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'EASTERNIZATION' OF EUROPE'S SECURITY POLICY



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FOREWORD

In May 2004, the European Union grew to include eight former communist states. While the unstated purpose of EU enlargement is to remold Central and Eastern Europe in the Western image, the enlarged European Union will inevitably adopt an eastern flavor as new members begin to take part in shaping EU policies. In the field of security and defense, the enlargement adds a new layer to what is a complex and sometimes challenging process of devising a common EU policy. The number of countries around the table grew and so did, at first glance, the diversity of views within the Union.

The European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is meant to defend shared values and interests. But that is easier said than done; attempts to craft a joint definition have often proved difficult and divisive. The Iraq crisis was a case in point, and so was the dispute over EU military planning headquarters or "structured cooperation" on defense issues. The idea of crafting a common vision was always going to be a controversial one because CFSP and its offshoot, the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) touch on deeply held beliefs about the nature of power and on questions of life and death. The challenge only seems to have grown ever since the Iraq crisis exposed fundamental differences in outlooks, themselves a legacy of vastly diverse military and foreign policy history of the countries that now form the European Union.

For all the differences among its members, the European Union does wield considerable influence over countries both near and faraway. The enlargement is rightly cited as a perfect example of the European Union using its power to shape countries around it. That may have been the easy part, however. The new member states embraced EU values and policies willingly, having determined shortly after the end of the Cold War that their future lied in integration. A far more difficult task is ahead. How does the European Union project influence to countries and regions immune to the pull of eventual membership? That is the essence of current debates on the nature of EU security policy.

The new members have joined the dynamic and often tortuous process of defining a common European security policy closer to its launch point than the finish line. The Union wrote its first-ever security strategy and conducted the first military operations only last year, in 2003. It will not acquire the capacity to carry out the full range of its missions until well after the May 2004 wave of enlargement. So while the accession states are new to the Union so is the prac-

tice of crafting common views on defense. They will be finding their place in the EU family together. Accession countries have been given the opportunity to co-define Europe's security and defense policies almost from the get-go.

The purpose of this monograph is therefore to examine the future impact of the May 1, 2004 enlargement on the direction of the EU security and defense policy and the Union's very ability to find a common vision. Authors from the four Central European states forming the Visegrad Four group (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) have been asked to examine their countries' positions on the key issues defining the EU security debate. What is the emerging EU consensus on today's main security threats, and the preferred strategy for meeting those threats? Are there differences between current and future members, and if so, are they durable? Is there a trend toward greater divergence of opinions? And what impact will the new members' strong political and military links to Washington have on the Union's defense relationship with the United States?

The following pages offer answers to these and other related questions. Together they provide a glimpse into the current security philosophies of the countries involved, as well as a reflection on their sources and durability. The formation of the common EU defense and security policy is an ongoing process, and the views described in this book as well as the European consensus on defense will inevitably evolve over time. These pages are offered in order to inform the current debate and decision-making on European security affairs – and in the hope of forging a constructive and cooperative dialogue within the European Union, and between the EU and its allies.

Editors

Olga Gyárfášová – Marek Šťastný

PRIORITIES AND SOURCES OF SECURITY POLICIES – SLOVAKIA

Few countries in Europe underwent as dramatic a change in security affiliation in the past decade as Slovakia. As recently as 1997, the rise of the authoritarian Mečiar regime led to the country's exclusion from the first post-Cold War wave of NATO enlargement and the relegation to a security "grey zone." The tide turned with the 1998 elections, which saw the Mečiar government replaced with a broad coalition. Slovakia has since made significant progress in Euro-Atlantic integration, consolidation of democracy and introduction of economic and social reforms, eventually shedding its pariah status. The 2002 elections extended the ruling coalition's lease on power and sent a strong signal that the Slovak society had overcome its fundamental conflict between authoritarianism and liberal democracy. Fifteen years after the collapse of the communist regime and 12 years after gaining independence, the country finds itself at a landmark situation, accomplishing its two principal strategic goals: membership in the European Union and NATO.

As with all accession countries, the entry of Slovakia to the European Union and NATO marks only the beginning of true integration. New members are entering these institutions at a time when NATO and the EU themselves are in great upheaval. The confluence of enlargement and institutional reform raises many new challenges for the accession countries. Ron Asmus of the German Marshall Fund divides these into three categories: "The first one lies across the Atlantic, the second one within Europe, and the third one is at home."¹ One can add that all three of these challenges are equally important, compatible and inevitable.

¹ Asmus, Ronald D.: *Central and Eastern Europe in an Age of New Uncertainty*. Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs, Spring 2003, p. 7.

SECURITY POLICY AND THE SLOVAK POLITICAL SCENE

Slovakia's membership in NATO enjoys the consensus support of all main political actors. Of the 136 members of parliament, 124 voted for NATO membership in 2003 (11 Communist Party MPs voted against, 1 MP of the opposition Smer Party abstained). Strong support for participation in the alliance carried through the 2002 parliamentary elections and continues to the present.

Cracks in the consensus appeared when the government agreed to deploy a small military unit to Kuwait to help protect the country against an attack with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by Saddam Hussein's regime. Paradoxically, the public debate surrounding the deployment never really addressed the possible danger posed by Hussein's regime to Slovakia. Those who opposed the Slovak deployment (with the exception of the generally isolationist Communist Party) did so partly out of conviction that Hussein's regime posed little danger to the West. But the bulk of the debate revolved around the motives for the Slovak government's support of the United States. To the supporters, the mission was an act of solidarity with the United States, and an important part of being a "good ally." Opponents countered with allegations that the government was merely trying to guarantee smooth ratification of NATO enlargement in the U.S. Senate. Opposition parties were particularly critical of the Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda's support for the January 30, 2003 *Letter of Eight* and later the *Vilnius 10 letter*, in which the respective signatories openly stated their support for the U.S. policy on Iraq. Both initiatives were seen by the opposition as needlessly divisive and provocative. A deputy for Mečiar's HZDS, Irena Belohorská, for example has called for a more "balanced approach" to foreign policy. Smer questioned the legitimacy of the intervention, and even some of the ruling coalition members (the Christian-Democrats, KDH, in particular) seemed unconvinced that the war against Iraq met the definition of a "just war." Others openly criticized the U.S. handling of the diplomatic efforts and the manner in which Washington presented its allies with evidence for going to war.

However, even the most vocal opponents of the intervention support NATO in principle and do not seem to view the efforts by some EU and NATO member states – namely France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg – to build military planning structures and rapid reaction units under EU auspices and separate from NATO, as an alternative to the alliance.

There also seems to be a general consensus in the country on the need to stop proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, which necessitates continued strong cooperation with the United States. However, with no history of terrorist attacks against Slovakia, these debates remain on a theoretical level.

SECURITY IN SLOVAK POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Generally speaking, in Slovakia – much as in the rest of Europe – elections are not won or lost on foreign policy issues alone. The one notable exception in recent memory came from Germany, where the incumbent chancellor Gerhard Schröder, in the last days of the 2002 parliamentary election campaign, successfully used anti-American rhetoric to rescue his floundering bid. Such an approach is indicative of a general trend toward disappearing barriers between domestic and foreign policies, not only in the perception of political elites but also increasingly among ordinary citizens.

The Slovak public lists foreign policy issues far from the top of its list of priorities, which continue to be dominated by high unemployment and worries about decreasing living standards. On the other hand, interest in international political events is slowly rising.²

The platforms of the political parties contesting the 2002 general elections featured foreign, and above all, security policy in only a secondary role. The Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ), Alliance of a New Citizen (ANO), and Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK) strongly emphasized benefits of NATO accession. This was at least partly due to the fact that Slovakia joined the alliance on their watch and, as incumbents, they had an interest in trumpeting own accomplishments. (They returned to power after the election.) Another coalition member, the Christian-Democratic Movement has also strongly advocated transatlantic orientation, and has consistently stressed Slovakia's share of responsibility for promoting freedom and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. European security architecture has been mentioned just marginally, with SDKÚ, KDH, and smaller non-parliamentary parties clearly preferring NATO as the key institution in European security architecture.

The current Dzurinda government is unabashedly pro-Atlanticist, both in terms of support for Slovakia's NATO integration and its endorsement of the U.S.-led action in the former Yugoslavia and Iraq. In other European countries, similar stances worked against the incumbents at election time. Therefore, in theory one cannot rule out the possibility that during the next round of voting (early elections are a distinct possibility), dissatisfaction with Slovakia's foreign policy course could contribute to producing a new government, or at least cause the current administration to tone down its strong support for the United States.

² In 1999, 38% of those polled stated that they follow world events on a regular or semi-regular basis; in 2001 43% had (See: Surveys of the Institute for Public Affairs, conducted in January 1999 and in September 2001).

In practice, however, there are other factors at play such as the outcome of the U.S. presidential election and a possible change in the tone and style of Washington's foreign policy, which could make it more agreeable to the Slovak political spectrum. At any rate, the potential shifts will not alter the fundamental orientation of Slovakia's security policy toward NATO as all the parliamentary parties in the Slovak Republic – with the exception of the Communist Party – have declared their support for the country's accession to NATO coupled with participation in the European Union's Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). The very act of accession to these two organizations has already helped a key member of the ruling coalition, SDKÚ, to unexpectedly good results in the 2002 election. As the British analyst Tim Haughton points out "the issues of NATO and EU membership were SDKÚ's trump cards."³

However, this broad consensus on Slovakia's security priorities is coming under increasing pressure stemming from the Iraq crisis. The opposition Smer in particular has seized on the mission's shortcomings to express preference for a "European, rather than American style"⁴ of foreign policy. Echoing the positions of France and Germany, Smer stated that the United States did not present sufficient cause for the war, and that the operation lacked a mandate from the United Nations.⁵ But despite the pronounced differences over Iraq, consensus on the importance of NATO membership appears to be intact. Róbert Kaliňák,⁶ Smer deputy chairman and the head of the Security and Defense Committee of the National Council (parliament) has repeatedly expressed support for a strong NATO, stating that it represents a stable platform for cooperation of two continents – Europe and the United States. Smer, in Kaliňák's words, favors a genuine EU defense policy, but one that is engaged in a close cooperation with NATO. He also thinks that Europe needs its own defense identity and military planning capabilities, but strictly within NATO. Further, he criticized the gap in military spending and capabilities between European countries and the United States. Striking a slightly different tone, Smer deputy chairwoman, Monika Beňová,⁷ recently elected to the European parliament, held that the European

³ Haughton, Tim: *We'll Finish What We've Started: The 2002 Slovak Parliamentary Election*. The Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics, Vol. 19, No. 4, December 2003, p. 74.

⁴ Statement by Boris Zala, vice-chairman of SMER and a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

⁵ *Národná Obrada*, March 21, 2003.

⁶ Interview with Róbert Kaliňák, January 28, 2004. Interview was conducted within the project Political Actors and the Future of Transatlantic Relations.

⁷ Interview with Monika Beňová, March 5, 2004. Interview was conducted within the project Political Actors and the Future of Transatlantic Relations.

Union should work on its own model of defense and stated that the extent to which the EU's defense should be autonomous is up for discussion because, at present, the majority of EU members are also members of NATO.

Smer, which consistently tops public opinion polls in Slovakia, adopted an even starker anti-government and anti-U.S. profile after the tragic death of three Slovak servicemen in Iraq in June 2004. The party called for a radical re-evaluation of Slovakia's security policy, drawing on earlier statements of Smer chairman Róbert Fico from March 2003 when he dubbed the Dzurinda government "reckless, un-European, warlike and undermining the authority of the UN."⁸ The party has maneuvered closer to the Franco-German non-interventionist position on Iraq, and has begun to consistently accentuate the European dimension of security. While remaining pro-NATO in principle, Smer also tends to view the alliance as a vehicle for restraining actions of the United States. The tragic developments in Iraq presented Smer with an opportunity to drive a wedge between the Dzurinda government and the public, generally unhappy with the war. In doing so, Slovakia's traditionally close relationship with the United States became the first casualty. Smer resurrected its leitmotiv from the pre-war diplomatic crisis, criticizing the Dzurinda government for building an "American island of influence in the centre of Europe". At a June 2004 conference, Smer representatives publicly questioned the loyalty of an SDKÚ member of the European Parliament and a Slovak émigré to the United States, Peter Šťastný.⁹ "How will [Šťastný] vote on European Security and Defense Policy, which is meant to curb the military hegemony of the United States?", Smer asked in a June 9 press release. "We fear that SDKÚ members of the European Parliament will represent neither Slovakia nor Europe but someone completely different, someone thousands of kilometers away from Brussels and Strasbourg."¹⁰

While increasingly anti-American, Smer takes a pragmatic view of the importance of NATO. During an interview with the authors, Beňová stressed that the European Union lacks "personal, technical and material resources to mobilize quickly." Thus, in case of a potential conflict, "NATO would take over." Moreover, Beňová sees the role of the EU in peace operations and diplomatic measures; NATO, in her view, should provide for *hard-security*. Similarly, Róbert Kaliňák likened the division of labor between NATO and the EU to that

⁸ *Sme*, February 1, 2003.

⁹ *Bezpečnostná politika SR vo svetle úmrtia troch slovenských vojakov v Iraku* [Security Policy of the Slovak Republic in Light of the Death of Three Slovak Soldiers in Iraq]. Press release, June 9, 2004; www.smer.sk.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

between the ministries of interior and defense, pointing out that NATO as a military organization will have to re-orient itself to respond also in non-military operations, and that some roles of the EU and NATO should be based on mutual cooperation of both organizations – such as in the fight against terrorism. However, in Kaliňák's words, this vision does not preclude the European Union from assuming a bigger role in providing hard-security. This could lead to competition with NATO, especially in light of Smer's often-declared orientation toward France and Germany in foreign policy.

PUBLIC VIEWS

Cultural roots play an essential role in foreign policy orientation and the security perceptions of the decision-makers and population alike. The sense of cultural-civilizational belonging to a certain group of countries as well as the degree of cultural affinity are important, albeit not the only, factors shaping the public attitudes. Despite an overwhelmingly positive view of the West, there is a persistent school of thought in Slovak history that questions the country's place in the Western Civilization and searches for alternatives, mostly associated with orientation to the Slavic East. However, at the level of the general public, a clear pro-Western orientation dominates. It is an instinctive rather than a well thought-out position but it dominates nevertheless. It exists alongside a third, less visible school of thought, isolationism, that appears to feed on suspicion towards external influences.

Countries of Central and Eastern Europe had never faced the choice between Western Europe and the United States. For most states of the region, the classic dilemma that has pervaded the discourse in their modern histories had been one of the West or the East (with the exception of the Cold War, when great power rivalry foreclosed all alternatives for countries on the wrong side of the Iron Curtain). The East implied imperialistic Russia, but also domestic Panslavic tendencies, Soviet domination, totalitarian regimes, and for many, even military occupations. The West was synonymous with democracy and prosperity. Moreover, the West represented the "idea of Europe" but reached further than that – the West was also cultural space that stretched across the Atlantic.

Therefore, integration into the European Union and NATO has been always viewed as two sides of one coin, not only compatible but also mutually reinforcing. It was never an "either – or" scenario. The turbulence brought on by the Iraq conflict complicated Central Europe's situation but the war also provided the accession countries with an historic opportunity to make their voice heard, and to speak their mind independently of any "tutors."

In Slovakia, popular perceptions of the EU and NATO differ, as does support for membership in the respective institutions. While the European Union is associated above all with social and economic prosperity, the relation to NATO is more ambivalent. A sizable portion of the population does not see clear reasons for membership in NATO because the country seems to lack enemies threatening Slovakia's security. The public also draws a distinction between the image of the United States and Europe. Western Europe elicits primarily positive associations clustered around two categories – *economic development* (high standard of living, low unemployment, social security, prosperity, wealth, welfare protection, trade, satisfaction, jobs, good pay...) and *democracy* (freedom, tolerance, independence, progress, respect for human rights, etc.). The United States is naturally also viewed as an economically developed country but its image is harmed by other, prevailingly negative connotations such as superiority, dominance and arrogance. Slovak media play an essential role in promulgating negative stereotypes, constructing and reinforcing clichés. Their frequently inaccurate commentaries nonetheless have a profound effect on public perception of the United States.

THREATS AS PERCEIVED BY THE CITIZENS

The Slovak public is more concerned about internal rather than external sources of danger. This is due to increased sensitivity to social problems and fears for personal safety that arose during the period of post-communist transition. Social dissatisfaction and frustration has reached such levels in recent years that over half of the country's population thinks that life was better for people like them before 1989.¹¹ Pessimism regarding economic and social situation, even higher than in the neighboring countries,¹² creates a solid foundation for general dissatisfaction in the society.

External threats or dangers coming from "behind the borders" are viewed as less worrying (see Table 1). Most people found security, especially if defined as hard security against external sources of danger, a rather abstract and unconvincing argument for NATO membership. A large percentage of Slovaks think of threats mainly as conventional military dangers – an unlikely scenario at this day and age. The benign threat environment thus in the eyes of many Slovaks negates the need for defense and organizations of collective security.

¹¹ In a public opinion survey conducted by the Institute for Public Affairs in March 2000, 62% of respondents claimed that life was better before 1989.

¹² See: Eurobarometer 2004.1, conducted in February – March 2004.

Other non-conventional security risks such as terrorism, excessive dependence on unstable energy sources, uncontrollable migration, etc., rank even lower on the list of potential sources of instability. It must be noted, however, that people have grown more sensitive to external threats over the past two years, marked by terrorist attacks in Europe and instability in the former Soviet bloc.

Table 1
“In your opinion, is Slovakia a safe country?” (% of respondents who agree)

	In terms of internal security	In terms of external security
It is certainly a safe country	9	13
It is a rather safe country	36	45
It is a rather unsafe country	35	22
It is certainly not a safe country	12	5
I don’t know	8	15

Source: ÚVKVM NOC, March 2002.

The above-listed perceptions have both a rational and irrational basis and are predominantly shaped by memories of periods in the country’s recent past. The era prior to 1989 is often remembered as the safest period for individuals and the country alike, defined by a higher degree of personal safety as well as relatively high national safety. The years after 1989 brought, above all, the decline in terms of personal safety. In addition, the gap between the perception of personal safety and national security has widened since 1989: people are worried about their individual well-being while threats to the country are receding in comparison (Table 2). Nevertheless, despite the marked improvements of Slovakia’s international position after the 1998 elections (and prior to September 2001), worries about national security remain stubbornly high. Presumably, they are being strongly influenced by concerns about personal safety, organized crime and other threats largely outside the control of individual citizens. At the same time, people clearly believe that the country’s security will improve, which stems largely from Slovakia’s accession to NATO (see Table 3).

Table 2

“How would you evaluate the following periods in terms of personal/national security?” (% of respondents who believe “security at that time was very+rather high”)

	Level of personal safety	Level of national safety
Before 1989	75	70
1990-1992 (after the break down of communism, before the split of ČSFR)	50	53
1994-1998 (when the nationalist coalition was in power)	29	40
1998-2001 (since 1998 election until to days)	25	39

Source: ÚVKVM NOC, June 2001.

Table 3

“In your opinion, will Slovakia’s accession to NATO lead to improvement or deterioration of the country’s security?”

Country’s security will (substantially+slightly) improve	67
Country’s security will (slightly+substantially) deteriorate	18
I don’t know	15

Source: ÚVKVM NOC, December 2003.

GOVERNMENTAL VIEWS AND ACTIONS ON SECURITY

An analysis of the foreign policy and security climate of a society would be incomplete without a look at the political elites. This is particularly true for Slovakia, whose foreign policy community has enjoyed a period of great continuity and stability since 1998. The SDKÚ-led centre-right government, in its sixth year in power, has consistently advocated a transatlantic vision of security with a central role for NATO and continued strong U.S. presence in Europe. This is despite fluctuating public views, which on occasions – especially at the time of the Iraq war – turned very critical of U.S. policies.

A landmark in this respect was the initiative of Slovakia and other members of the so-called Vilnius Group (V10), which during the heated debates on Iraq in early 2003 threw their collective support behind the United States and Great Britain. On February 5, foreign ministers of the V10 countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and

Romania) issued a joint declaration in which they stated that the United States had submitted convincing evidence to the UN Security Council on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, they called on the Security Council to take all necessary and adequate measures to respond to the continuing threat posed by the Iraqi regime. V10 ministers officially confirmed that if Iraq did not submit to conditions of the UN Security Council Resolution No. 1441, their countries were prepared to participate in joint operations aimed at disarming the Iraqi regime.¹³

The Slovak decision should be read first and foremost as a declaration of interest in preserving a strong transatlantic bond and in eliminating existing tension between France and Germany on the one hand and the rest of NATO member states on the other. The V10 initiative, along with a similar *Letter of Eight* from established EU and NATO member states, effectively transposed a U.S.-European disagreement into an intra-European one and prevented the European Union from distancing itself collectively from the United States.

During the course of the Iraq debate, Slovakia clearly joined the ranks of those countries that see the future purpose of NATO in preserving close ties between the United States and its European allies.¹⁴ One of Slovakia's key national security prerogatives is to maintain the U.S. military and security presence in Europe, which not only guarantees the alliance's combat readiness but also adds to the relevance of Europe's existing security architecture. Slovakia's minister of foreign affairs, Eduard Kukan, confirmed this attitude when he said: "Slovakia enjoys good relations with the United States and intends to preserve them. We will always view the United States as Europe's partner and not its rival."¹⁵

The Slovak government has fully supported the war on terrorism; it has given coalition forces over-flight and transit rights during the campaign against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and it sent an engineering unit to the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul. It also fully supported the United States in Iraq. In addition to opening airspace and infrastructure for military supplies, Slovakia has provided a small number of engineering troops, one of its *niche* capabilities. The current governing elites have shown a clear tendency to lead and shape public views on security rather than to follow the polls. The decision to support the U.S.-led campaign against Iraq was made at the time when the overwhelming majority of the population was against Slovakia's participation.

¹³ *The EU Observer*, February 6, 2003.

¹⁴ Korba, Matúš: *Slovakia and the Iraqi Crisis*. In.: Štátný, Marek (ed.): *Iraqi Crisis and Politics in USA, Europe and V4 Countries*, Bratislava, Institute for Public Affairs 2003, p. 45.

¹⁵ *Sme*, March 12, 2003.

THE BROADER PICTURE: WHAT ROLE FOR V4 IN DEVELOPING SECURITY STRATEGIES?

The Visegrad Group established in the early 1990s by four Central European countries – Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia – has become a symbol of effective regional cooperation, generating stability and good neighborly relations. Pressure from and diplomacy by V4, for example, played a critical role in restoring Slovakia to its place in the international community after the Mečiar years. And even though the various members' commitment to Visegrad oscillated over the years – during which serious disagreements occurred, too, such as the one concerning the new voting mechanism proposed in the draft EU Constitution – Visegrad remained politically relevant.

The V4 members originally united in order to secure accession to NATO and the European Union. While this task has been accomplished, other long-term shared interests remain. Radek Khol of the Prague-based Institute for International Relations identifies two common concerns: first, the creation of a new eastern EU border with Belarus, Ukraine, Russia and Moldova (after the accession of Romania and Bulgaria). The Visegrad countries have a considerable stake in shaping “the effects of direct neighborhood policies of enlarged EU.”¹⁶ This is particularly true for the former Soviet republics and the former Yugoslav republics which, along with Albania, have yet to fully overcome the cumulative effect of civil wars and economic hardship. Poland, for example, has ignored the EU line and pursued a policy of engagement with Belarus even at the time when the European Union recommended travel restrictions for Belarusian diplomats and businessmen. Similarly, all Visegrad countries take a keen and often independent-minded interest in finding the right policies to bring about a stable and democratic Ukraine and Moldova.

The second long-term interest shared by the V4 consists of “keeping separate the tasks of collective defense under NATO from the broadly defined crisis management operations under the EU.” Khol argues that historical experience as well as the general Atlanticist view of the new NATO member states shaped this view. “Visegrad countries would not like to see this crucial NATO function undermined and therefore would not support steps leading to ambition as was presented by certain EU states.”¹⁷ The Visegrad Four can therefore be expected

¹⁶ Khol, Radek: *Policies of the Visegrad Countries towards CFSP/ESDP*. Working Paper 3/2003. Prague, Institute for International Relations 2003, p. 14.

¹⁷ Ibid.

to strive to keep the transatlantic link alive, and to balance their NATO and EU security commitments.

However, despite sharing specific concerns apart from the EU, the V4 show only faint signs of foreign policy coordination. Members of the quartet are more likely to try to outdo one another and “privatize” a portion of the EU policy agenda directed at their immediate neighbourhood, presumably in order to demonstrate to the electorate the government’s ability to influence EU policy. Similarly, little “mutual reassurance” seems to take place among the V4 on the thorny issue of U.S.-European relations.

Slovakia, the smallest of the Visegrad 4 countries and the last to join NATO, is unlikely to abandon its alliance-first policy anytime soon. Bratislava may not be as instinctively Atlanticist as Poland but that is logical – the cultural and historical basis for Warsaw’s foreign and security policies was never likely to be replicated elsewhere in the Visegrad 4. The three smaller countries will need to contend with America’s negative image among their citizens as well as with Washington’s shift away from focusing on the defense of Europe. Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic will find it increasingly more difficult to resist alternative “European” security models centered on the European Union.

Any such Europeanization of Visegrad Four’s defense policies, however, is simply music of the future, for a simple pragmatic reason: lack of resources. None of the four can afford to abandon the hard security guarantees of NATO membership, backed up by U.S. military might. In Slovakia, even representatives of Smer, arguably the least pro-Atlanticist party, express a pragmatic preference for continued NATO cooperation. Therefore, for the foreseeable future, the Visegrad countries will strive to fulfil their NATO commitments while attentively following developments in ESDP. Other issues that enter into this complicated equation are worries about straining relations with France and Germany, two advocates of the European alternative to U.S.-centric security architecture.

CONCLUSIONS

At present, Slovaks are too consumed by their country’s internal problems to take active interest in Slovakia’s immediate neighborhood, to say nothing of the more remote areas of the world. The general population has slipped into a “beneficiary” mindset – one of a recipient of aid – and seems reluctant to adopt the role of a benefactor, i.e. someone who is willing and able to help others. It is a myopic view, certainly, and counterproductive in the long run. While European experts frequently write about the need for “internalizing” the

EU agenda, i.e. making it an integral part of the state's domestic agenda, the challenge before Slovakia is one of "internationalizing" the views of ordinary citizens – making Slovaks more aware of the greater community and the opportunities (and dangers) that it presents. It is very possible, however, that with future improvement in Slovakia's economic performance, foreign policy will crawl closer to the centre of public awareness, and political elites will be forced to engage their voters in a debate on global security issues.

The government is facing a vast task of applying its new security doctrines within Slovakia as well as coordinating with the requirements of EU and NATO membership. This job has only begun with accession, and is of course, most unhelpfully, taking place in the context of a new split in the Western alliance. While national and collective security documents reflect a common drive to find effective solutions to threats increasingly coming from outside the Euro-Atlantic area, the allies often vastly disagree on the proper strategy. This poses a challenge that Slovakia, along with its Visegrad neighbors, cannot afford to ignore. Reforms in Slovakia – be it in the military or economic sphere – have served to alert the country and its political leaders to the challenges of a globalized, competitive and increasingly dangerous world with unconventional and unpredictable security threats. The debate on effective responses to those threats – and on the necessary alliances – has yet to fully take place.

Tamás Meszerics

THE SECURITY POLICY OF HUNGARY

The sources of Hungary's foreign and security policy outlooks are inextricably linked to the country's location and its modern history. As all other countries situated between Russia's western and Germany's eastern borders, Hungary has traditionally been forced to bandwagon with the major power – or conglomerate of powers – willing to underwrite its security needs without necessarily exerting hegemonic influence over its policies. This realist geopolitical reference may not be in harmony with the language of the present-day European discourse on defense and security, but it goes a long way toward explaining the willingness of many small and medium European powers to challenge the French and German visions of European foreign policy.

Hungary – again, similarly to other accession countries – tends to judge the different western forms of integration and international organizations in broad functional terms. In this simplified view, the Council of Europe serves to promote democracy and the protection of human rights, the EU is primarily a vehicle of economic integration, while NATO remains the major provider of security (primarily traditional military security) in the region. This is the true division of labor as seen from Central and Eastern Europe, and it helps explain why, until recently, governments of the new member states had regularly shown surprise when these organizations overstepped their perceived functional boundaries. The European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) was at first seen as a rather superfluous pillar of the European integration.¹ Hungary's orientation to the United States for security won it the moniker “reflex Atlanticist” by some analysts – a reputation only confirmed by signing the open *Letter of Eight* on January 30, 2003. In signing the letter, the Hungarian Prime Minister echoed anxiety felt by all political élites of the region upon seeing a rift opening between the United States and the major European powers' vision of defense and security.

¹ On this “functionalist” view see Dunay, P.: *Az EU közös biztonság- és védelempolitikájának céltalansága: a tagságra váró országok nézőpontja* [*The aimlessness of ESDP: the view from the accession countries*]. Külügyi Szemle, Winter 2002.

THE PILLARS OF HUNGARIAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY

Basic principles of Hungary's defense and security policies are outlined in the *Parliamentary Resolution 94/1998*, passed by a large majority of votes on the eve of Hungary's entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on December 28, 1998.² The document starts from the premise that the successful integration of Hungary into the institutional framework of the Euroatlantic region necessitates a rethink of the main principles of the country's defense and security policies. Indeed, the document superseded a similar resolution from 1993 (*Parliamentary Resolution 11/1993*) that had served as consensual guide until Hungary joined NATO. Its new version embraced a wider definition of security in line with the basic NATO documents, including threats posed by international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), illegal drug trafficking, organized crime, and mass migration. The resolution declared that though the danger of a world-wide armed conflict had receded with the end of the bipolar international system, the potential sources of threats and the types of risks grew broader and more complex. This was tantamount to the admission that the traditional military interpretation of security threats was no longer adequate. It solemnly announced that Hungary views no state as its enemy.

To the extent that Hungary considers itself threatened, it looks to its membership in NATO – and the related mutual defense clause – as the most efficient way of guaranteeing its security. Importantly, the document also stresses that Hungary considers transatlantic cooperation the primary guarantor of all European security in the long run. It links Hungary's support for strengthening European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) to continued European participation in the existing structures of NATO – hence the repeated admonishments (in reference to EU operational headquarters and similar issues) not to create “parallel structures” and “inefficient multiplication of functions” between NATO and ESDP.

Although the 1998 resolution is five years old now, it is still valid as the broad outline of Hungary's defense and security outlook. It contained all the major themes that dramatically came to the foreground in the Atlantic rift around the war in Iraq. What is of even greater importance, however, is the fact that none of the major actors involved in the formulation of these strategic concepts has

² The vote was 328 for and 12 against. All the “no” votes came from the radical right wing party MIÉP.

since proposed changing or amending the text of the resolution. It is a clear sign that the order of priorities concerning Hungary's security policy has not changed since 1999.

DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

For a small country like Hungary the major foreign policy and security concerns are regional. It has no significant interests outside the Euroatlantic region, therefore in most cases it will not voice strong dissent from the position of its major allies. In all other issues it will support the position of Europe, although it may put some extra emphasis on the importance and promotion of international institutions and norms.

Within the Euroatlantic region, however, there are three areas in which Hungary's stance may not fully coincide with that of its EU neighbors.³ As shown by the events of a year ago, one is the transatlantic connection. Hungarian statesmen will find any disturbance in EU-U.S. relations worrying, but they will be reluctant to take sides as long as they can avoid doing so. If, however, they are forced to show their particular allegiance, they would most probably come down on the side of the United States, the presumed final guarantor of military security.

The other region towards which Hungary may have a more independent viewpoint is the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The historic memory of the conduct of the Soviet Union (or even the Russian Empire) and the heavy-handed attempts of Boris Yeltsin at meddling in the affairs of the region towards the end of his presidency generated a certain weariness vis-à-vis Moscow among the political elites. The EU policy of influencing Russia through offers and practice of extensive cooperation is viewed from Budapest as yielding mixed results, with Europe too quick to drop pressure at the first sign of Russian displeasure. Hungary's former prime minister, Viktor Orbán, once said that: "...the more strongly we cooperate [with Russia] in the economic realm, the clearer and sharper the dividing line must be between us, as the easternmost member of NATO and the region lying to the east of us, in issues of military and security policy."⁴ Though couched in

³ Dunay: *Az EU közös biztonság- és védelempolitikájának céltalansága: a tagságra váró országok nézőpontja* [The aimlessness of ESDP the view from the accession countries], pp. 26-28.

⁴ Speech of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on the tasking conference of the Defense Forces on March 1, 2001; <http://www.honvedelem.hu/cikk.php?cikk=717t>.

rather ambiguous terms, the sentence was interpreted by the military to mean that there should be no spill-over from any increase in economic cooperation into the field of security. The latter is seen as the exclusive realm of “western” alliance structures.

On the other hand, Russia is one of the few foreign policy issues on which the two major parties might display some policy differences. The new head of the centre-left coalition, the current prime minister, Péter Medgyessy, has shown a much more conciliatory attitude towards Russia since his election. How much this is a question of style or substance we shall see below.

The third area where Hungary might try to have an impact after the accession to the EU is the realm of human rights and, more specifically, minority rights. Since 1990, successive Hungarian governments have repeatedly used European and other international fora to express dissatisfaction with the treatment of Hungarian minorities in neighboring countries. The government may now choose to use the EU’s common security policy to channel its concerns. If so – and if Hungary succeeds in convincing other member states of the validity of its position – Budapest’s voice would be significantly amplified. By nature, multilateral negotiations led by the European Union would also dampen the emotional impact of claims pursued single-handedly by Hungary as well as the verbal “radicalism” of claims. However, past Hungarian experience with raising its national concerns at the EU level has been frustrating; the government’s attempts at strengthening minority rights in the proposed European constitutional debate, in particular, must have been highly educational in their ultimate futility.

THE POLICY PROCESS AND THE MAJOR PLAYERS

Hungary is a parliamentary republic with medium-weak president and a strong prime ministerial government. A number of important consequences follow from this broad regime-level definition. Although the president of the republic serves as the commander-in-chief of the armed forces in war, he has no independent political bearing on the formulation or execution of defense and security policies, and no place in the peacetime military chain of command (the arrangement is the product of a long-running conflict between the president and the prime minister in the early 1990s, eventually settled by a constitutional court ruling). As a result, all the important actors responsible for planning and implementation of security policies report to the prime minister.

The prime minister holds considerable powers across all areas, even by international standards. The institution of the constructive vote of no confidence

makes it very unlikely (barring extreme political disasters) that a prime minister will not serve his or her full term of four years. As the prime minister personally selects his government, all ministers owe their position ultimately to him alone. In fact, some observers pointed out years ago that the powers of the Hungarian prime minister are comparable to the German chancellor. Like his German counterpart, the head of the government in Budapest benefits from the organizational support provided by the Office of the Prime Minister; in effect the counterpart to the federal chancellor's office – a ministry level governmental unit, which in many ways has come to dominate the other departments.

The national security cabinet consists of the minister of defense (chair), the minister of interior, the minister of justice, the minister of foreign affairs, the minister of the Prime Minister's Office, and the undersecretary of the Prime Minister's Office responsible for national security affairs. This body is the top policy-making unit in the executive domain responsible both for defining broad policy outlines and for the day-to-day management of national security affairs. This is also the ultimate clearing-house for the final products of the intelligence community. The threat assessments of the different intelligence agencies are also collated and harmonized at this body.

The legislative, too, enjoys significant say in the national security policy-making process. In addition to the "power of the purse" – already considerable because of the costs of military modernization – it also takes part in formulating the military and security doctrines, which must be approved in the form of a parliamentary resolution. Most of the legislative work is carried out in the national security and foreign policy committees. These also serve as the main channels of providing important national security information to opposition parties through hearings and closed sessions.

However, the major players in the process are the executive agencies represented in the national security cabinet and the Prime Minister's Office itself. In the centre-right government of Viktor Orbán the primacy of the "chancellery" was even more pronounced, since all major portfolios were supervised on behalf of the prime minister by personal "referents" within the Prime Minister's Office. Thus the minister of defense, for example, had considerably less policy-autonomy than in previous or later governments. The reasons for this concentration of power were political in nature and were induced by the needs to manage the ruling coalition (about which more will be said later). Though the position of the "referents" was abolished by the Medgyessy government, and thus the level of ministerial autonomy was again increased, the prime minister remains the dominant player in all issues on which he chooses to concentrate. Delegation is the privilege of the premier.

The most important institutional actor is arguably the Ministry of Defense. It is the primary vehicle of the reform of the armed forces, which broadly follow two major directions. One of these is the re-integration of the Defense Forces into the ministry and changing the command structure so as to reduce the number of headquarters. The other is the reduction of peacetime personnel, which was carried out mostly by 2001. It is not entirely clear at the moment what would be the net effect of the new public sector austerity program on the armed forces. Imre Iváncsik, the state secretary for political affairs in the Ministry of Defense claimed on February 4, 2004 that the budgetary cuts will not impede the ongoing reform of the defense force structure. The ministry still envisages that by 2013 Hungary will have a small, professional rapid reaction force with high survivability.⁵ The peacetime strength is envisaged at 36,000 with a 50-60% expansion of personnel in wartime. The modernization effort made imperative the upgrading of military hardware as well. The relative expansion of the military budget in the 2000-2002 period made room for some important investments. The largest of those was the lease of the Gripen supersonic fighters from Sweden (the choice of the Gripen over the F-16s caused a temporary but perceptible chilling in the bilateral relations with the United States).

The reform plans are heavily back-loaded with the bulk of the equipment modernization only expected in the third phase (2007-2010) of the 10-year cycle of the transformation of the defense forces.⁶ With most procurement yet to be made, Defense Minister Ferenc Juhász announced on the same date that he signed an agreement with his UK counterpart, Geoffrey Hoon, for Britain to monitor and advise Hungary on the defense transformation process. The agreement, reached on the sidelines of the Munich security policy conference, prompted Juhász to claim that Hungarian modernization efforts enjoy UK and U.S. support and could serve as a model for new NATO members.⁷ Whether Hungary is truly a showcase is a debatable assertion. Nevertheless, the agreement demonstrated that Hungary has travelled far from the days when it was branded an underperforming ally by Foreign Affairs magazine before the Prague NATO summit in 2002.⁸

⁵ <http://www.honvedelem.hu/cikk.php?cikk=15307>.

⁶ See also the section on Hungary by Erzsébet Nagyné Rózsa in Missiroli, A. (ed.): *Bigger EU, Wider CFSP, Stronger ESDP? The View from Central Europe*. ISS Occasional Papers No. 34, April 2002, pp 39-40.

⁷ http://www.radio.hu/index.php?cikk_id=75200.

⁸ Wallender, C. A.: *NATO's Price*. Foreign Affairs, November-December 2002, Vol. 81, No. 6.

DOMESTIC POLITICS AND SECURITY POLICY

How do the policy processes outlined above work in the context of the Hungarian political landscape? And how do the formal threat assessments produced by the Hungarian government relate to the perceptions of the socio-political elite and the general public?

The most important fact about public perceptions of security threats is their almost complete absence from public consciousness. This is true of almost any issue that relates to the international environment of the country. Among the 15 most important political issues covered by the Hungarian media in January 2004, there was not a single item that would even indirectly relate to international or security affairs – and the 15th received only 2% of the media coverage!⁹ If we take media presence to be a proxy for the general interest in political issues, we can safely claim that security and foreign affairs are generally out of sight of most Hungarian voters. This is further corroborated by the fact that during the last three campaigns before general elections these issues were almost entirely neglected by all parties that eventually entered the parliament.

Some security concerns do linger. Although the government rightly de-emphasized potential threats to Hungary (at least from state actors), the general public remains undeniably concerned. Though this is far from unique in the region, there is one aspect that distinguishes the Hungarian case from Poland or the Czech Republic: here the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s left their visible mark. The Hungarian public remains wary of existing or potential conflicts among the southern Slavs. However, after the fall of the Milosevic regime in Serbia and Montenegro, public anxiety about outside threats reached a post-Cold War low.¹⁰

The relatively low public interest in security issues is a double-edged sword. On the one hand it gives considerable leeway to the political elite – and most importantly the government – in shaping its foreign and security policy without grass-roots pressures. On the other hand the very same lack of concern also threatens to undermine the popular legitimacy of the broad strategic outlook of the Hungarian state. This is one of the possible interpretations of the low turnout in the two referenda on joining NATO (1997) and the European Union (2003). In both cases the percentage of the “yes” vote was very high (85.3% for

⁹ *Medián* monthly review, January 2004; http://www.median.hu/kutatasok/szemle_2004/Havi_szemle_jan.pdf.

¹⁰ See the piece of Pál Dunay in Missiroli, A. (ed.): *Enlargement and European Defence after 11 September*. Challiot Papers No. 53, June 2002.

NATO in 1997; 83.8% for the EU in 2003) but less than half of the eligible voters bothered to participate (49.2% in 1997; 45.6% in 2003). Had it not been for the change in the constitution in 1997, both referenda would have been invalid (in fact, the rules on referenda were changed with an eye to the looming NATO referendum¹¹). Lack of interest among the general public also helps explain why foreign and security policies are almost entirely absent from election campaigns. They confer no electoral bonus, which means that parties usually have no interest in inserting security into the campaign agenda. Only the fringes of the political spectrum – the Workers' Party (Munkáspárt, extreme left) and the Hungarian Life and Justice Party (MIÉP, extreme right) – bring up the 19th century notion of full national sovereignty or military independence and neutrality. MIÉP seems to be calculating that reference to neutrality, a notion popularized during the 1956 revolution, might translate into nostalgia votes. However, it had little success with its agenda in the last three elections.

On the other hand, the lack of public interest (and, *a fortiori*, a lack of campaign focus on such themes) may engender an unfounded sense of broad political consensus among the mainstream political parties. Each time an external event prompts rapid government reaction – such as during the Kosovo and Iraq crises – the opposition party seizes the opportunity to criticize some aspects of the government policy even though it may be in general agreement with the broad security and foreign policy orientation of the government of the day. Voices of dissent regularly make the major governing party jumpy, and accusations of deliberately undermining the “national consensus” fly across the floor in the parliament and in the media. Partisan disagreement on national security issues in a tense situation usually comes as a surprise to both sides exactly because of the low salience of these issues in “normal” times. In other words, the broad consensus often turns out to be an illusion.

The Hungarian party system has evolved basically around one major cleavage: relation to the communist/socialist past (even the terminology would be indicative of party affiliation in this area). This type of left/right divide is far from unique in the region. What makes it particular is the low fragmentation of the party system. There are only two effective political entities now in the Hungarian parliament each with a small satellite party. This is partly due to the constitutional setup and the electoral system, but it also owes much to the consistent efforts of the dominant centre-right party, FIDESZ, who spent enor-

¹¹ For the details of the referenda and the legal background see the webpage of the National Election Office, Hungary (<http://www.valasztas.hu/>).

mous energy on turning their party into the quasi-hegemon on the right of the political spectrum. This level of concentration on the right is what makes the party system unique in the region.

Although FIDESZ's foreign and security policy preferences do not necessarily diverge much from the ruling Socialists, the party tends to wrap all its security decisions in the cloak of *national interest*. The rhetoric plays an important role in keeping together the otherwise very heterogeneous group of voters that make up the right of the political spectrum, which also includes a number of Euro-skeptics and voters with an anti-Western/anti-American general disposition (its core, however, is built of middle-of-the-road centrist conservatives, whose outlook is more internationalist and western oriented). The rhetorical juggling routinely performed by FIDESZ carries its dangers as rhetoric and style sometimes equal content in diplomacy. It is little surprise that the otherwise pro-American-leaning Orbán government, near the end of its term, found itself falling out of grace of the U.S. administration.

At another level party politics may still exert some influence on security and foreign policy issues. Although 14 years of political history of the Third Republic does not allow us to speak of strong political traditions, one clear tendency has emerged. During coalition negotiations, the major government party strives to retain monopoly over the portfolios relating directly to military, security and foreign affairs. With one exception, this was always achieved. In the 1998-2002 centre-right government the minister of defense, János Szabó, was a member of the minor coalition partner, the Smallholders Party (FGKP). His less-than-professional conduct in the office proved a headache for the then-prime minister, Viktor Orbán, particularly because Hungary was about to join NATO. Given this experience, it is quite unlikely that the dominant coalition party will in the future trade away control over national security portfolios, at least in the next few elections. The tendency toward an effective two-party system (with the share of the smaller parties' seats in the parliament falling constantly) in itself works against the Szabó scenario; defense and foreign affairs will most likely go to seasoned politicians of the major governing parties.

The general absence of checks and balances in national security decision-making also creates conditions for ill-advised policies to persist and flourish. Critics of the Medgyessy government pointed to the lack of outside political input as the possible reason for the Hungarian government's decision to support the Polish stance on voting rights in the European Convention talks. In exchange, Poland promised to support the Hungarian request for a clause on minority rights to be included in the European Constitution. This attempt at packaging two issues with a minimal chance of winning a majority could at best

be read as “intransigence” by some in the core – and it may not be the ideal policy for a country of Hungary’s size.¹²

Though the security consensus at critical times proves to be more tenuous than it might appear at first glance, the odds are that the next government of Hungary will share the general strategic outlook and the foreign policy priorities of the previous governments, regardless of who forms the government in 2006. Hungary will remain a “reflex Atlanticist” with no particular enthusiasm towards the second pillar of European integration, but will participate in its development as long as it does not force a choice between her European and Atlantic commitments.

¹² *Felebarátok közt* [Among half-friends]. HVG, 2003, Vol. 25, No. 48.

Zdeněk Kříž

COMPARISON OF CZECH AND EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGIES

The security strategy of the Czech Republic is in somewhat of a flux. Following the adoption of the first strategy in 1999 and its subsequent 2001 update, a new, third round of discussions on security policy is currently under way, involving the full panoply of government institutions and the larger security community. In December 2003, this debate yielded an amended *Security Strategy*.

The key theme of the changes is a wider concept of security that goes beyond the narrow horizons of the realist and liberal-idealist security concepts. The military aspect of security represents only one level of analysis (and *not* the most important one); security is considered in all its possible dimensions. The strategy is also broader in a territorial sense: it dwells considerably on the country's interaction with the outside world both as a source of security (through alliances with the European Union and NATO) and as a potential vulnerability (due to transnational threats). "Security of the Czech Republic is indivisible from the security in [the] Euro-Atlantic area and from global security situations," the authors concluded.¹

Much as the European Union's 2003 document – *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy* – the Czech security strategy paints a picture of a generally favorable security environment; one devoid of the threat of massive conventional military aggression. However, both documents agree that the situation may be changing for the worse. New threats are emerging, of which "the most frightening scenario is one in which terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction," warns the *European Security Strategy*.² The Czech perspective on this particular problem is very similar. Both documents see the greatest threat in the amalgam of international terrorism (often inspired by religious radicalism), organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and of their delivery vehicles, as well as the increased availability of related technologies.

¹ *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic*. Prague, Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic 2003, p. 5.

² *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*. Brussels, Council of the European Union 2003, p. 4.

Both the Czech Republic and the European Union are also concerned with real or potential regional conflicts. Both entities put emphasis on the Balkans, the Middle East, the Mediterranean and the Caucasus, while also identifying as serious security threats the growing gap between the South and North, state failure, organized crime, drug trafficking and global climate changes.

AIMS OF SECURITY POLICY

The security aims, even though essentially similar, are defined in different ways. For obvious reasons, the Czech security strategy defines very specific goals whereas the *European Security Strategy* is formulated in more general terms. Nevertheless, the specific goals of the Czech security policy are broadly consistent with the more general priorities of the European Union, with a few key exceptions.

Effective Multilateralism

The key potential area of disagreement concerns the importance of multilateral institutions. The *European Security Strategy* holds that: “In a world of global threats, global markets and global media, our security and prosperity increasingly depend on an effective multilateral system. The development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and rule-based international order is [the EU] objective.”³ On a general level, Prague subscribes to the thesis because it is undeniably true and it holds for the Czech security policy as much as for the security policy of any other country. But in practice, there may well be a difference in emphasis between “effective” and “multilateral.” Should multilateralism become the norm at all costs, irrespective of its effectiveness, the Czech Republic would likely dissent. This does not rule out the possibility that a future EU consensus on the principles of multilateral yet effective security will emerge, to which the Czech Republic would happily subscribe. But it must not be based on uncritical preference for multilateralism as a policy opposing the perceived U.S. unilateralism.

North-South Divide

Unlike the European Union, the Czech Republic does not regard the reduction of the economic and social imbalances between the North and the South as its primary strategic interest; it is merely considered in the ‘other important’

³ *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, p. 9.

category. This will undoubtedly affect the Czech commitment to any future poverty reduction programs by the European Union.

The *European Security Strategy* holds that uneven distribution of wealth between the North and the South raises the risks of failing states. As such it is a security problem, which the European Union proposes to address through a variety of means including economic assistance. Should the richer EU countries agree to provide a robust development program to the Third World, the Czech Republic is unlikely to contribute substantially to that effort. To Prague, the country's own – by no means small – economic, social and ecological problems come first. Both the political elite and the population at large tend to base their perception of their standards of living on those of their rich neighbors, not those of the developing countries. Not surprisingly, they find their situation rather unsatisfactory, even though the Czechs are rich by any true global standard. Consequently, the problems of developing countries – even when put in the context of crisis prevention – are not in the center of attention of the Czech security policy. Nor are the political groupings traditionally most in favor of redistribution of wealth, such as the Greens, particularly influential in the Czech Republic.

Any future EU program involving liberalization of the market for agricultural products would be greeted with equal skepticism in the Czech Republic. The Czech agriculture industry is as subsidy-dependent as that of its EU counterparts, and the agricultural lobby's influence in Prague is relatively strong.

U.S. Role in European Security

The centrality of the transatlantic security link is – with the exception of the extreme and radical left – an article of faith on the Czech political scene. The *European Security Strategy*, too, stresses its importance, but the exact interpretation of these paragraphs remains an open question. The views of individual EU members on the vitality of security cooperation with the United States clearly differ. Steps taken by France and Germany, in particular, seem inconsistent with their stated desire to maintain close transatlantic links. Their policy towards Iraq, the creation of EU military structures duplicating NATO capabilities, and the French call for the lifting of the arms embargo on China come to mind. Should that interpretation prove correct, and should any coalition of EU members attempt to weaken the transatlantic security link, such policy would be considered by the Czech Republic as incompatible with its strategic interests.

Missile Defense

The Czech Republic views missile defense as an important part of its drive to reduce the risk of a WMD attack on its territory. This is the context in which the authors of the Czech security strategy wrote: “In view of the continued proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technologies, and since some countries refuse to honor their international commitments [not to proliferate WMD], the government of the Czech Republic will seek to create conditions that will enable [it] to join projects or systems capable of securing the defense of its territory.”⁴ The *European Security Strategy* stays clear of the question of missile defense altogether, with a number of influential European countries known to oppose it. In the Czech Republic, on the contrary, its deployment is opposed only by the extreme left represented by the Communist Party, the environmental left with the Green Party in the forefront, and the leftmost part of the Social Democratic Party. Most of the Social Democrats, Christian Democratic Party–Czech People’s Party, and Liberty Union view missile defense as a part of the defensive system needed to eliminate the threat of a WMD attack. The Civic Democratic Party – the strongest opposition party – supports the program quite openly.⁵

With participation in the U.S. missile defense program supported by most of the Czech political spectrum, Prague will likely defend the concept in any future discussions within the European Union, thus shifting the EU center of gravity toward support of the project.

IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY STRATEGIES

UN and the Use of Force

While the amended *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic* (2003) speaks of the use of force in agreement with the principles of the *UN Charter*, it creates a potential tension with the very system by stating: “The Czech Republic is also ready to take part in enforcement operations undertaken by the international community aimed at the prevention of large scale violation of human rights, genocide in particular. Such enforcement operations should have the widest

⁴ *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic*, p. 12.

⁵ Press briefing of the Civic Democratic Party, May 4, 2001, and Nečas, P.: *Naše podpora protiraketové obraně. Mezi námi* [Our support for the missile defense. Among us]. June 27, 2001; <http://www.ods.cz>.

possible international support, including the UN Security Council mandate.”⁶ Importantly, the document speaks of actions ‘of the international community,’ not of the UN *per se*. It also states that use of force *should* have a Security Council mandate rather than explicitly requiring such approval.

The use of the conditional opens the door to the possibility of a multinational military operation without the Security Council authorization, provided the aim of the operation is the protection of human rights. This interpretation also dictates that Prague maintain a certain maneuvering room lest its future actions be blocked by countries who have considerable human rights problems at home (this applies mainly to China’s overall domestic policy and Russian actions in Chechnya). However, from the practical point of view, Czech participation in a military operation conducted without a UN mandate might be a hard sell domestically. The public sentiment on Kosovo, in 1999, and Iraq, in 2003, spoke clearly in favor of a UN approval.

Areas of Interest

Naturally, the Czech Republic views security in more local terms than the European Union. Prague is realistic about its capacity to exert influence in the international arena, and it also has the good fortune of being surrounded by stable and prosperous countries. Nevertheless, the current Czech security strategy – and, even more so, its actual policies – lean heavily in the direction of EU’s global understanding of security as articulated in the 2003 Solana paper: “With the new threats, the first line of defense will often be abroad. The new threats are dynamic... This implies that we should be ready to act before a crisis occurs. Conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early.”⁷

Prague has been actively engaged, both militarily and through civilian presence, in a number of global hotspots (Kuwait, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq). An important section of the Czech political elite is aware of the need to address global problems which, though not posing an immediate threat to the security of the Czech Republic, could potentially threaten it.

Nevertheless, the need for global action is far from universally welcome in the Czech Republic. This holds not only for the population at large, but also for a part of the political elite across the entire spectrum of ideological orientation. A number of key politicians find the current level of engagement too ambitious

⁶ *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic*, p. 12.

⁷ *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, p 7.

for the country's economic and military capacity and out of proportion to the Czech ability to influence the international order. The Communist Party and the left wing of the Social Democratic Party prefer an essentially buck-passing strategy of leaving the responsibility to bigger and more influential states. Given the attitudes among the elites – and the skepticism with which the Czech public views all government policies – the future may bring problems. The government may find it difficult to justify future expansion of the Czech Republic's engagement in international operations, no matter whether authorized by the EU or NATO. Only 48% of Czechs supported their country's participation in the Iraq war, compared to 52% who were against it. The active military participation of the Czech Republic in the fight against terror was supported by only 51%, with 49% opposed.⁸

NATO-EU Relations

The Czech Republic wants to contribute to the development of NATO capabilities and to its adaptation to the new security environment. With respect to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), there is a consensus across the Czech political spectrum, with the exception of extreme left, that the European Union should remain in a close consultative, if not cooperative, relationship with NATO.⁹ “The Czech Republic supports the building of capabilities within ESDP with the possibility of conducting peace and security support operations making use of NATO capabilities... [S]uch operations, if the need arises, should be decided upon on the basis of the consultations mechanism agreed by NATO and the European Union.”¹⁰

In practical terms, the preference for a close EU-NATO relationship translates to Czech support for strengthening the transatlantic security link, for complementary development of EU and NATO military capabilities, and for maximum cooperation between the two organizations. This policy in itself is not incompatible with a strong EU security policy, depending on the exact political strategy and methods in areas of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and ESDP proposed by other EU members. Some steps taken by France and Germany, in particular, could be interpreted as a message that their long-term strategic vision does not include a close transatlantic link. Examples

⁸ Jandová, J. – Pavlíková, E.: *Veřejné mínění o armádě ČR* [Public Opinion on the Army]. Prague, Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, June 2003, p. 36.

⁹ See *The Manifesto of Czech Eurorealism* – document from the Civic Democratic Party conference on party principles and ideology, April 21, 2001.

¹⁰ *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic*, p. 11.

include the creation of EU military structures duplicating NATO capabilities as well as the countries' stance during the 2003 war in Iraq. Czech differences with some of the established EU member states on the subject of relations with NATO thus mirror similar divisions on the importance of the United States to European security, as described above.

The reform of the Czech Armed Forces, currently underway, is also predominantly shaped by NATO requirements. The transformation effort aims at improving the capacity to contribute to crisis resolution operations while retaining the capability for both individual and collective defense. Because Prague continues to regard the North Atlantic Alliance as the basic pillar of the defense of the Czech Republic, it also builds its forces around existing allied capabilities and needs.¹¹ By the time the reform is complete, the Czech Armed Forces should be capable of:

1. deploying all its forces in an operation of collective defense by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty;
2. deploying up to 3,000 troops for the period of six months without rotation in one peace enforcement operation;
3. deploying up to 1,000 troops for the period of six months with rotation in one peace support or peacekeeping operation, while keeping 250 troops for the purpose of a simultaneous operation for the period of six months without rotation.

At the same time, in parallel with any of the above variants, the Czech Armed Forces must be able to assure the protection of important objects, and, if the need arises, to receive NATO reinforcements in the territory of the Czech Republic and to participate in NATINEADS (NATO Integrated Extended Air Defense System).¹²

In practice, the defense reforms mean a transition to a fully professionalized military (by Jan. 1, 2005), and its gradual modernization. The Air Force is being overhauled with the planned purchase of 14 modern supersonic aircraft (JAS 39 Gripen seems the likely winner), and the ground forces will be equipped with new armored personnel carriers or combat infantry vehicles.

The Czech defense reforms broadly follow the pattern of modernization underway in the majority of other European countries, and are in harmony with the *European Security Strategy*. But the objectives of the reform may yet be jeop-

¹¹ *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic*, p. 13.

¹² *Koncepce výstavby profesionální Armády České republiky a mobilizace ozbrojených sil České republiky připravená na změněný zdrojový rámec*. A-report 24/2003, pp. 6-7.

ardized if Prague cuts defense spending in its attempts to reduce the budget deficit. Czech military expenditures after the last reduction in 2003 currently stand at around 1.9% of GDP and the number could be lowered again. There is a parallel and separate source of pressure on the military reforms. The country's president, Václav Klaus, clearly puts more emphasis on territorial defense rather than improving the capabilities of Czech forces to participate international operations.¹³ His first priority is the national sovereignty of the Czech Republic, which, in the president's view, requires armed forces capable of defending the Czech territory. Klaus views crisis operations abroad as secondary in importance and advocates a vision of reforms that accentuate the task of territorial defense. Nevertheless, his ability to influence the process is fairly limited, and the eventual shape of the Armed Forces will be mainly determined by the government's ability to persuade the parliament about their merits.

CONCLUSIONS

In general, the Czech security vision is compatible with the security philosophy emerging in the European Union. There are no inherent reasons why the Czech Republic's accession to CFSP and ESDP should be problematic although, it must be said, the EU common foreign and defense policies are vague and wide enough to accommodate many different viewpoints. Their eventual implementation may yet turn out to be divisive, with the most likely sticking points revolving around the European Union's strategic partnership with NATO.

Since there is basically a consensus among all the main Czech political parties (with the exception of the Communist Party and Green Party) on the majority of security issues in the Czech Republic, a radical change in priorities is highly unlikely in the short term. Moreover, foreign and defense policies rarely dominate electoral contests in the Czech Republic, no matter how lively they might be discussed in some of the pre-electoral debates.

The key to the successful creation of true common foreign and security policy lies with the established member states as much as the Czech Republic itself. There is a clear tendency among some of the key actors, specifically France and Germany, to present their particular interests as European interests in general, without first discussing them with the other EU members and without trying to determine the common European interest on the basis of this discussion. Neither size nor past contributions to the process of European integration can

¹³ Speech of the President of the Czech Republic Václav Klaus on November 4, 2003.

justify that style of policy. It would also be wrong to believe that the new EU countries will not want to make a better use of their EU membership than obedient silence. Their own security will greatly depend on the successes and failures of ESDP (and their impact on NATO), and besides, they had to be silent long enough during the Cold War.

Barbora Gábelová – Juraj Marušiak

FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY PRIORITIES OF POLAND

The largest country among the Visegrad Four, Poland, stands out for both its size and its policies. Like its neighbors, Warsaw envisions the European Union cooperating with NATO on defense. Poland is also arguably the most forthright advocate of a continued robust U.S. military presence in Europe. An active member of NATO since 1999, it has taken a rather reserved view of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP).

Current Polish views are a product of the country's historical experience. The German-Russian rivalry produced three separate divisions of Poland in the 18th century, followed by yet another breakup under German and Soviet pressure in 1939. By the end of the 1930s, wrote Polish diplomat and political analyst, Adolf Maria Bocheński, Poland came to view its security goals in classic balance-of-power terms: prevent Germany and Russia from developing better relations with each other than those between Poland and either one of the two countries.¹ If Poland had to live with a potentially hostile empire on its borders, it would counter that threat by forging an alliance with another strong neighboring country.

By the beginning of the 21st century, the nature of the international system around Poland changed, and the emergence of a Western community – in the form of the European Union and NATO – offered an alternative to balancing: integration. “Too weak to be a geostrategic player [Poland] is left with only one viable option: to integrate itself into Western Europe,” wrote U.S. political scientist of Polish descent, Zbigniew Brzezinski.² “[The] geopolitical situation of the Polish Republic is highly favorable in the 21st century; we can go as far as stating that it has never before been so favorable,”³ he added.

¹ *Polska idea imperialna [Polish Imperial Ideai]*. In: *Naród – państwo – władza [Nation – State – Government]*. Krakow, Aurens 1996, p. 104. See Bocheński, Adolf Maria: *O ustroju i racji stanu Rzeczypospolitej*. Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe 2000, p. 19.

² Brzezinski, Zbigniew: *Velká šachovnice [The Grand Chessboard]*. Prague, Mladá fronta 1999, p. 50.

³ Bernatowicz, Grażyna: *Priorytety polskiej polityki zagranicznej [Priorities of the Polish Foreign Policy]*; <http://msz.gov.pl/polzagr/priorytety.html>, January 1999. In this case we have to be careful to differentiate between the terms geopolitical position that is determined by the country's location and the geopolitical situation that is determined by a given international situation, as in a given region.

This newfound stability allowed Poland to begin exporting security to areas around its borders. Former minister of foreign affairs, Bronisław Geremek, stated: "Poland is not a big country, but it is not small ... As a member of big structures – European and Euro-Atlantic ones – Poland can play the role of a country implementing its sense of responsibility for the region of Central Europe."⁴ This has been particularly true since 1999 when Poland became a full-fledged NATO member. Warsaw began actively supporting independence and pro-Western orientation in the former Soviet republics east of its border, with an eye on their eventual inclusion in the European Union and NATO. Warsaw clearly sees the Euro-Atlantic integration of its neighbors as the most effective tool in improving the region's – and by extension, Poland's – security.

EUROPEAN DIMENSION OF POLISH SECURITY POLICY: WEIMAR TRIANGLE

The U.S.-centric image of Poland is not fully accurate; an important portion of the country's diplomatic efforts went into forging ties with European powers. Along with Germany and France, Poland is a member of the informal Weimar Triangle (W3).⁵ Since 1991, the three countries have held regular high-level consultations aimed at improving German-Polish relations, reinforcing Germany's establishment in Euro-Atlantic structures and Poland's integration into the European Union. For Poland, membership in the W3 represented an affirmation of its status as a leader of "new democracies" in Central and Eastern Europe.

After the first two trilateral meeting of defense ministers of Germany, Poland and France held on March 3, 1994 in Paris and on July 18-19 in Warsaw, respectively, the cooperation has started to take on a defense dimension. German Minister of Defense Volker Rühe and his French counterpart, François Leotard, backed the Polish bid for inclusion in NATO and endorsed Warsaw's

⁴ Geremek, Bronisław: *Euroatlantická solidarita [Euro-Atlantic Solidarity]* Mezinárodní politika 5/1999, p. 6.

⁵ The group was named after the German location of the first meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of Poland, France, and Germany on August 28-29, 1991. Polish minister of foreign affairs K. Skubiszewski has characterized the meeting as "the beginning of cooperation focusing on strategic issues with a great meaning for European politics. The model of the Weimar Triangle, if we succeed in maintaining it into the future, could play an important role in strengthening Poland's position in Europe." See *Współpraca polityczna i wojskowa Polski, Francji i Niemiec w ramach Trójkąta Weimarskiego [Political and Military Cooperation of Poland, France and Germany within the Weimar Triangle]*. Przegląd Środkowoeuropejski, No. 20-21, February 1998; <http://www.medi-anet.pl/ceurorev>.

call for membership to be opened to all countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The three countries also regularly consulted on military doctrines and security issues, organizing, among other things, joint military exercises at the staff and unit level. Despite an agreement to hold ministerial meetings on a yearly basis, the next session did not take place until February 1997 in Frankfurt. Rühe and the new French minister of defense, Charles Million, presented the Polish defense minister, Stanisław Dobrzański, with an offer to strengthen Poland's role in the European defense industry. Importantly, Germany and France also made a guarantee to Poland that in the course of NATO-Russian negotiations, no decision would be made that would encroach on Poland's sovereignty.

But as Poland's accession to NATO neared, cooperation within the Weimar Triangle gave way to intensifying cooperation with the United States. At the same time, trilateral cooperation with Germany and Denmark also emerged.⁶ The original expectations for the W3 were high. Polish Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek once dubbed it "the backbone of Europe;"⁷ Brzezinski described the Triangle as "a potentially significant geopolitical line comprising of three states and 180 million people with a highly cultivated sense of national identity."⁸ Brzezinski also predicted that the geopolitical interest of Poland and Germany in preserving Ukraine's independence – which also had the support of the United States – would lead to a gradual Ukrainian integration into the special French-German-Polish relationship.⁹

However, Polish expectations and reality on the ground began to diverge. Towards the end of the 1990s, after meetings between German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and, later, French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, with representatives of the Visegrad 4 countries, cooperation within the W3 began to stagnate. Poland expected faster integration into the European Union than France and Germany were willing to offer while other disagreements, over institutional reform and EU Common Agricultural Policy, caused additional rifts in the relationship. Yet another reason for stagnation was Poland's insistence that EU security and defense policy be enacted in close cooperation with the United States, which was met with reservations from Paris and Berlin. The disagreements were heightened further still by the Iraq crisis. Subsequent meetings of

⁶ *Współpraca polityczna i wojskowa Polski, Francji i Niemiec w ramach Trójkąta Weimarskiego* [Political and Military Cooperation of Poland, France and Germany within the Weimar Triangle]. Przegląd Środkowoeuropejski, No. 20-21, February 1998; <http://www.medianet.pl/ceurorev>.

⁷ Buzek, Jerzy: *Tekst exposé prezesa Rady Ministrów Jerzego Buzka wygłoszonego w Sejmie RP 10 listopada 1997 r.* [Transcript of a Speech by Jerzy Buzek in Sejm on November 10, 1997]. Warsaw, Sejm RP 1997.

⁸ Brzezinski: *Velká šachovnice* [The Grand Chessboard], p. 76.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 90–91.

the W3 – whether between heads of state in Wrocław (May 9, 2003) or foreign ministers in Berlin (January 16, 2004) – failed to revive cooperation.¹⁰ In a highly publicized move, Poland sided with Spain against France and Germany in opposing the redistribution of voting power in the new EU Constitutional Treaty, leading to the collapse of the December 2003 Brussels summit. W3, as a forum for consultations, was not effective in diffusing the crisis; the Irish presidency has played a far more important role in reaching an eventual compromise. Increasingly, questions surround the future and utility of the Weimar Triangle.¹¹ The hopes and expectations Poland vested in it at the beginning of the 1990s have not been fulfilled.

DIVIDED BY VIEW OF THE THREATS

The deeper reasons for the failure of the 'European' option, as represented by the Weimar Triangle, also help explain the overall tension in Poland's relations with France and Germany over ESDP. A key to understanding the Polish position rests with the country's emphasis on conventional security threats. The majority of Polish political and military elites remain unified in emphasizing territorial defense against a direct armed attack.¹²

Given Poland's defense priorities, it is not surprising that NATO is considered the main pillar of Polish security (the second pillar being ESDP). The collective security guarantee offered by the alliance serves as a "safeguard... against the likelihood of direct threats,"¹³ stated the July 2003 *National Security Strategy*. "For Poland, NATO is the key platform for multilateral and bilateral collaboration within the scope of security and defense preparedness and the main pillar of politico-military stability on the continent."¹⁴

The emphasis on collective defense and on hard security guarantees inevitably colors the Polish view of common EU defense and security policy. During a visit to Moscow in February 2001, Poland's former minister of foreign affairs, Władysław Bartoszewski, summed up the Polish position towards the ESDP in

¹⁰ Jędruszczak, Piotr: *Reanimacja Trójkąta Weimarskiego* [Revival of the Weimar Triangle]. Rzeczpospolita, January 16, 2004; Jędruszczak, Piotr: *Cudu nie było. Trójkąt Weimarski o traktacie konstytucyjnym* [Without Shame. The Weimar Triangle on the EU Constitution]. Rzeczpospolita, January 17, 2004.

¹¹ Reiter, Janusz – Cichocki, Marek A.: *Trójkąt Weimarski. Usuwanie przeszkód* [The Weimar Triangle. Removing the Barriers]. Rzeczpospolita, May 29, 2004.

¹² <http://www.wp.mil.pl/start.php?page=1011200001>.

¹³ *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland*. Warsaw, Ministry of Defence of Poland, July 22, 2003; <http://www.wp.mil.pl/start.php?page=1010302000>.

¹⁴ *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland*.

following terms: "As a European country we recognize the need for development of the European defense and political identity; as a NATO state with a burden of a certain historic experience we shall strive for the preservation of the alliance's full potential."¹⁵ European defense efforts, with their focus on lower-intensity missions, tend to be viewed by Warsaw as secondary to NATO. "Numerous Polish military authorities and politicians alike are quite often not able, or simply not willing, to see the difference between ESDP and ESDI [European Security and Defense Initiative], which is essentially about strengthening the European pillar of NATO, not creating independent European capabilities – as if nothing has changed within the EU during the last few years."¹⁶

The emphasis on conventional threats, however, is coming under increasing scrutiny. The Polish *National Security Strategy* emphasizes new threats to the country's security such as "organized international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), unpredictable policies of authoritarian regimes, and ... failed states."¹⁷ In response to the events of September 11, 2001, the document concludes that Poland is under direct threat from unconventional threats and thus, "the changes in our security environment essentially consist of a shift of emphasis away from the classical risks (armed invasion) that decrease in importance and toward the unconventional risks that originate with hardly identifiable, non-state entities."¹⁸

Poland's security situation also improved with the second round of NATO enlargement in April 2004, which brought the Baltic states (Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia) and Slovakia into the alliance. The expansion left Poland surrounded on most sides by allied states, decreasing the likelihood of a conventional threat. Moreover, NATO is increasingly more focused on new challenges such as WMD and terrorism, prompting one observer to note that, "Poland would very much prefer to be in the 'old' NATO rather than in the 'new' one."¹⁹ Whether out of conviction or necessity, Warsaw has strongly supported NATO's adaptation to new threats, including new missions, capabilities, and out-of-area operations. "Poland shall continue to act in support of NATO's cohesion, including the congruence of allied interests on the international scene, elimi-

¹⁵ Quoted in Bilčík, Vladimír: *ESDP and the Security Policy Priorities and Perspectives of Central European EU Candidates States*. In: Krause, Joachim (ed.): *Unravelling the European Security and Defence Policy Conundrum*. Lang, 2003, p. 133.

¹⁶ Trzaskowski, Rafał: *From candidate to member state: Poland and the future of the EU*. Occasional Papers no. 37. Paris, Institute for Security Studies September 2002, p. 34.

¹⁷ *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland*.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Trzaskowski: *From candidate to member state: Poland and the future of the EU*, p. 35.

nation of the technology gaps between allied military assets and capabilities, increased European access to NATO's operational and defense capabilities and the American know-how."²⁰

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES

Aside from membership in NATO, Polish defense and security policy rests on the partnership with the United States. In the early 1990s, Poland sought to position itself as key U.S. ally in Central and Eastern Europe. The importance of the U.S. relationship is also highlighted in the *Polish National Security Strategy*: "...[T]he American presence, including military, in Europe is [necessary] in order to continue strengthening the sense of security within the transatlantic and European dimension ... Our bilateral relationship with the United States also represents an essential link of the transatlantic relationship."²¹

The ties have been tested by – and survived – the 2002-2003 Iraq crisis. Together with its neighbors, the Czech Republic and Hungary, Warsaw signed the so-called *Letter of Eight* expressing support for Washington's Iraq policy. Poland has since re-affirmed its previous position and, unlike for example Hungary, did not make any attempt to tone down the letter's impact by adding diplomatic caveats. Polish troops eventually took part in the actual combat operations.

At the same time, Poland dismissed the April 2003 quadrilateral mini-summit of Germany, Belgium, France and Luxembourg as an attempt to undermine NATO. Furthermore, during the EU Constitutional Treaty negotiations, Poland opposed proposals to create an EU common defense guarantee, for fear of weakening the alliance.²² Warsaw clearly lacks faith in the capacity of Europe to provide for its members' defense, and Poland's tough stance on defense also plays into its image as a regional force. U.S. power, a source of tension in many EU countries, sits well with Warsaw. "[R]econciled with the notion that they are unable to provide for their own security, [Poland and its neighbors] accept a hegemonic international system, so long as the hegemon is not a nearby state."²³

²⁰ *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Sprawozdanie z realizacji zadań polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2003 roku [Report on the Activities of Foreign Policy in 2003].* Warsaw, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 21, 2004; <http://www.msz.gov.pl>.

²³ Zaborowski, Marcin – Longhurst, Kerry: *Poland and Transatlantic Security.* *Medzinárodné otázky*, 2/2004.

Poland and the United States share history and culture;²⁴ but also skepticism toward multilateralism, disposition toward proactive engagement during regional instabilities, and the desire for a missile defense system.

Personal preferences also favor close ties to Washington. A poll conducted in July 2002 showed President George W. Bush as the “most liked” foreign politician in the country.²⁵ The sentiment is reciprocated. During Alexander Kwaśniewski’s visit to Washington, Bush remarked that he “does not have a better friend in Europe.”²⁶ The friendship has already brought tangible pay-offs. In December 2002 Poland rejected French and Swedish bids and instead chose Lockheed Martin’s F-16C/D to satisfy the country’s requirement for 48 supersonic fighters. The Polish government stated that American F-16s were chosen for economic reasons (aided by a significant financing package from the U.S. government) but political considerations played an important role, too. The government in Warsaw wanted to show gratitude to the Americans for supporting Poland’s NATO bid and also wanted to avoid undermining the second wave of NATO enlargement.

At the same time, the Iraq war pointed up the limits of the Polish-U.S. relationship. Warsaw supported the war, and it commands one of the three military sectors, south of Baghdad. Yet unlike the conflicts in Kosovo and Afghanistan, the strike against Iraq did not enjoy unequivocal support of Polish public opinion. “In the Polish debate, the opponents of the Polish involvement in Iraq often pointed to the danger of Poland’s foreign policy being completely blocked, which would make it impossible to pursue other objectives of crucial importance to the country, most importantly Poland’s eastern policy.”²⁷

Regarding missile defense, Warsaw moved from silence to Kwaśniewski’s public declaration of support during Bush’s visit to Warsaw in June 2001. Poland was initially cautious, reluctant to engage in a discussion between the United States and Russia that it was unable to influence. “Privately, Polish politicians were largely skeptical about Washington’s initiative, arguing that it could lead to the decoupling of the United States from Europe and that it

²⁴ Similarities of views are also illustrated by the fact that: “Officers of the Polish army... did not choose to go to the geographically close France to defend the French Revolution there, but to the distant United States to defend the achievements of the American Revolution.” See *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *A Coalition of the Moral*. The Wall Street Journal Europe, February 6, 2003.

²⁷ Cichocki, Marek A.: *An Old or a New Europe? A Sketch on the Philosophy Underlying Polish Policy in Europe*. Reports & Analyses 12/03/A, 2003, p. 19.

would be detrimental to Poland's eastern policy."²⁸ Publicly, however, few spoke up. "[N]one of these concerns were officially voiced, which is probably unsurprising given that the overwhelming view in Warsaw was that Poland should do nothing that could be interpreted by Washington as 'uncooperative behavior.'"²⁹

Shortly before Bush's visit to Warsaw in 2001, the Polish chief of staff, Gen. Piatas told his NATO colleagues that Poland was ready to offer its territory and some degree of financing for the installation of missile defense radar and launch pads. This was confirmed by the then-defense minister, Bronislaw Komorowski, who pointed out that owing to its geographical position, Poland was ideally placed to become part of the system. Both stressed that missile defense components on Polish territory would not only serve to enhance the country's security but they would also strengthen Warsaw's political importance within NATO. Although this position was subsequently watered down by the Polish foreign ministry – traditionally less Atlanticist than the defense ministry – Poland officially endorsed the program during the Brussels summit of NATO in June 2001, with Kwaśniewski confirming support during Bush's subsequent visit to Warsaw.³⁰

While Poland's geopolitical outlook favors close links to Washington under most circumstances, the perceived lack of interest in Eastern Europe by the European Union also played a part in the relationship. The European Union was a less-than-enthusiastic proponent of enlargement in the mid-to late-1990s, leaving the Visegrad 4 countries without a clear membership perspective for a number of years. Brussels is arguably even more skeptical now about further enlargement to the East, much to the dismay of Warsaw, which made the integration of Ukraine and Belarus a high priority. "What has probably influenced [Warsaw's] calculations is the actual lack of any concrete political offer for the new members on the part of the old EU members, which only adds to the lack of faith of the former in EU political power."³¹

POLAND ON ESDP AND CFSP

Poland's positions on CFSP and ESDP must be viewed through different lenses. Warsaw has few reservations about EU foreign and security policy, if only because Brussels has difficulties formulating an effective and coherent one.

²⁸ Zaborowski, Marcin – Longhurst, Kerry: *Poland's Instinctive Atlanticism*. International Affairs, Vol. 79, No. 5, October 2003, p. 1015.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 1016.

³¹ Cichocki: *An Old or a New Europe? A Sketch on the Philosophy Underlying Polish Policy in Europe*, p. 16.

Compliance with CFSP provisions requires no extra financial or institutional resources; nor does foreign policy cooperation necessitate major changes to domestic legislation and institutions. In general, Poland shares virtually all EU foreign policy priorities, subscribes to all of its demarches, and supports all of common positions when invited. Tellingly, when Poland started negotiations with the European Union in March 1998, it did not request any transitional period or derogation in either CFSP or the external relations chapter, declaring that it would be ready to implement the *acquis communautaire* in both areas on the day of accession. Both chapters were closed early – external relations in November 1999 and CFSP in April 2000.³² A rare exception to the general harmony with EU foreign policy came in 1998, when the European Union asked member states to withdraw their diplomats from Belarus in protest of the government's policies. Poland did not support the EU declaration for fear of further isolating the Minsk government. Finally, after consultation with other EU members, Poland chose to abstain rather than block the vote.³³

In general, the Polish view of CFSP and its applications can best be described as “disinterested support.” Poland is officially for an effective, ambitious and far-reaching European Union – a position which implies the continued strengthening of CFSP – but it offers nothing more specific beyond this general proclamation.³⁴

The only exception is the European Union's future eastern policy, a linchpin in Warsaw's campaign to become a bridge between the European Union and its neighbors. In theory, EU membership provides Poland with an opportunity to punch above its weight when it comes to the integration of Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. The reality so far has brought mixed results. A February 2003 Polish non-paper, containing proposals on the future policy of an enlarged EU toward its eastern neighbors, failed to stir interest among member states.³⁵ Poland did not manage to secure a special status for the three republics. The

³² Trzaskowski, Rafał: *Poland*. In: Missiroli, Antonio. (ed.) *Bigger EU, wider CFSP, stronger ESDP?* Occasional Papers no. 34. Paris, Institute for Security Studies April 2002, p. 19.

³³ *Commission Report on Poland from 2002*. Chapter 27: Common Foreign and Security Policy; www.fifoost.org/polen/EU_Poland_2002/node62.php. Poland's activities in CFSP during 2002 are recounted in Starzyk, Jarosław: *Poland's Cooperation with the European Union within Common Foreign and Security Policy*; www.sprawymiedzynarodowe.pl/yearbook/2003/druk/starzyk.html.

³⁴ “Poland is joining the EU collaborative framework in the area of internal security and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the aims of which include an effective deterrence of existing and potential threats, consolidation of the underlying values of the Union and an influence... on the shape of the international environment, particularly within the immediate neighborhood of the Union.” *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland*.

³⁵ *Non-paper z polskimi propozycjami w sprawie przyszłego kształtu polityki rozszerzonej UE wobec nowych wschodnich sąsiadów* [Polish Non-paper on Future EU Policy Towards its New Eastern Neighbors]. Warsaw, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, January 2003; <http://www.msz.gov.pl>.

European Neighborhood Policy Strategy,³⁶ published by the European Commission in May 2004, does not include a prospect of membership for the countries, sowing skepticism in Warsaw policy circles about the strategy's implementation.³⁷

POLAND AND ESDP

The European Union's defense initiatives have attracted far more attention in Poland than the often esoteric debate about a common foreign and security policy. "Whereas CFSP has so far been largely an exercise in political and bureaucratic integration, the development of ESDP encompasses a bigger array of other tasks," wrote Slovak political analyst, Vladimír Bilčík, adding: "It touches on, and in some ways competes with, other security and defense initiatives and priorities that have shaped the foreign policy goals of post-Communist countries throughout the 1990s. In particular, these include the desire to join NATO – which has been primarily motivated by the guarantees of collective defense – an area not covered by the ESDP."³⁸

Poland and other new member states in general held only a limited domestic debate about ESDP, owing to the general uncertainties over its future development inside the European Union. The existing attention focused on relations between NATO and the EU. Poland's own position on ESDP has undergone considerable evolution. Initial mistrust was fuelled by fears that ESDP would:

1. undermine NATO, which, for the majority of Poles, was seen as the only force able to guarantee security on the European continent;
2. lead to U.S. withdrawal from Europe and a return to the instability which prevailed between the two world wars;³⁹

³⁶ *European Neighborhood Policy Strategy Paper*. Brussels, European Commission, May 12, 2004; http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/strategy/Strategy_Paper_EN.pdf.

³⁷ Pelczyńska-Nałęcz, Katarzyna: *Europejska Polityka Sąsiedztwa: nowy etap w relacjach UE ze Wschodem?* [EU Neighborhood Policy: New Era in EU's Relations Towards the East?]. Warsaw, Center of Eastern Studies, May 20, 2004. See also Pelczyńska-Nałęcz, Katarzyna: *Szansa na Wschodzie* [A Chance on the East]. Rzeczpospolita, July 1, 2004.

³⁸ Bilčík, Vladimír: *ESDP and the Security Policy Priorities and Perspectives of Central European EU Candidates States*. In: Krause, Joachim (ed.): *Unravelling the European Security and Defence Policy Conundrum*. Lang, 2003, pp. 131.

³⁹ The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs W. Cimoszewicz stated at a May 2002 press conference that opting for a U.S. presence in Europe was not only in Polish interest but also in the interest of the European Union as it stabilized the whole of the continent. In this context, it is interesting to quote a leading politician, Jan Maria Rokita, of the main opposition party Civic Platform who has asserted that "in dealings with the United States, Poland should be as European as possible and in contracts with the EU as pro-American as possible. It seems, nevertheless, that the Polish elite is not as yet ready and mature enough to implement such Machiavellian advice." (Trzaskowski: *From candidate to member state: Poland and the future of the EU*, p. 35).

3. allow Russia to gain more influence over European security, if ESDP divided Europe from the United States;
4. lead to duplication and weakening of the alliance structures if European defense capabilities were not built within NATO's European security and defense identity (ESDI);
5. lead to discrimination among EU members themselves and between the member states and non-EU NATO allies.

Although Europe's further clarifications of ESDP ambitions (at the 2000 Feira and Nice summits as well as the Laeken summit in 2001) were met in Warsaw with greater understanding, Poland remains somewhat ambivalent about the exercise. ESDP is still a vaguely defined concept whose eventual shape and implications are an open question. The Polish political elites continue to focus on hard security guarantees, showing limited understanding for soft security measures.⁴⁰ For its part, the Polish military elite harbors doubts over Europe's ability to muster enough political will to develop fully effective independent operational capabilities. NATO membership has also already produced a 'socializing effect,' with the result that Poland puts more trust in the alliance than in the European Union.

Warsaw's greatest concern has always revolved around the potential for ESDP to lead to gradual U.S. disengagement from Europe. To prevent such scenario, Poland has pushed for full coordination between NATO and ESDP systems for operational and strategic force planning. The Polish *National Security Strategy*, while expressing support for EU military and civil emergency capabilities, adds a caveat that they must also constitute Europe's contribution to NATO and make use of NATO resources. "As a member of both organizations, Poland would like to see the growth of their permanent and institutionalized cooperation so as to ensure full complementarity of EU and NATO operations."⁴¹

At the same time, the debate about the European Union's defense role failed to stir much excitement in Poland. Historically, when addressed, it was only done within a comprehensive security debate, with Polish elites primarily focused on defending the country's status as a non-EU NATO member (until May 2004). Poland is sensitive to charges of being a Trojan horse and strives

⁴⁰ "The attention of most politicians dealing with defence focuses on meeting the NATO requirements instead of identifying areas in which Poland could prove its potential. The situation is paradoxical because it is precisely in soft security that the Polish military with its remarkable peacekeeping record could make its greatest contribution to European security." (Trzaskowski: *From candidate to member state: Poland and the future of the EU*, p. 34).

⁴¹ *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland*.

to be seen as a constructive member of the European Union. Therefore, since the day of accession, its rhetoric on questions related to the European Union's global role has been progressively positive.⁴² Generally, Warsaw backs all initiatives aimed at strengthening ESDP as long as they do not lead to the creation of an EU collective defense mechanism and full emancipation from the alliance. Moreover, since the EU summit in Helsinki, Poland has started to show marked interest in the concept of strengthened cooperation in defense industry of European countries.⁴³

POLAND'S SECURITY PRIORITIES IN THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Official support for NATO membership remains constantly high in Poland, irrespective of the party in power. This held true even for governments controlled by the leftist Union of Democratic Left (SLD), despite voices on the fringes of the party calling for the dissolution of NATO and its replacement by OSCE. Alliance membership has traditionally enjoyed high support among the Polish public and since the 1992, it never declined below 75% (in 1997, the support exceeded 90%). Reservations regarding Poland's membership in NATO were voiced only by the nationally-oriented Confederation for Independent Poland (KPN) and a part of the agrarian Polish People's Party (PSL). Before the 1995 presidential elections, the then-candidate Kwaśniewski (SLD) hinted at the possibility of a referendum on NATO membership but changed his mind when opinion polls and consensus among the majority of relevant political parties rendered the plebiscite irrelevant.⁴⁴

⁴² In his speech in May 2001, Polish foreign minister W. Bartoszewski called for Poland's active engagement in European security, arguing that failing to do so had cost Poland dearly in the past. He also denied that Warsaw's approach to the ESDP has been skeptical. Subsequently, however, Bartoszewski recalled the well-known catalogue of postulates, arguing that the word "defense" should be dropped from ESDP, that the policy should complement but never duplicate NATO that all non-EU European NATO members should be fully integrated in ESDP structures and that EU member states should concentrate on enhancing their military capabilities. The speech was about as pro-ESDP as one hears from top Polish officials. See Zaborowski, Marcin – Longhurst, Kerry: *Poland's Instinctive Atlanticism*. International Affairs, Vol. 79, No. 5, October 2003, p. 1019. See also Khol, Radek: *Policies of the Visegrad Countries Towards CFSP/ESDP*. Working Paper 3/2003. Prague, Institute of international studies 2003.

⁴³ Starzyk, Joanna: *Wspólna polityka zagraniczna i bezpieczeństwa Unii Europejskiej* [Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union]. Warsaw, Institute of International Studies of the Warsaw University 2003, p. 332.

⁴⁴ Kopeček, Lubomír: *Polská republika*. In: Dančák, Břetislav (ed.): *Integrační procesy ve středoevropském prostoru II*. [Integration Processes in Central Europe II.]. Brno, Masaryk's University 1999, p. 173.

Poland's foreign policy orientation – particularly its security dimension – only truly entered into open discourse in 2002, with the Iraq war looming on the horizon. The public was less skeptical than in other parts of Europe but a 60% majority opposed Polish involvement in the conflict nevertheless. The views shifted somewhat after Poland entered the war on the side of the United States, deepening the split within society. On one hand, a majority believed that participation in the war would strengthen the country's international position (59% of respondents), but this did not prevent half of the respondents from worrying that Poland may be too weak to play a decisive role in the international arena.⁴⁵ The share of those who were opposed to Polish military presence in Iraq remained relatively stable – rising from 53% in July 2003 to 57% in October of the same year, while 37% of the respondents in October expressed their support for Polish units staying in Iraq.⁴⁶ Two opposition parties protested Polish involvement in the conflict: the populist Self-defense (Samoobrona) and League of Polish Families (Liga Polskiech Rodzin).

Some reservations also came from the ruling SLD. In 2002, a state secretary for foreign policy in the office of the prime minister hinted at the need to contain the United States, saying that “cooperation with the United States has to be such that it objectively would not lead the superpower to engage in unilateral acts.”⁴⁷ Four senators from SLD and its coalition partner, Social-Democratic Union of Labor, issued an appeal on March 18, 2004 to withdraw Polish troops from Iraq.⁴⁸ Their main arguments focused on the economic costs of the engagement to Poland, and on the threat of retaliatory domestic terrorist attacks. Opponents of the war also tend to play down the Polish contribution, pointing out that the Polish military was not capable of providing for security of its soldiers without allied help, and that the Polish public was “not ready to make a sacrifice unless the security of the country is imminently threatened”⁴⁹ (Poland was hoping that NATO would take over command of the multi-national forces in its sector but the proposal failed to pass the June 2004 Istanbul summit).⁵⁰

⁴⁵ CBOS, May 29 – June 1, 2003.

⁴⁶ Osica, Olaf: *Irak – początek nowej epoki w polityce zagranicznej III RP?* [Iraq – Beginning of a New Era in Polish Foreign Policy?]. Raporty i analizy, No. 6, 2004, p. 7; http://www.csm.org.pl/pl/files/rap_i_an_0604.pdf.

⁴⁷ Iwiński, Tadeusz: *Szanse dla Nowej Europy* [Chances for the New Europe]. Trybuna, November 9-11, 2002, p. 9.

⁴⁸ *Lewicowi senatorowie: Nie dla okupacji!* [Leftist Senators: No to Occupation!]. March 18, 2004; <http://www.lewica.pl/?dzial=polska&id=2423>.

⁴⁹ Osica: *Irak – początek nowej epoki w polityce zagranicznej III RP?* [Iraq – Beginning of a New Era in Polish Foreign Policy?].

⁵⁰ Przybylski, Jacek: *Szczyt w Stambule. W Iraku bez flagi NATO* [Summit in Istanbul. In Iraq without the NATO Flag]. Rzeczpospolita, June 29, 2004.

On the broader question of U.S.-European security relations, the SLD dissenters mentioned above strayed from the general party line. As a matter of policy, the Union of Democratic Left wants the European Union to pursue close cooperation and compromise with the United States and other non-EU allies. In its 2001 election program, SLD spoke in favour of strengthening the European defense identity within NATO,⁵¹ i.e. in favour of ESDI, not ESDP.

The right-leaning parties – Civic Platform (PO) and Law and Justice (PiS) – support the continuation of transatlantic cooperation without any major reservations. In its 2001 election program, PiS called NATO membership the foundation of Polish foreign policy and supported the closest possible cooperation with the United States within the NATO framework.⁵² Its May 2004 European program states that solidarity and support of the United States in its role of maintaining peace and stability in the world is the basic precondition for further development and success of the enlarged EU.⁵³ PiS supports the creation of common EU foreign and security policy as well as a common defense union, under the condition that it does not compete with the United States or detract from good transatlantic relations. PiS opposes creation of a “multi-speed Europe” and wants member states to retain considerable independence in foreign policy.

The Civic Platform shares PiS' pro-Atlantic foreign and security policies, albeit with more apparent zeal for a European role. It calls on the EU to take up a greater share of responsibility for Europe and the world, demanding that member states “should start to talk with one voice.”⁵⁴ PO supports Poland's active participation in the process of building CFSP and ESDP and has supported establishing the post of an EU minister of foreign affairs, building an EU Rapid Reaction Force, and implementing common policies in the area of armaments and logistics. As nearly all political actors in Poland do, PO stresses that “none of the mentioned projects should lead to loosening of the Euro-Atlantic partnership.”⁵⁵

A slightly different approach is outlined by the non-parliamentary Union of Freedom (UW), which has historically played an active role in shaping

⁵¹ *Manifest programme owy Nowy wiek – nowy Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej* [Program New Age – New Union of Democratic Left]; <http://www.sld.org.pl>.

⁵² *Programme wyborczy PiS* [Electoral Program of PiS]; <http://www.pis.org.pl>.

⁵³ *Europa solidarnych narodów* [Programme polityki europejskiej Prawa i Sprawiedliwości] [Europe of Nations' European Policy Program of PiS]. May 28, 2004; <http://www.pis.org.pl>.

⁵⁴ *Platforma Obywatelska: Programme europejski PO* [European Program of PO]; <http://www.platforma.org>.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Poland's foreign policy. According to one of its representatives, former minister of defense, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, maintaining good relations with the United States and concurrently building a strong position within Europe is the most significant and long-term interest of Poland. In case of a disagreement between the United States and Europe, Poland should, in his view, strive to achieve a compromise that will take into account Polish interests. His party supports greater EU involvement in global affairs while observing that Europe's growing role on the international scene needs cooperation with the United States.

The opposition clerical-nationalist League of Polish Families (LPR) advocates a strong link with the United States, mostly for reasons related to U.S. economic and military power. It points out that the United States represents a bigger market for Polish goods than that of the EU.⁵⁶ Somewhat inconsistently, LPR has been critical of the engagement of Polish troops in operations to stabilize Iraq and has proposed to organize a referendum on the issue.⁵⁷

The Social Democracy of Poland (SDPL) tends to advocate good relations between the United States and the European Union, arguing – much like UW – that Poland's interest lies in preventing tensions between the two continents. On one hand the party stresses the importance of relations with the United States in the area of security policy; on the other hand, it points out that in the economic area, Poland's cooperation with European partners is of utmost importance.

The populist Samoobrona views the United States as a strategic partner while at the same time urging Poland to “retain relations and a symmetry of advantages in the political and economic sphere.”⁵⁸ Samoobrona does not explicitly question Poland's membership in NATO, nor its cooperation with the United States, but it is openly critical of Warsaw's support for the Iraq war,⁵⁹ and opposes Polish military presence in Iraq.⁶⁰ The agrarian Polish People's Party (PSL) has adopted a position similar to that of Samoobrona: it supports continuous U.S. military engagement in Europe but wants the relationship to be based on partnership and mutual respect, refraining from “hegemonic tendencies of

⁵⁶ See <http://www.gazeta.pl>; <http://www.sejm.gov.pl>.

⁵⁷ PAP, March 15, 2004; see <http://www.sejm.gov.pl>.

⁵⁸ See <http://www.gazeta.pl>.

⁵⁹ *Uchwała nr 2 w sprawie polskiej polityki zagranicznej* [Direction no. 2 Concerning of the Polish Foreign Policy]. Samoobrona, May 24, 2003; <http://www.samoobrona.org.pl>.

⁶⁰ *Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o podstawowych kierunkach polityki zagranicznej Polski. Wystąpienia klubów i kół poselskich oraz zapytania posłów* [Report of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on Basic Directions of the Polish Foreign Policy]. Warsaw, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, January 21, 2004; <http://www.ms.gov.pl>.

any kind.”⁶¹ With an eye on the public opinion polls, PSL declared itself in opposition to the presence of Polish troops in Iraq, and in January 2004, it fought to open a debate on this question in the Sejm (parliament).⁶²

Polish public opinion on security is fairly homogeneous (as opposed to views on Poland's role in the EU). The population is more divided now, after the Iraq war, than before, with the leftist and agrarian political parties criticizing Poland's participation in the Iraq war. No political party, however, openly questions Poland's membership in NATO or its partnership with the United States. It is highly unlikely that if, as expected, the next ruling coalition is formed around the right-leaning parties, Poland's security policy will be anything other than continuation of the present course.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

An analysis of Poland's foreign and security policy is incomplete without factoring in the country's desire to serve as a regional leader. Aside from certain natural predispositions for this role (size, history), Poland's policy of leadership in Central Europe strengthens the country's hand vis-à-vis its two powerful neighbors, Germany and Russia. It adds to Warsaw's own weight and allows Poland to escape the trap of German and Russian power politics.

Countries that are important partners to Poland include those around the Baltic Sea – Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia – as well as the three other countries of the Visegrad group, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia. Since the early 1990s, Poland has been one of the largest supporters of Visegrad cooperation. This held true even at times when the Czech Republic and Hungary, in their race for EU and NATO membership, strove to loosen their ties to their less successful Visegrad neighbors, or when the Mečiar government in Slovakia pursued different foreign-political priorities.⁶³ Only in recent years did Visegrad move down from the level of “priority” to the level of “important” foreign policy aims of Poland. After acces-

⁶¹ *Polityka zagraniczna i międzynarodowa pozycja Polski [Foreign Policy and International Position of Poland]*. In: *Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe. Tezy programme owe [Political Programme of the Polish People's Party]*. Polish People's Party, March 16, 2004; http://www.psl.org.pl/prog_nap/index.php.

⁶² *PSL: Polacy nie powinni okupować Iraku [PSL: The Poles are not obliged to be in Iraq]*. Rzeczpospolita, January 5, 2004.

⁶³ “Exposés and other public speeches of ministers of foreign affairs in the period after revival of Visegrad testify to Poland's overall positive disposition toward this grouping. It is present in Polish foreign policy, even if it is not a priority or if it, due to other priorities, figures as a secondary or auxiliary priority in Poland's policies.” See Vykoukal, Jiří et al.: *Visegrád*. Prague, Dokořán 2003, p. 234.

sion to NATO, Warsaw had less need for V4 as a regional security platform. As the country worked to join the European Union, Polish foreign policy priorities shifted toward the economic realm. Visegrad, a platform with primarily political and symbolic significance, offered little promise in assisting Poland with its ambitions.

Regarding the three Baltic states, Poland is bound by a traditional relationship with Lithuania, with whom it shares membership in the Baltic Sea States Cooperation (BSSC) as well as – at one point in history – a common state. Poland's engagement in the Baltic region competes with the country's focus on Central Europe but, as a new NATO member, Warsaw played an important role in supporting the membership of the Baltic states in the alliance. To Poland, NATO enlargement to the north had the effect of shoring up its security on the Russian border. It is now engaged, with the northern countries, in the formulation of the northern and eastern dimensions of EU foreign policy in order to further extend the security zone.⁶⁴

Warsaw's Russia policy focuses primarily on building relations with countries in the zone separating Poland from Russia: Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Any rapprochement between these states and their eastern neighbor is perceived by Poland as challenge to its security. For this reason, Warsaw spends considerably diplomatic capital on moderating the negative impact of EU enlargement (strengthened via regime and trade barriers) in the region and on fostering economic development and political stability in the three countries.

In its effort to become a regional power, Poland enjoys the support of the United States. Washington expects Poland to gradually become a security provider in Central and Eastern Europe, in due time offering security guarantees to the countries in the region. At the same time, Poland's aspirations are also leading to a more active engagement with the European Union and its so-called eastern policy.⁶⁵ The EU has played, and clearly will continue to play, an important role in shaping the policy of its neighboring states, and Poland wants to have a hand in steering this process. This was apparent during the accession negotiations (non-paper published in January 2003), and it also influences Poland's position on ESDP.

⁶⁴ See priorities of Estonian chairmanship of CBSS for 2003 – 2004; www.cbss.st.

⁶⁵ All Polish political parties stress that close cooperation with Eastern neighbours constitutes one of the most vital Polish interests. See Trzaskowski: *From candidate to member state: Poland and the future of the EU*, p. 24.

CONCLUSIONS

Poland is a strong pro-Atlantic and pro-American regional player that derives its security from a partnership with the United States and membership in NATO. It supports continued U.S. military presence in Europe, favors maintaining the alliance's current military posture and wants a "division of labor" between the EU and NATO. It views the notion of decoupling EU security and military duties from the United States with great reservations and opposes any duplication of NATO and EU capabilities.

Poland, like other countries of the Visegrad 4, rejects the prospect of competition between the EU and NATO, instead preferring European and transatlantic cooperation "even in the case when they [are] perceived by their members as competing ones."⁶⁶ Its position is at least partly based on the conviction that the European Union is not able to provide Poland with the same security guarantees as NATO or its partnership with the United States. To the extent that the European Security and Defense Policy is seen as detracting from alliance responsibilities in the political and military realm, Poland views ESDP as a liability rather than an asset. Warsaw is not blind to the signs of U.S. neglect of NATO; many Polish analysts are cautioning that there is a need to renew the alliance in order for it to become important again for the United States.⁶⁷

Polish concerns about ESDP are also heightened because of Russia's potential influence on Europe's defense policy. Poland sees the role of the European Union primarily in terms of extending political and economic stability in Europe through the process of enlargement, and wants to influence and formulate, if necessary, the common foreign policy of the enlarged EU toward the its new neighbors (Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Russia).⁶⁸

EU membership is unlikely to undermine Poland's Atlanticism for several reasons. The country's political elites remain deeply grateful to the United States for its role in ending the Cold War and nurturing Poland's transition to democracy in the 1990s. Poland's location on the external border of the European Union dictates a focus on conventional security concerns and territorial

⁶⁶ Parzymies, Stanisław: *Orientacja europejska w polskiej polityce bezpieczeństwa* [European Orientation in Polish Security Policy]. In: Kuźniar, Roman (ed.): *Polska polityka bezpieczeństwa 1989 – 2000* [Polish Security Policy 1989 – 2000]. Warsaw, Scholar 2001, p. 335.

⁶⁷ Onyszkiewicz, Janusz: *Sojusze jak róże* [Unions are Like Roses]; <http://www.csm.org.pl/pl/files/Sojusze%20jak%20roze.pdf>.

⁶⁸ See *Non-paper of the Ministry of foreign Affairs of Poland* or a presentation of Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz at a conference "The EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy", February 20, 2003.

defense, for which NATO remains better equipped. Last but not least, the EU itself remains divided over key foreign and security policy issues.

Poland's position on ESDP has evolved from an initial skepticism toward a more constructive cooperation after 2000. For rapprochement to continue, Poland would need further guarantees that the new structures, however ambitious, would not duplicate or endanger the cohesion of the alliance. Until such time, the official Warsaw position remains lukewarm.

Poland's views on EU's common foreign and security policy are shaped by worries over the formation of a Franco-German alliance in the west and the policies of Russia to the east. Cooler relations with France and Germany have already had a negative effect on Poland's leadership aspirations in Central Europe. Political scientist Olaf Osica warned with prescience that in cases of disagreement among EU members over financial resources and political profits, new member states will view cooperation with Poland as a disposable asset.⁶⁹ And indeed, during the Constitutional Treaty talks, the V4 countries took at best a tepid position toward Poland's attempt to preserve the voting system adopted at the Nice summit in 2000.

Another concern to Poland is the "nationalization" of foreign policy in EU member states with regards to Russia, as is the case with France, Germany, Great Britain, and even Italy. Poland worries that the trend will grow into an all-out nationalization of defense policies on the continent. Warsaw wants the European Union to produce a unified concept of foreign policy toward Russia supported by all 25 member countries. To help achieve this, former minister for European affairs, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, suggested that the Polish commissioner in Brussels be given the portfolio covering EU's eastern policy.⁷⁰

Transatlantic cooperation continues to be a priority for Polish foreign policy. At the same time Polish politicians and political analysts are increasingly of the view that Poland must also support communitarian institutions, i.e. the European Commission and the European Parliament. These institutions form the natural counterweight to inter-governmental Europe, a model in which Poland, with its unstable government and weak economy, is at a distinct disadvantage. In Poland, the Parliament and Commission are viewed as guardians of financial and political solidarity. According to Wolski, it will be necessary to retain the existing network of EU grants to new member states for a few decades so that Poland can close the existing economic gap.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Osica, Olaf: *Mocnarstwo marginalne [A Marginal Power]*. Rzeczpospolita, July 26, 2002.

⁷⁰ Pawlicki, Jacek: *Sześć kroków do silnej Polski w silnej Europie [Six Steps towards a Strong Poland in a Strong Europe]*. Gazeta Wyborcza, June 15, 2004; <http://www.gazeta.pl>.

⁷¹ Ibid.

As a new EU member, Poland continues to support Ukraine's membership in Euro-Atlantic structures and favors a change in the EU position toward this country.⁷² This is impossible without the support of EU's influential members – namely Germany and France.⁷³ Poland will need to actively participate in shaping CFSP and ESDP and help negotiate compromises so that EU foreign and security policies reflects its interests.

⁷² *W Puńsku o Ukrainie*. Gazeta Wyborcza, May 23, 2004; <http://www.gazeta.pl>.

⁷³ Pawlicki: *Sześć kroków do silnej Polski w silnej Europie* [*Six Steps towards a Strong Poland in a Strong Europe*].

Tomáš Valášek

CONCLUSIONS: ON NATO'S FUTURE, AND RIDING THE ESDP TIGER

The mood was not quite “Barbarians at the gate!” but there was apprehension aplenty when the eight EU candidate states from Central Europe, only weeks shy of EU membership, sided with the United States over the Iraq war. Some member states found the public declaration of preference in the form of two open letters¹ an affront to the principle of commonality; others argued that German and French efforts to present their opposition to war as official EU policy provoked the confrontation in the first place.² No one could fail to realize the dramatic significance of the moment. The European Union found itself in a perfectly dysfunctional balance: divided in two roughly even-sized groups of nations whose governments held diametrically opposed views on Iraq. The divisions were real and deep, the French and German consensus no longer ruled the day but neither did any other obvious constellation of forces – is this any way to run a common security policy?

A number of EU members clearly decided that it was not, and proposed that smaller groups of states should have the right to launch security initiatives of their own, under the EU flag but without the full participation of all members. “Structured cooperation,” as the concept is known, became a part of the EU Constitutional Treaty. However, even if the Treaty is approved, any “structured” activity is *a priori* limited and not fully common. It is an admission of failure to reach consensus on future contentious issues.

Has the European Union truly become too diverse a group to pursue truly common security and defense policy? Enlargement is often faulted, for two reasons. One, it is said to have made the EU unmanageably large. Perhaps, but

¹ Aznar, José Maria – Durao Barroso, José-Manuel – Berlusconi, Silvio – Blair, Tony – Havel, Václav – Medgyessy, Peter – Miller, Leszek – Rasmussen, Anders Fogh: *United We Stand*. Wall Street Journal, January 30, 2003; *Statement Of The Vilnius Group Countries In Response To The Presentation By The United States Secretary Of State To The United Nations Security Council Concerning Iraq*. February 5, 2003.

² See e.g. *Our responsibility for peace*. Policy statement by Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in the German Bundestag, Berlin, Thursday, February 13, 2003.

even if that were the case – and only time will tell – it is irrelevant. No constellation or number of EU members will produce common action on defense if only one state disagrees strongly enough. Witness the months-long impasse, brought about by Greek opposition, over the Berlin Plus agreements with NATO. The recently-concluded EU Constitutional Treaty, too, keeps defense and foreign policy among policy areas in which EU members decide by consensus, not majority.

New members are also viewed as upsetting the emerging EU consensus on defense by bringing previously underrepresented perspectives into the EU discourse. This is partly true and mostly wrong. True in the sense that, in some important respects, the Central European governments do tend to view the world differently – their focus on Russia being the most noteworthy example. But on vast majority of other issues, including the often contentious question of NATO-EU relations, new members' preferences fall within the span of the current security debates. Enlargement did not create new dividing lines, it redistributed power within the existing groupings. Consensus may and likely will shift – but this is only natural. Consensus, by definition, reflects the views of all EU member states. It is only logical and inevitable that if membership changes, so does the centre of gravity on defense. Managing this change – working to find mutually acceptable formulas between the newly realigned groups of EU member states, will be the next challenge for European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP).

DISTINCT, BUT HOW DIFFERENT?

What viewpoints do the new members bring into the EU discourse? And how strong is the domestic consensus behind those views? The preceding four chapters paint a picture of a rather diverse group but one bound by a few common traits. The one thing on which most new EU members agree is the need for a strong NATO and for continued U.S. military engagement in Europe. It would be wrong to ascribe this view entirely to sentiment – yes, gratitude to the United States for its role in the Cold War fuels the current friendship but one other important factor is at play. The new member states' affinity with NATO comes down to geopolitics.

Seen from the EU's eastern border, the Union's boundaries mark more than the outer limit of the purchasing power of the Euro. In international relations terms, they also denote the geographical end of the great European experiment with dependency-based relationships. For better or worse, the countries east of the European Union's borders don't fully subscribe to the concept of integra-

tion; their vision of the reality can still be best explained in balance-of-power terms (witness Russia's rhetoric describing NATO enlargement as 'encirclement'). And that is a different world, one which produces situations for which the European Union doesn't always have ready answers.

The Union's foreign and security policy has historically focused on remolding the rest of the world in its own image. Attraction, not coercion, is its chosen tool. Europe stands as a symbol of a new model of international relations, one which exerts tremendous pulling power. The very prospect of EU membership already helped transform the former communist societies caught between the East and the West.

But there are clear limits to foreign policy largely based on persuasion and attraction. Some countries do not and never will desire EU membership, nor will they automatically repay kindness with kindness. Seen from outside the EU, enlightened altruism can easily be construed as weakness, community of values may seem more like a hostile alliance, the best-intentions can invite a hostile reaction.

To new member states, that band of nations on the fringe between modernity and post-modernity,³ it is not immediately obvious that Europe has answers to a potential deterioration in relations with its neighbors. The United States provides both a keener understanding of balance-of-power relationships, and the military power to create a desirable balance. This may hold little meaning to countries deep in the centre of Europe but nations on its periphery live in the world of power relationships. Until and unless Europe produces a more convincing Eastern policy, one that balances incentives for transition with deterrence and real defense capability, new member states will continue to look to Washington for their ultimate security guarantees.

It is also possible – and perhaps desirable – that the European Union will never become an actor in balance-of-power politics; such mission being arguably incompatible with its role as a model for cooperation and integration. If

³ The use of the term "postmodernism" in international relations has been popularized by British thinker and diplomat Robert Cooper. According to Cooper, "postmodern" systems are characterized by the breakdown of the distinction between domestic and foreign affairs, mutual interference in domestic affairs and mutual surveillance, the rejection of force for resolving disputes and rules that are self-enforced because all states have an interest in maintaining the rule of law, the growing irrelevance of borders, and security that is based on transparency, mutual openness, interdependence and mutual vulnerability (Cooper, Robert: *Postmodern State*. In: *Re-ordering the World: The Long-term Implications of September 11*. Leonard, 2002). The European Union is most often cited as an example.

so, however, what may be needed is more appreciation for the tasks performed by the United States. The accession states, for their part, would not pursue any defense project overtly or covertly designed to balance or limit the power of the United States, on the grounds that it is bound to prompt Washington to loosen its commitment to the defense of Europe.

At the same time, this stance should not be construed as a rejection of the postmodernist model of international relations advocated by the European Union; on the contrary. To most new member states, balance-of-power rivalries brought nothing but misery. They aspire to live, just as their Western neighbors, in the midst of a community of interdependent and cooperating nations. They fully support the European Union's efforts to build a foreign policy aimed at spreading the 'European' model beyond the borders of the Union, and a suitably tailored defense policy. They are merely more aware of its limitations, possibly more skeptical about its universality and certainly more vulnerable to its potential failings. NATO and the United States represent an insurance policy, which can and must, in the view of the accession states, co-exist with a strong EU security vision. There is nothing hypocritical or contradictory about a policy of hoping for the best but preparing for the worst. Accession states can be full participants in building a credible ESDP.

The feeling of insecurity among new member states deserves a closer look. To some it may seem incomprehensible that Russia, with its declining military strength and plethora of domestic problems, could threaten EU member states. And indeed, at least on one level, the accession states' yearning for hard power seems based on a somewhat nebulous feeling of insecurity rather than a concrete, articulated challenge from Moscow. "Threats to the country are receding [but] worries about national security remain stubbornly high," wrote Olga Gyarfášová and Marek Šťastný in this book's chapter on Slovakia. "Presumably, they are being strongly influenced by concerns about personal safety, organized crime and other threats largely outside the control of individual citizens."

If true, it stands to reason that as the living standards and personal security improve, the new member states will become more 'Europeanized' in the sense of softening their threat assessments and security policies. Gradually, this process could lead to a firmer embrace of incentives-based foreign policy, of which the European Union is the most prominent representative. The obvious 'wild card' issue remains the future development of Russia itself, and that of Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova, the other countries on EU's new eastern border. Instability in the region or, worse, signs of aggression, would only harden attitudes among the new member states.

THE "IRAQIZATION" OF NEW MEMBERS' SECURITY POLICIES

While the states of Central Europe seem firmly set on an Atlanticist foreign policy course it bears remembering that so did, until recently, Germany – that is, until the 2002 parliamentary elections. In that tumultuous campaign, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder seized on his countrymen's opposition to the Iraq war in order to snatch victory from the jaws of an almost certain defeat. Could a similar "perfect storm" of political and international winds yet force a change of heart in the new member states? And what is the probability that they could they be gradually "conditioned" to look to Brussels instead of Washington? Certainly, many in Europe already speak of the inevitable *socialization* of the new members – a process which should see new members gradually embrace a far more central role for the European Union in their defense policies.

There are indeed tentative signs that security preferences of at least one of the countries surveyed is changing, but the underlying reasons have less to do with Brussels than with a Middle Eastern country called Iraq. All governments in Central and Eastern Europe sided with Washington despite public opinion that – as elsewhere in Europe – broadly opposed the war. The post-conflict chaos in the country only deepened public skepticism of U.S. – and, by extension, their own governments' – actions.

In theory, this divide should provide rich pickings for opposition parties. So it is a little surprising to see that, with one notable exception among the Visegrad Four (V4), Iraq did not spark much controversy in the electoral discourse. The reason lies in the political composition of current governments. For the past several years, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have all been governed by parties left of the political centre. It was these parties and their leaders – many of them reformed communists – who found themselves forced to take sides in the run-up to the Iraq war. They did so in conformity with their countries' long-standing foreign policy course and often against their better instincts. In an ironic twist, leftist politicians became the standard-bearers for the Iraq war. The right-of-centre opposition parties, in keeping with their foreign policy preferences, tended to be as pro-war as the governments, if not more. Not unlike Great Britain, the Iraq debate in Prague, Warsaw and Budapest was generally limited to the technicalities of the governments' handling of the crisis rather than the broad principles, thus sheltering the governments and their foreign policy course from criticism.

The one exception to this rule is Slovakia, where a coalition dominated by centre-right parties has held power since 1998. When it, too, sided with Washington over Iraq, the main opposition party, Smer, was handed an opening.

A relatively new and young entity, Smer had no personal attachment to the policies of the first post-Cold War generation of Slovak politicians; a veiled anti-American tone also resonated well with its left-leaning base. It wasted little time in articulating a security platform opposing U.S. policies in the Middle East and scoring electoral points as a result. An effort that started tentatively picked up speed after three Slovak servicemen were killed in Iraq in June 2004. Smer has since more-or-less openly campaigned for a withdrawal of Slovak forces, adopting an increasingly anti-American rhetoric in the process. During the 2004 elections to the European Parliament, for possibly the first time in the history of any V4 state, the European Union's foreign and security policy itself appeared in campaign rhetoric, with Smer calling on the EU to counter "U.S. hegemony."⁴ The party consistently leads public opinion polls and stands a fighting chance of assuming power after the next elections scheduled for 2006.

The swiftness with which Smer disposed of 15 years of Slovak foreign policy suggests that none of the V4 countries, given the right circumstances, are inherently immune to a repeat of the German scenario. That day may not be particularly near – the June 2004 elections for the European Parliament saw right-of-centre parties dominating polls in the Visegrad region – but nor is a sweeping change of the new members' security policies entirely out of question. Without a doubt, Iraq is also wreaking havoc with the traditional preference for a U.S.-centric European security model. While the governments continue to support Washington, their policies are increasingly divorced from the feelings of the general population. The appearance of continuity may be deceiving. It is a product of a political constellation that will inevitably change. Assuming continued difficulties in Iraq, opposition parties will at some point seek to fully explore the brewing discontent (conversely, a tangible improvement in Iraq could and likely would take away the momentum from the critics of Washington's Iraq operations).

NEW MEMBERS IN EU SECURITY DEBATES TO DATE

A look at the new members' role need not be an entirely academic exercise. Most practical decisions on EU defense are taken in the Political and Security Committee (PSC), a body established in January 2001 to serve as "a privileged forum for dialogue on the ESDP"⁵ and to provide policy proposals to the Euro-

⁴ *Bezpečnostná politika SR vo svetle úmrtia troch slovenských vojakov v Iraku (Security Policy of the Slovak Republic in Light of the Death of Three Slovak Soldiers in Iraq)*. Smer press release, June 9, 2004; http://www.strana-smer.sk/tlac_odd/konferencie/clanok.html?id=1157.

⁵ *Council decision of 22 January 2001, setting up the Political and Security Committee*. Brussels, European Council 2001; http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/1_02720010130en00010003.pdf.

pean Council, among other things. All accession states have taken part in PSC deliberations since early 2003, and as voting participants since May 1, 2004 (in fact, because most decisions in the PSC are taken without a show of hands, even non-voting participant enjoy influence almost equal to that of regular members). In theory, the new members' performance in this forum could serve as a good indication of their ability to shape EU defense discussions, and of their general preferences. Does the tone and substance of their interventions point to more disunity, or has the enlarged EU been able to go about its defense business?

Alas, interviews with regular participants at PSC meetings offered little in the way of evidence for either proposition. The new members have simply "not been very effective or vocal" in PSC discussions, said one senior diplomat from an established member state, familiar with the deliberations. Even representatives of the V4 states admit in private to playing a relatively minor part in the work of the Committee.

Upon closer questioning, a few general reasons emerged for the accession states' ineffectiveness. First – and most understandable – is the accession states' newness to the Council. As one diplomat from a new EU member said: "It takes time to get to know the personalities and the rules of the game." The V4, cautious not to start their relationship with the European Union on the wrong foot, also apparently 'held their fire' and set out to prove themselves as constructive EU citizens. Even before accession they acquired – more wrongly than rightly – a reputation of a spoiler, a "Trojan Horse," which they were eager to shed. "That's why we are taking part in all EU operations," said one senior official from a V4 state. "We are very focused on presentation."

The defense debates in the EU to date have largely been a three-nation show with France, Britain and – to a lesser extent – Germany providing most ideas and energy. Greece and Holland routinely speak out in defense of one side or another but other states, including established EU members, tend to defer to the Big Three. Seen from this perspective, the new member states' absence from most of the discussions is no different from that of many other EU members. There is also a sense among representatives of the V4 that ESDP debates to date generated far more heat than light, and that while a number of ideas under discussion could potentially complicate the transatlantic link, actual decisions taken to date give little cause for concern. The unspoken implication is that many potential controversies have been merely delayed, not diffused.

Perhaps most importantly, however, the new member states seem to struggle to keep up with the speed and amount of decisions being made at the EU level. In order to influence the Union's defense agenda, the administrations need a clear national vision of the EU's role in security, and the capacity to pro-

duce real-time decisions flowing from this larger vision. In practical terms, this requires a well-educated and informed foreign-policy and security establishment. However, the relevant ministries in accession states have been singularly focused for nearly 15 years on assuring their countries' smooth accession into NATO and the EU. The result is that little capacity exists to evaluate and make decisions on issues not directly related to enlargement. Several diplomats interviewed for this article complained that instructions received from national capitals were often too vague and unconstructive to offer reliable guidance for PSC decisions such as the one on EU arms embargo on China.

And last, but not least, the governments in the Visegrad states still tend to view EU integration as mostly a passive exercise. The nature of the enlargement process dictated that for over a decade, the candidate states strove to adjust their policies and government infrastructure to comply with EU criteria. Accession produced an essentially reactive relationship with Brussels, leaving little room for initiative on the part of the applicant states. And even though the candidates became members in May 2004, the transition from *incorporating* to *defining* the European consensus takes more time. It requires a shift to not only a more proactive mindset but also to different expertise. The new member states are now expected to weigh in on a much wider range of issues, whose impact on their national security is often indirect and measured in decades rather than months or years. It should come as no surprise that they are reluctant to take active role in PSC discussions. This could change, however, as they find their footing in Brussels, and as their foreign policy and security ministries at home broaden and deepen their expertise. It is possible and indeed likely that the accession states will start leaving their mark on ESDP later rather than from the day of integration. This only raises further the importance of crafting a common European vision on defense and security.

CONCLUSIONS: ON NATO'S FUTURE, AND RIDING THE ESDP TIGER

If some Europeans are indeed from Venus and Americans from Mars, most accession states can best be described as Earthlings – firmly occupying the space in between, eager to advance the EU model of international relations but equally appreciative of the hard-security role played by the United States. Nothing in that posture inherently supports fears, dating back to the EU's Iraq crisis, of Europe split over its relations with Washington. It argues for an EU security and defense policy built in partnership with the United States – as EU member states have consistently advocated all along.

This, of course, is easier said than done. ESDP is a fast moving and broadening process, whose full impact is yet to be felt. As EU member states expand and deepen their security cooperation, they will at some point have to answer difficult questions about their relationship with NATO and about the future of the alliance as such. In short, if integration continues, NATO will have to change. The current model of 26 nations carrying equal weight at the table is unsustainable if three-fourths of them begin to coordinate their decisions outside and prior to allied discussions. A purely intergovernmental organization like NATO will have to find a way to accommodate in its midst the political hybrid that is the integrating EU. Some sort of Caucus EU within NATO is the most likely outcome.

But that is clearly only a part of the answer. What mindset or security mentality will that Caucus adopt? How different will it be from the visions of non-EU allies, particularly that of the United States? And how attached will this Caucus be to the future existence of NATO? Will it be willing to work toward streamlining the diverse security philosophies in the alliance? Will it live up to the first credo of any alliance: doing things for others than one would otherwise not do? That is by no means a foregone conclusion, and accession states are right to worry about the alliance's long-term health.

Today's debates on Washington's role in European security are effectively setting the stage for the European Union's future interactions with the rest of the NATO allies. The form that is ESDP is being filled with content; and that content will determine whether and how a European Union of 25 countries with truly integrated foreign and security policies can act within NATO.

This will no doubt be a tumultuous process. The United States may yet decide that a less cooperative NATO is not worth the trouble. But there is nothing inevitable – and, in the accession states' view, desirable – about a stronger ESDP pushing America out of Europe, or about the two sides losing the ability to speak with common language to despots and terrorists.

So perhaps the greatest difference between the new and old members is one of emphasis. Both sides are committed to EU integration and aware that it will likely produce structural differences in the way Europe relates to the United States. But while established members embraced ESDP – if in different forms and for very different reasons – the accession states focus on preserving the alliance with Washington. The two goals are not mutually exclusive but if defense integration is not to turn into a slugfest, the difference between the two priorities needs to be narrowed.

This would require action on both sides. For the accession states to warm up to ESDP, the European Union as such may need to take a more appreciative

view of the U.S. role in security in general. This does not preclude criticism of individual actions such as Iraq. The point is to recognize the usefulness of America's past and present role in global security, and to reduce the anti-American tone of the political discourse.

For the accession states to fully embrace the European defense project, a combination of events would need to take place inside their societies. As things stand, new members share few of the motivations that drive other states to support ESDP. Barry Posen, a U.S. defense analyst and Europe observer, divided these into three broad categories: balancing the power of the United States, building capacity for crises which the United States chooses to sit out, and solidifying EU integration by adding a new dimension of cooperation.⁶ Of these three, new member states certainly don't share the desire to balance the United States, they are not too keen on playing substantial role in resolving crises away from their borders, and – having just celebrated their accession – they do not necessarily share worries about the future of EU integration. Arguably, they slowly recognize that the United States is not going to play as active a role in the defense of Europe as it did in the past (which could be one argument for ESDP). But even that is counterbalanced by U.S. plans to open new military bases in Central and Eastern Europe, which seemingly solidifies and even increases Washington's commitment to the region's defense.

Accession states will likely come to see ESDP in more useful light as they gradually revise their defense outlooks and strategies. Already, latest versions of national security documents of the V4 states suggest an expanding definition of security, one that links threats such as terrorism to social and economic problems as well as failed states on Europe's periphery. From there, it is but a short step to concluding that even relatively poor members of the European family must take interest in early prevention of threats, the main thrust of Europe's defense policy.

⁶ Posen, Barry P.: *ESDP and the Structure of World Power*. The International Spectator 1/2004, Vol. XXXIX, pp. 5 – 17; <http://www.iai.it/pdf/articles/posen.pdf>.

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