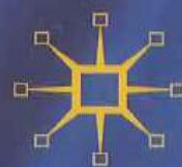


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THE EUROPEAN UNION AS A SMALL POWER

After the Post-Cold War

Asle Toje



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The European Union as a Small Power

After the Post-Cold War

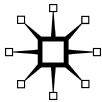


Montparnasse by Christopher R. Rådlund

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Abbreviations

AMIS	African Union Monitoring Mission
AU	African Union
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDM	Capability Development Mechanism
CESDP	Common European Security and Defence Policy (1998–2000)
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CMC	Crisis Management Concept
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy (2010–)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Community
ECAP	European Capability Action Plan
EDA	European Defence Agency
EEA	European Economic Area
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEC	European Economic Community
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy (2000–2009)
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU-Aid	EuropeAid
EUFOR	European Union Force
EUISS	European Union Institute for Security Studies
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
G-8	Group of Eight
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
HR-CFSP	High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy
HQ	Headquarters
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ICG	International crisis Group.
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LTV	Long-Term Vision (EDA)
NAC	North Atlantic Council

x *Abbreviations*

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMD	National Missile Defence
NRF	NATO Response Force
NSS	National Security Strategy (of the United States of America)
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
OpCen	Operation Centre
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PSC	Political Security Committee
PSCoop	Permanent Structured Cooperation
QMV	Qualified Majority Voting
R&D	Research and Development
RRF	Rapid Reaction Force
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TCE	Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UMP	Union for a Popular Movement
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Preface

In the autumn of 1991 I hitch-hiked to Poland. A lanky teenager, I was determined to peer behind the Iron Curtain before it was pulled shut. It turned out to be a highly interesting time in Warsaw. The Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, went on holiday to his dacha and while he was away a coup was launched in Moscow. The drama unfolded before a public unaccustomed to live television. The new leader, Boris Yeltsin, standing on a tank in front of the parliament building shaking a defiant fist, was a powerful image, one that will never leave me. Nor will it, I imagine, be soon forgotten by the baffled people of the former Soviet satellites who saw fissures opening in the power that only recently had seemed so permanent. After some tense hours the army failed to support the plotters and the democratic forces took back the government, but in the meantime the Soviet Empire had unravelled. The Cold War was over.

Some 12 years later I was working in Brussels. American President George Bush the Younger went to war against Iraq based on a doctrine of pre-emption that, were it to be universally applied, would tear the international system apart. Europe was seething. America was going it alone and did not pretend to care what other powers might think. The invasion caused a groundswell of public resentment. On 15 February 2003 people took to the streets in their hundreds of thousands all over Europe. It seemed that the European public, so often theorized in academic papers, was coming into being before my very eyes. And they looked to the European Union to give them voice. After all, had the EU only weeks earlier not proclaimed a common security and defence policy to be operational? But it was not to be. The EU's leaders failed to channel the energy, choosing instead to pour their efforts into a constitutional treaty that the voters would later roundly reject.

We did not know it at the time, but the Iraq war heralded the end of the post-Cold War interlude. Since then a new element of competition, of scarcity and volatility has made political time pick up speed, driving the emerging powers faster, higher and stronger. But not the EU. It has grown increasingly apparent that a weaker United States will not automatically translate into a stronger European Union. The 'bipolar West' envisioned by many, including this author, has failed to materialise. The EU has not grown to be an eastern gravitas in a two-pillar entity.

No European Byzantium to America's Rome. During the post-Cold-War period (1991–2003), European security was treated as a sort of 'pyramid scheme' in which security guarantees were dispensed with little calculation of the possible costs involved. The hopeful teleology of the 'end-of-history' thesis reappeared in Europe in more extreme forms, masking Europe's decline in sophisms.

The ongoing shift in European security has deep sources that have little to do with diverging ideologies, financial crises or, indeed, any fundamental differences in threat perception. It has everything to do with the end of the Cold War and the gradual erosion of unity of purpose that came with it. This is a book about the state of European power after a decade of the Common Security and Defence Policy, the linchpin of the European Union's international presence. It is a book about regional and international power in the most recent times.

As I take on a task of this magnitude I should like the readers of the book to know that I am fully, even acutely, aware of the limitations inherent in the subject as well as of my own limitations. Is the EU better understood as a small power? Asking readers to accept a cut-and-dried verdict on so complex and fluid a topic as the role of the European Union in the world today, over such an immediate period and in such circumstances as those surrounding the end of the post-Cold-War interlude, would be brash indeed. Since the scope of the book is so broad, it is clear that it will be read by different people for different purposes. Some readers will find here what they hope for: a broad yet reasonably detailed survey of the EU as a power in international affairs, and of the way in which the position of the EU in the international order has been affected by political will – and the lack thereof.

I draw for this analysis on an extensive body of primary and secondary literature. But the book would not have been possible without the many European officials who have been directly involved in making and executing policy and who consented to be interviewed. The backbone of the study is made up of more than 80 interviews with people who have followed the processes from up close – decision-makers, implementers and analysts – carried out in a six-year period from 2003 to 2009. Since most of the interviews were given on condition of anonymity, only the dates and places of interview will be listed. This book has benefited from the support of both institutions and individuals. Particular thanks are due also to the European Union Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Paris. Most of the present book was if not written then at least conceived during my spell as visiting fellow in Paris during the happy spring of 2008. Also, my thanks go to the Norwegian Institute for Defence

Studies and the Norwegian School of Management (BI) for their support and facilities. The Norwegian Nobel Institute in Oslo provided a safe harbour during the critical months when the heap of threads collected over time were woven together.

For funding, I am grateful to the Research Council of Norway. I should also like to register my particular gratitude to the staff at the Norwegian Nobel Institute library in Oslo for their patience in dealing with my endless loan requests. Also, thanks are owed to the librarians at the University Library in Cambridge who let me work in the Rare Documents Room leafing through old books in search of the idea of Europe. Whatever the failings of the book, they would certainly have been greater without the kind help of friends and colleagues. Finally, this book could not have been written in such a short period had it not been for the good humour of my wife, Anne Kristine, whose loyal support and cheerful counsel made it possible.



Introduction and Basic Arguments

You that Mitchel's prayer have heard – 'Send war in our time,
O Lord!' – Know that when all words are said – And a man
is fighting mad – Something drops from eyes long blind – He
completes his partial mind (...). Even the wisest man grows
tense – With some sort of violence – Before he can accomplish
fate – Know his work or choose his mate.¹

William Butler Yeats' (1865–1939) words provide a fitting point of departure for a work about the European Union (EU) coming into being as a power with passions, needs and interests. Since 1999 the EU has gradually and purposefully developed a capacity to act: diplomatically, economically and, most importantly, militarily. It is in its ability to coerce that the EU departs from the ranks of international organisations and becomes something different, something with a 'self'. The Union is a relatively young political entity, having found its economic, social and political form as late as 1992. The principal purpose of its first incarnation, the EEC, was to help foster economic prosperity in Europe. A second purpose, was to reduce the risk of war among European states by encouraging an indissoluble, economic interdependence among them, beginning with the heavy industries that were key sources of military power in the twentieth century. The third ambition, to act as a Union when dealing with the rest of the world, is little more than a decade old.

Why should the EU have a foreign and security policy? This fundamental question invites, as is so often the case, several other questions. Is the EU changing its nature in order to take a seat at the high table in a multipolar world order? Are we witnessing the debunking of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as a Potemkin village, a construction made to give a false impression? Or are the experience of

2 The European Union as a Small Power

American dominance, the failure to provide effective out-of-area crisis management and the re-emergence of power politics leading to a renewed determination to address the gaps and weaknesses of collective engagement? Does national foreign policy still inspire confidence, or are the peoples of Europe ready to embrace their indisputable great power potential? The present effort considers whether this last phase of the EU's security and defence policy has exposed its limits or indeed fatal flaws – or whether those who criticise the EU are being too hasty in their verdicts. The answers to these questions are inextricably tied to the future of the CFSP, the catalyst intended to unite the sum total of 27 nation states into a single policy, a single power.

During the 1990s the EU rose head and shoulders above other contenders in Europe's over institutionalized security landscape. In policy area after policy area, the Union asserted itself, even in fields in which sceptics had argued that nation states would never willingly part with their sovereignty. As a result the EU, as it stands in 2010, displays all the characteristics of a giant, except the outward trappings of power. As new states have been brought into the European security architecture, the EU has redefined its very essence from an institutionalized arena into an increasingly distinct political actor in its own right. Some of my colleagues, influenced by the idealist dogma of things international being inherently 'progressive' and things national being 'reactionary', embraced this process. Libraries are replete with analysis boldly mixing the normative and the empirical; hope and analysis regarding Europe's supposed supranational future as summarized by Michael Emerson as 'cosmopolitan democracy', a condition which

belongs to the *postmodern* idea, rejecting [the view] that great centres of state power have to be concentrated at the level of a unified jurisdiction. The idea is rather that a set of rules and codes, defined and enforced at a variety of supra- and multinational levels, largely displace the need for superpowers.²

Today such claims look curious, even a little naïve. The first decade of the new millennium has proved key assumptions on which the integrationists based their analysis to be misguided. The nation state is not withering. The unfettered enthusiasm for institution building has left the European diplomatic landscape hopelessly over-institutionalised. The enthusiasm of the 1990s for the integration project has waned. As one Austrian diplomat put it, 'the EU foreign policy is like an apple tree that does not produce apples'.³ Scorn notwithstanding; the envoy does

have a point. Looking at the issues that dominate the news headlines, the EU is rarely a factor. On the contrary, the rot that has attacked the grand oaks of the global order from the World Trade Organisation to the United Nations to NATO appears also to be eating away at the roots of the EU, inviting the question of whether the EU is a mere institution after all.

European integration has been a story in which sprints of intense activity have been followed by prolonged periods of inertia, followed by renewed optimism, followed again by disappointment. In 2010 the EU finds itself in another depression. The flurry of integration of the 1990s achieved some progress towards a 'common' foreign and security policy but left three important issues unresolved, namely delivering a workable political support system for foreign policy integration; the inability to fund the venture, stemming in part from taking in 12, in a relative sense, underdeveloped new members without fundamentally changing the redistribution mechanism, and, finally, the lack of a EU *raison d'état* to inform policy, as illustrated by the lack of common EU positions on almost every single major foreign policy challenge. The focus of the discussion in this book is on the pattern of activity of the 27-state collective in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

The book focuses on identity, history, capabilities, values, institutions, as well as hands-on crisis management. In addition to relying on existing literature, the study uses the memoirs of policymakers and public records. The backbone of this work is the more than 80 interviews conducted from 2003 to 2009 in France, Britain, Germany, the United States (US) and Belgium. The approach broadly meant carrying out extensive surveys of the academic literature and locating contentious points which were then made the main focus of the interviews. The sources covered the whole spectrum of specialists – from generals to politicians, from policy experts and academics to government and EU officials. The analysis places a particular focus on the period after 2003. That year was chosen as a marker because it represented the beginning of the CSDP in an operational sense, and the Iraq war signalled that the post-Cold War era was coming to an end.⁴ The conflict plunged the EU into a deep crisis by revealing that the creation of institutional frameworks and the pooling of forces had not been coupled with a firm consensus on the purpose of European power.

To avoid misunderstandings, the normative and empirical assumptions of this book should be stated. The first, most obvious, such assumption is that the EU is an power in international affairs. It is, admittedly, a partial and inconsistent power, but a power nonetheless that can be

dissected with the analytical tools of international relations and measured in accordance with the yardstick of power. A second assumption is that power matters and that, although it indisputably comes in various guises, power in international affairs is in the final instance linked to the force of arms. The CSDP is therefore seen as a 'litmus test' of the EU as a power. Third, the analysis is to be placed within the broad confines of the neoclassical realist tradition. The main distinguishing feature of neoclassical realism is, as Gideon Rose has noted, the view that systemic-level variables are 'translated through unit-level intervening variables such as decision-makers' perceptions and domestic state structure'.⁵ Neoclassical realists, like all classical realists, believe that the world is out there and that it thus can be explained but also that it changes.⁶

This said, the book does not knowingly seek to make a contribution to theoretical or methodological discourse. Neither is the study focused on the forces driving the shifting power patterns in international affairs; the book is about the particular case of European integration manifested in the European Union. It is not a book about the laws of power politics, or about the ebbs and flows of influence on an international level. The analysis offers thoughts on the role of the EU in the emerging multipolar world order; the emphasis is squarely on the EU side and on the process of foreign and security policy-making within the EU. It does not deal with other great powers, or with the international market or global institutions. By definition this book is unashamedly Eurocentric, as the title indeed indicates. The attempt to draw longer lines into history in respect of governance will probably interest some. To others, perhaps especially those political scientists who apply *sui generis* models to the EU, this study may offer less than they desire since it holds the EU up against the traditional benchmarks of power.

Finally, the present effort does not propose any suggestions for how the EU might make it into the ranks of the great powers, although some will read a warning into braving multipolarity in its current state. For this reason, I would ask readers to accept the analysis and conclusion for what they are intended to be: a working hypothesis arrived at conscientiously and reassessed and retested at every chance, but ever subject to alteration if a longer perspective and new evidence suggest a need for it. The book introduces the concept of 'small power' and does so knowingly inviting ridicule. After all, there have been a great many attempts at defining the EU as a civilian power, normative power, even a 'smart' or 'quiet' power. The reason for adding another concept to the list is that it places the EU in the real world, which is inhabited by states. It

is little use praising a player's prowess at soccer when the game of the day is rugby.

Ten roles of the EU

In order to explain what parts of the EU's external presence this work concerns itself with, it might be useful to briefly mention some dimensions of the EU's power and reach. The European Union is underpinned by a complex and dynamic bargain, an understanding among the states on the one hand, and within the institutions on the other. It was always more than a practical arrangement. From the beginning, the EU partnership has been bolstered by a strong sense of common values. This includes a European commitment to organise itself for both external presence and internal stability. It is an agreement to constitute and protect a European order that is universal in conception, an order that the member states could find compatible with their interests given their different levels of power and lesser abilities to affect that order. In essence the European security bargain is a presumption of cooperation in the face of instability, and common solutions to common problems that affect all the members. To this effect the EU is seen to have ten distinct, admittedly overlapping foreign policy functions:

The EU is a system of governance. Integration is an effective tool for defusing historic grievances. One of the architects behind the CFSP, Robert Cooper, is among those who see EU membership as a long-term solution to the inherent insecurity of the anarchic international system. Cooper has suggested that advanced countries are 'moving towards a system of overlapping roles and responsibilities with governments, international institutions and the private sector involved, but none entirely in control'.⁷ The case of the EU is popular with academics who are interested in studying the ways in which membership in an international organization can redirect national interests. Much has been written on this topic since Ernst Haas saw a 'supranational' style of decision-making taking hold in the Coal and Steel Community.⁸ Recent literature has been concerned with how national preferences are transformed into a common EU interest, exemplified in Simon Bulmer's book on the transfer of policy ideas between EU states.⁹ Michael E. Smith sees the trend towards consultation among national governments on foreign policy issues as part of a broader trend of 'Europeanization'.¹⁰ This process has traditionally been most pronounced in the 'heartland'

of the six founding members of the EU and has not only helped to quell nationalism, but also to nurture a nascent common European identity.

The EU is a community of values. By continuously adding new members to its ranks, European integration has been crucial in expanding a community of values and sharing a blend of free-market economics, rule of law, human rights and democracy coupled with tolerance and individualism, captured in the EU motto 'Unity in Diversity'¹¹ What sets the EU apart is that the treaty underlining cooperation clearly articulates common values. Unlike NATO, for example, the EU has consistently applied these values as a yardstick when reviewing applications for membership.¹² The values underpinning the EU are enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty on European Union. Values are an important factor in explaining the attraction of EU membership to new democracies. Policy-making in the EU is a dynamic process through which interests and objectives emerge as a result of interaction at the domestic, national and European levels. Consequently, the clear distinction between national and European politics has become less distinct, even in what has traditionally been seen as 'high politics'. Perhaps the strongest testimony to the importance of norms and values is that negotiations, diplomacy, economic interdependence and the use of inducements have gradually replaced sanctions, military deterrence and balance of power as the hallmarks of the regional order.¹³

The EU is a security community. Karl Deutsch was among the first to note how European integration helped, if not to change, then to reconsider, EU member states' perceived interests in a way that favours cooperation through consultations and participation in multilateral forums. There can be little doubt that such legitimacy has played an increasingly important role in reducing the scope of hard power in relations among the EU member states.¹⁴ To understand the logic behind the EU's external security dimension, it is necessary to keep in mind the internal security argument, which is often referred to as the Kantian or 'peace argument' for integration, and which sees integration as a bulwark against a return to Europe's troubled past of national interest-driven policies, military power balances and war as the final arbiter. Disarmament is seen as an integral part of this effort. According to this rationale, integration is a goal in itself, because the alternative is that the incentives embedded in the international system could again plunge the region into zero-sum competition. After half a decade of integration among the EU member states, the common-market area is characterized by complex interdependence, social interpenetration and strategic interaction, to such an extent that the EU resembles what Barry Buzan

calls a security complex – ‘a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot be realistically considered apart from one another’.¹⁵

The EU is an understanding among powers. Over the past two centuries, the goal shared by Europe’s three former ‘great powers’ – France, Germany and Great Britain – has been to prevent any one power from dominating the continent. The European integration project has provided the institutional framework for reconciliation between France and Germany – and no less remarkably it has done much the same for Britain. The Franco German ‘axis’ has been the primary dynamo in driving the integration project towards fulfilling the Treaty of Rome’s promise of an ‘ever closer union’.¹⁶ When Britain joined the EU in 1973, London joined Paris and Bonn in an informal grouping, a ‘*Directoire*’, known as the EU-3. The intra-European understanding – in which the most powerful states agree to submit themselves to the same rules as the smaller ones – made it possible for Europe’s many small and middle-sized states to venture into an ‘ever closer union’ with greater powers, without fear of ending up like the proverbial pig being persuaded by the hen to ‘join up to make bacon and eggs’. This understanding has also helped sustain states that might otherwise have been of doubtful durability, what Alan Milward calls a ‘European rescue of the nation state’.¹⁷ The EU’s unique role as an instrument of economic, political and security cooperation among the member states has brought Europe’s ‘great powers’ closer in matters of security and defence, opening the prospect of an EU-3 as an executive committee in pressing foreign policy matters.¹⁸

The EU is a trade bloc. Trade is one of the foreign policy fields where EU members have agreed to pool their weight and act as a Union. The EU’s share of world trade – roughly one-quarter – makes the Union the world’s largest trading federation. The EU is consequently one of the single most important actors in the negotiating process of global and regional trade regimes.¹⁹ The EU’s presence has gradually become more apparent, culminating in monetary union in 2002. The euro is the foremost symbol of European integration, as well as of European power. With a single currency, the EU is making international monetary decisions its preserve, alongside China, Japan and the US. This means that the EU is developing a presence that it did not previously possess in institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Although the 27 EU members conduct the major part of their trade with each other, the Union is collectively one of the indispensable actors in world trade politics. The financial crisis that ruptured in September 2008

has highlighted the recent changes to the global economy. The US has bypassed the WTO establishing ever more preferential trade agreements with 'privileged partners', prompting Japan, China and the EU to rush to the same. The result is what Robert H. Wade calls 'a giant spaghetti ball of bilateral trade rules'.²⁰ In practice, this means that the EU ensures its members trade status that they would have difficulties obtaining on their own. Because of its capacity to act comprehensively and consistently on behalf of such a large share of the global economy, the EU has become an indispensable player in such forums.²¹

The EU is a normative power. The concept of normative power was first developed by Ian Manners. Manners prefers to describe Europe's power as normative, and dependent on certain 'core ideals', which it tries to pass onto other nations in order to create a more peaceful world culture that is based on democracy, basic respect for human rights, and on economic rather than military dominance.²² The idea is that the EU is committed to exporting norms and thereby changing what is regarded as 'normal' in international affairs, again without relying on material incentives or physical force. While that is certainly true on an aspirational level, it is less obvious that the EU is an effective driver of 'value change' in the international system beyond the group of countries seeking EU membership. Although Michelle Pace has questioned the claims regarding the merits of such 'normative power' as a geopolitical tool, the concept remains influential in academic circles.²³ As Zaki Laïdi and others have argued the EU's power of attraction is clearly founded, at least in part, on what it is seen to represent on an ideal level.²⁴

The EU is a civilian power. The concept of 'civilian power' is inseparable from the work of François Dûchene.²⁵ Most analysts today agree that the EC and later, the EU, has played a limited but nevertheless important role as a 'civilian power' in the international system and that it relies on non-military power resources by using diplomacy, trade, aid and enlargement to further European interests abroad. Especially after the Cold War, the integration process has been used for political goals beyond the borders of the member states. Karen Smith lists the primary instruments of the CFSP as being declarations, confidential demarches to foreign governments, high-level visits, diplomatic sanctions, political dialogue, making peace proposals and dispatching special envoys.²⁶ The EU enlargement process has proved to be an important tool in teaching the new democracies in Europe the ways of liberal democracy, not only in terms of domestic and economic good governance, but also

in the conducting of foreign and security policies. This process is the only path through which new states can join the Union. The EU's neutral member states have embraced the EU's civilian efforts to promote stability in Europe and beyond. The primary significance of the EU's civilian approach has been to develop open, transparent and predictable relations with the states on its borders. Partly for these reasons the 'Pax Europa' acts as a magnet and a model for countries on the fringes of the Union.

The EU is a regional pacifier. The Union is not, of course, the only cause of the remarkably long period of peace in the region, but without the Union such key elements as the Franco German axis and the democratic transitions of Greece, Portugal and Spain would have been less smooth. Kenneth Dyson has illustrated how the EU's expansion into Central and Eastern Europe has helped to reduce the possibility of serious disputes breaking out between, and within, the new democracies.²⁷ The EU's post-conflict management in the former Yugoslav republics is the most high-profile example. The Union's strategic use of its accession process is arguably the EU's most powerful foreign policy tool. Since the US is reducing its commitments in Europe while the EU is increasing its own, it will increasingly fall to the EU to act as arbiter when regional stability in Europe is under threat. In institutional terms, it means that the Union is something more than the 'teeth' of the international community, as it has sometimes been described.²⁸ The EU derives its legitimacy from a deeper level of commitment among its member states than that of these forums, and the transformational power of EU membership is clearly a source of stability in the region, providing the dynamism and capacity to mobilize resources for actions that purely institutional bodies rarely achieve.

The EU is a humanitarian actor. The EU remains the principal interlocutor between the developed world and the less-developed majority. The EU carries out this role in a variety of fields, such as EuropeAid, the Mediterranean Dialogue and its channel of communication with 'bottom billion' countries.²⁹ Europe is the world's biggest provider of development aid, responsible for 55 per cent of global aid. The EU is the third-largest single donor of development assistance. In the 1990s, the EU constructed its aggregate development policy with EuropeAid. The European Commission plays the central role in increasing coordination with EU member states, managing one-sixth of their overall aid flows, roughly 10 per cent of global aid. There is also an increasing understanding that humanitarian policies are also

a foreign policy tool that can be used to achieve objectives, particularly in Africa. This position has increased over time, partly because of the structural limits on cooperation between very poor and relatively rich states, and partly because of ideological shifts towards doctrinal idealism that took place in the 1990s. The line between foreign aid to gain and maintain influence and the provision of foreign aid to promote development is a fine one.³⁰ Whether the EU's aid policy is an effort to augment the EU's structural power through targeted political and economic liberalization or an altruistic endeavour is a matter of continuous discussion.³¹

The EU is a power in a traditional sense. The EU is in many ways an 'accidental' power. Its role in the international system is less a result of any grand ambition than an incremental process where the sum total of many foreign policy initiatives amount to something bigger. As it has become a purveyor of the security order in Europe, the pressures for action in extended Europe and farther afield have multiplied. The Europeans have had to adopt a less robust approach than many had anticipated. The EU is as of yet not more than the sum of its parts, the collective power and reach of the EU is smaller than many of its member states. The EU's attempts at developing a global outlook is constrained by internal limitations and external pressures.³² This means that since 2003 the EU has developed a capacity to act by military, economic and political instruments, in states or regions where European interests are threatened and/or the peaceful evolution of the international community of states is under threat. The rest of the book will be dedicated to these questions of power and presence.

Rationale and outline

Why did this book need to be written? It is a fair question. There are many, arguably too many, books that deal with aspects of European integration. Although foreign policy is certainly touched upon by many of them, few tend to analyse in any detail the perhaps most obvious question: what sort of power is the European Union? As indicated in the book's title, this work is about a period of transition in which the voluntary policies of the unipolar era is giving way to an age in which many of the givens in the international system are under review. By bringing together international affairs with the dormant tradition of small power studies this book chooses a genuinely new vantage point from which to assess the EU as a foreign policy actor. Taking this path has meant imposing certain restrictions. I have had to stick to the main lines of policy and, although

I have tried to make use of the existing literature as fully as possible, most of what is original in this book comes from interviews.

The analysis rests on the twin precepts of power and presence. Both will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, so for now it suffices to note that this conceptualisation covers internal and external dimensions, decision-making and the role played by EU in the international system. The concepts do not predict the direction in which the EU is heading, but they do give a firmer analytical basis for prediction than other methods as they seek to gauge the present, not potential, power of the EU. For it is important to take the above-mentioned sets of activities into account. They are closely intermeshed and altogether easy to confuse in the EU political process. This is perhaps reasonable, considering the manner in which the EU has constructed its security dimension; spread over three poorly inter-wired 'pillars'. Perhaps as a result of these complexities, the public's expectations with regard to actual policy output have been surprisingly low despite the many tall claims that have been made about the EU as a foreign policy actor.

The main line of argument of this book is straightforward and can be summarised in six sentences. The EU is a response to and function of Europe's unique historical experience. The past decade has shown that there is policy space for greater EU engagement in European security, although the EU has not been able to play all roles with the same degree of accomplishment. There are particular concerns over its security and defence dimension where attempts at pooling resources and forming a political consensus have failed to generate the results expected. These trends, combined with shifts in global power patterns, have been accompanied by a shift in EU strategic thinking whereby great-power ambitions have been scaled down and replaced by a tendency towards hedging *vis-à-vis* the leading powers. On an operational level the track record shows that the EU's effectiveness is hampered by a 'consensus-expectations gap', owing primarily to the lack of an effective decision-making mechanism. The sum of these developments is that the EU will not be a great power, and is taking the place of a small power in the emerging multipolar international order.

Any assessment of EU foreign policy immediately runs into the problem of scope; most topics are not exclusively EU issues. This book will not concern itself with the formal frameworks for EU foreign policy-making in any great detail – that ground has already been adequately covered by others.³³ Nor will much attention be given to the bureaucratic policy-making that in many ways distinguishes the EU as a strategic actor.³⁴ Instead the study will focus on Europe as an actor in real-world security

politics. In this sense, the book builds on the analysis and findings from *America, the EU and Strategic Culture: Renegotiating the Transatlantic Bargain*, which focused on events and trends in the period 1998–2003.³⁵ An alternative approach would perhaps have been to continue the focus on EU–US relations. However, changes in the international system warrant a reappraisal of the EU as an actor under the changed circumstances. The US remains important, but it is no longer an indispensable variable. The aim is to take stock of the relative position of state foreign policies and the collective operations of the European ‘power’, and to gain a sense of the trajectories of the process, as revealed through the trial of live fire international politics.

With regard to structure, the analysis moves from the historical to the present; from the general to the specific. A discussion contextualizing the EU as a historical phenomenon is followed by four core chapters; first an overview of the main substantive challenges that have preoccupied the EU security agenda since the Iraq war. This is followed in Chapter 4 by a discussion of shifts in EU strategic thinking over the same period. Chapter 5 looks into the specifics of EU crisis management with the humanitarian intervention in Darfur as an illustrative case. This leads into a discussion of consensus as the Achilles heel of European foreign and security policy integration. The empirical and conceptual aspects are brought together Chapter 7, which analyses the EU as a player in the international system in terms of capabilities, history, geopolitics and values and finds that it more than anything resembles a small power. Chapter 8 is devoted to what role the EU as a small power can be expected to play under multipolarity. The concluding chapter summarizes the findings and points towards some of the urgent challenges facing the EU as a small power.

1

The Anatomy of EU Security

The symbolic importance of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP, formerly ESDP) goes beyond its actual and potential real-world impact; it is the vanguard of the EU's international presence. No initiative more clearly symbolizes the ambition to develop a political union than the CSDP. Anne Deighton described it as breaking 'glass ceiling of Europe's self-denying ordinance on EU access to military competencies'. Javier Solana concurred that the CSDP is seen to be the 'teeth' of the Common Foreign and Security Policy – 'with the CSDP we are giving ourselves the tools to deliver'.¹ The currency of hard power has changed little over the centuries. The ability to conduct foreign policies, maintain independent relations with other powers depends in the final instance on the ability to raise and command armies.² For this reason the CSDP is the best indicator of whether a new power is indeed rising in Europe. Hence the book's focus on security and defence policy.

Studying the CFSP/CSDP nexus is considered an integral element that represents an even greater challenge than other EU-related topics. This mainly because the CFSP is not only a unique form of international cooperation; it is also a unique form of EU cooperation. The foreign policy dimension fits uneasily with the parameters of integration theory because it is not as *sui generis* as the Union, it fits uneasily into mainstream international theory because it is too unique. This is part and parcel why there are few good books on the topic. Most start off from a muddled starting point and, after muddling through the analysis, end up in equally muddled conclusions. All too often concepts are applied in order to provide pretence of order and clarity where, in fact, there is little of either. The result is that much of the existing literature of EU foreign policy reads like H. C. Andersen's fairy tale, 'The Emperor's New Clothes' where all claim to see something that does not actually exist.

In order to start on an even keel, a definition of terms employed is required. The first question that needs asking is – what are ‘security and defence policies’ in an EU context? The answer would have been considerably easier to pinpoint only two decades ago, when most readers would have had an instinctive understanding of security – made manifest by the annual Soviet Mayday parade in Moscow. The CSDP is a true-born child of the post-Cold War, a period characterized by an unusually benign security climate for the Western democracies. As a result the tasks the EU engages in are still, for the most part, the same tasks that were defined in the 1992 WEU Petersberg Declaration as humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace keeping and crisis management.³ The corresponding range of policy instruments are the same as state actors – diplomatic, economic and military. This includes the exercise of ‘hard power’ that stems from military and economic means and which reflects an actor’s ability to coerce, induce and to resist attempts at such. These were the areas the CFSP/CSDP complex was meant to improve.

Institutions, capabilities and consensus

It is usually assumed that the primary factors shaping the foreign policies of the European Union are internal characteristics such as values, norms, discourse, capabilities, decision-making procedures and institutional frameworks. Scholars generally find the multidimensional, fragmented nature of EU policy-making sufficiently complex, without adding exogenous variables into the mix. Due to its unique multilateral architecture and preference for multilateral engagement, displayed foreign policy behaviour has received surprisingly little attention. There have been very few assessments of the Union’s ability to reconcile means and ends. European Union mandarins can be said to have encouraged this perspective. When evaluating EU foreign policies, scholars frequently find that the EU policymakers have set the parameters for success so low that failure is not an option.

The institutional structures governing EU foreign and security policy are dissimilar from those of its nation state counterparts. In pluralistic democracies, power and legitimacy are transmitted bottom-up through the democratic process. The EU foreign policy institutions cannot claim a similar democratic legitimacy. The EU Commission is dependent on the member states with which it shares the right of initiative. Actors are state actors. The member states figure more prominently in the forward-looking, or strategic, elements of the EU foreign policy-making process which is characterized by intergovernmental bargaining. This has two

important effects in that it curtails the mandate of the EU policymakers, but also serves to insulate them from public opinion and electoral politics.

The permanent institutional structures that govern the CSDP were agreed at the 2000 EU summit in Feira. The European Council of Heads of State and Government make decisions pertaining to the CFSP unanimously through joint actions and common positions. The overall responsibility for the CSDP ultimately lies with the General Affairs Council (GAC), which normally consists of the foreign ministers of the 27 EU countries. This structure reflects the intergovernmental nature of the CSDP; that is, it will operate based on consensus among the 27 member governments, in interplay with the 'communitarian' method of policy-making between the Council, European Commission and European Parliament. The Policy, Planning (and Early Warning) Unit (PPU), consisting of civilian experts, report to the High Representative and advise him on defence issues. It also contains a Situation Centre, which reports both to The High Representative and the Military Staff. The Policy Unit is to draft position papers and briefings for High Representative as well as monitor international developments. The EU Military Committee (EUMC), is composed of the Chiefs of Defence represented by their military representatives. The EUMC advises the EU on military matters. The EU Military Staff (EUMS) is the EU's only permanent military body. It informs and prepares the deliberations of the Military Committee and the Political and Security Committee (COPS) on defence issues.

The Treaty of Nice defined the key tasks of the EUMS, which are early warning, situation assessment and strategic planning for Petersberg tasks as well as identifying the relevant forces from the forces catalogue. Although the EU security agencies are limited, the EU possesses institutional frameworks through which policies are implemented. In addition to the core agencies the EU has a great many additional institutions, including a Policy, Planning and Early Warning Unit, a Political and Security Committee, a Military Committee, a Military Staff and a Situation Centre, a General Affairs and External Relations Council, a Committee of the Permanent Representatives, and a Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management. Although the EU has a Planning Cell, any military operations of scale are directed through frameworks available in France, Germany and Britain of NATO. The operational nature of the institutional structures is illustrated by the EU's engagement in a number of small-scale pre- and post-conflict missions from Indonesia, to Afghanistan, Chad, Georgia and Kosovo.⁴

The CFSP has come a long way on an institutional level since the 1992 Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU) merged the European Political Cooperation (EPC) secretariat into the Council Secretariat as the CFSP unit. By 2010 the EU's capabilities are governed by a comprehensive, if somewhat unevenly integrated, institutional structure.⁵ Organigrammes are a poor guide to the actual workings of the CFSP/CSDP (and perhaps a reason why they are rarely drawn. See Figure 1.1). Important-sounding acronyms frequently cover up skeleton outfits with few actual resources. The existing structures are surprisingly poorly integrated. The disunity stems, in part, from the practice of 'planting', institutional seeds as parts of intergovernmental compromises with the hope that they may over time grow into a more important agency. And those who do not wish for this plant to grow seek to deny it light and water – in the EU case access and information. This has everything to do with the competing visions for the EU security policy. The COPS, with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) at its head, has a specific responsibility for the CSDP. The primary duty of COPS is to help formulate, coordinate and implement CFSP but also to oversee new security policy arrangements in cooperation with the senior officials, who prepare foreign policies at a national level.

In terms of decision-making mechanisms, it is important to keep in mind that the EU is not a strong centralized federation like the United States, but rather a weak federation with a fragmented centre. Examining power and presence in the context of EU foreign policy is more difficult than analysing any single member state. The Common Foreign and Security Policy framework was originally assigned to an explicitly intergovernmental 'pillar'.⁶ For reasons examined in greater detail in the next chapter, the CFSP is frequently not a *common* policy in the sense indicated in the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU). It is a coordination mechanism in which input from EU institutions is fed alongside input from the member states. The member states pursue their parallel national foreign policies and maintain control over the fiscal, military and diplomatic resources that can be called upon by the EU. This precludes the EU from interacting in a consistent and deliberate manner with other international actors.

While the member states and formal institutional frameworks clearly are indispensable factors in shaping EU foreign and security policies, two informal structures should not be underestimated: notably, the 'Troika' (which comprises the holder of the rotating EU Presidency, alongside the Commissioner for External Relations and the High Representative)⁷

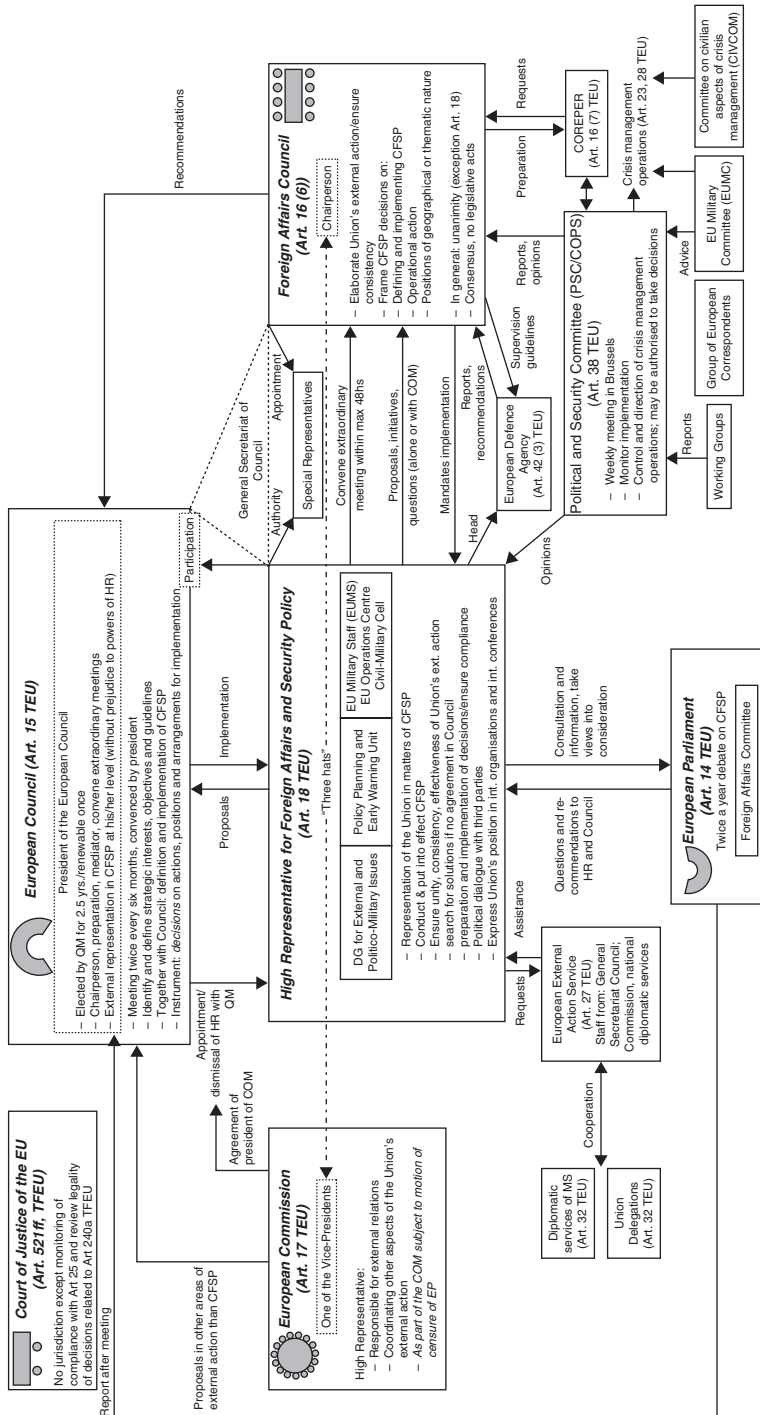


Figure 1.1 The Lisbon Treaty Institutional Architecture of CFSP/CSDP
Source: Based on Wessels, 2004: 17.

and informal directorates, notably the 'EU-3' (Germany, France and Britain, which can be added to the list of primary actors). In the EU process, the importance of individual actors varies with the circumstances, albeit perhaps not in the way one might expect, as seen in the case studies. When reading academic tracts about EU security one could get a sense that this exists in some sort of a postmodern vacuum. It does not. European security remains a part of a transatlantic security bargain, sometimes referred to as the transatlantic alliance or just 'the West'. The rise of the EU security and defence is surely an important development in a transatlantic context, but arguably more so for Europe.⁸

The tension between national interest and European interests is not to be underestimated. Neither is the fact that when they clash, the latter most often loses out. The intricacies of the decision-making process (Figure 1.1) allows for initiatives to be blocked, neutered or derailed with relative ease. There is a pattern where even when a government has a strong mandate – its scope of foreign policy leeway can be narrow; for instance, the persistent unwillingness of British governments to challenge the 'special relationship' by departing from the core policies of the United States, French patronage towards francophone states or indeed Germany shielding Russia from EU critique. In cases when the government is heterogeneous or ever on the verge of collapse, autonomy may well mean an even greater difficulty in breaking out of domestically imposed constraints, which gives less scope to conduct common EU policies.

Different countries handle security challenges differently. Threat of terrorism, or political violence, for instance – will be filtered through a long list of factors such as historical experiences, the organization and competences of the army and police, the political culture, the degree of polarization, the militancy of the civil society, the strengths of extremist groupings and the constitutional powers of the executive. All this contributes to demarcate the common ground among the 27 member countries. This is the reason why the CFSP/CSDP has not been given an effective decision-making mechanism, which more than anything else gives the EU foreign policy its distinct flair. Decisions are generally made by consensus, which normally is arrived at through carefully crafted ambiguities, consensus building and process-structuring.⁹ This process, sometimes referred to as the 'black box' includes interpenetrating elites, bureaucratic politics, horse-trading, process-management and patient incrementalism. The result is that it is often hard to establish the basics, such as whether a genuine decision has been made, and if so when and by whom. Although many in Brussels would have

preferred a less byzantine arrangement there is an understanding that the current *modus operandi* is the least noisy and therefore least politically divisive. There is – as the saying goes – always an election coming up somewhere.

Yet, the system does not operate under a perpetual threat of veto. The council, where national governments meet, rarely hold votes, preferring to work towards consensus. Even so, when countries hold a veto, they can sit out negotiations. No state, however, likes to end up isolated. This, at least in theory, tends to push everyone towards compromise, and ‘more Europe’. Michael Smith elaborates this logic: ‘It is evident that there is an intimate linkage between the internal development of the EU and its institutions and the broader European order, which is not solely attributable to the interests, power or policies of major European states.’ He concludes: ‘Whilst some analysts have emphasised this connection, it is doubtful whether it can be accounted for simply within an inter-state or inter-governmental framework.’¹⁰ Although decision-making by consensus certainly limits policy output, the EU states have generated a cumulative body of common foreign and security policies characterized by common positions and joint actions. For all its shortcomings, the CFSP has brought about a sea-change in the practice and ambience of foreign policy-making. This is due not least to the fact that the *modus operandi* of voluntary security, combined with the ineffective decision-making mechanism, has proven fertile ground for bureaucratic politics, where the High Representative and Council and Commission staff play essential roles in formulating EU foreign and security policy. In an interview, a Council official stated: ‘We are charged with identifying the issue areas where there is an overlap in terms of means and ends among the member states.’ She later went on to say, ‘Alongside the rotating presidency, it is our job to play the role of honest broker’.¹¹

Through a blend of incrementalism and pragmatism, the CFSP staff plays an important, if not widely acknowledged, role in setting the EU security agenda. This is the primary reason why EU foreign policies do not as Simon Nuttall correctly points out, represent the lowest common denominator, but rather a median of the range of national views.¹² This common perspective is not always driven by altruistic ‘common good’ internationalism, but is at times also clearly self-interested. An embryonic EU *raison d’etat* clearly exists even if it is, admittedly, irregular in appearance and fleeting in presence.¹³ One possible explanation is that at times national governments use international cooperation to gain influence in the domestic political arena and to overcome internal opposition to

their preferred policies. Klaus Dieter Wolf argues that highly developed democracies tend to constrain policymakers with a great number of checks and balances and that policymakers can use intergovernmental governance as a means of escaping these restrictions.¹⁴

What Lisbon changed

The Lisbon Treaty was born from the 2001 Laeken declaration, which called on the EU to become 'more democratic, transparent and effective', with the help of simplified legal foundations. The treaty sets a grand, if not altogether realistic, goal for EU foreign policy: 'The Union's competence in matters of common foreign and security policy shall cover all areas of foreign policy.'¹⁵ The Lisbon treaty introduces some innovations aimed at rationalizing the EU's institutional architecture. It creates a new standing president to chair meetings of national governments in the European Council, and a foreign-policy chief to chair meetings of foreign ministers. The post of semi-permanent president is intended to reduce the importance of the Presidency significantly by separating the European Council (EU heads of state or government) from the Council of the European Union. The post was given to former Belgian Prime Minister Herman van Rompuy, who is meant to represent the EU and preside over the Council meetings. The Lisbon treaty does not define the president's purview, beyond organizing summit meetings of the European Council and representing the EU in meetings with world leaders.

Under the Lisbon Treaty, provisions on EU's external action will continue to be found in two separate treaties. This represents an abandonment of the idea of consolidating the EU's main treaties into a single text. In the field of the EU's external action, the central declared aim of the Treaty reform process has been to achieve greater coherence between the 'Community' and the intergovernmental elements of policy. Under the Lisbon Treaty, the Constitutional Treaty chapter which set out principles and objectives for EU's external action is added to the amended TEU. This would constitute a new 'general provisions' on the EU's external action in the TEU.¹⁶ The TEU will then deal in a following chapter with 'Specific provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy'.¹⁷ Chapter V, the part of the TEU which contains both chapters are renamed 'General provisions on the Union's external action and specific provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy'.¹⁸

The Lisbon Treaty introduces four notable changes of wording in relation to general provisions of the CFSP. One, the CFSP will be based on

‘the achievement of an ever-increasing degree of convergence of member states’ actions.¹⁹ The Lisbon Treaty charge the European Council – the body of EU heads of state or government – with determining ‘the strategic interests and objectives of the Union’ for all the EU’s external action.²⁰ Two, the Lisbon Treaty encourages the members to ‘comply with the Union’s action’ in the area of the CFSP.²¹ Three, the objective of consultation among member states is listed to be that of determining a ‘common approach’.²² And four, each member state is asked to consult the others within the European Council to ensure, through the convergence of their actions, that the Union is able to assert its interests and values on the international scene.²³ The inclusion of a mutual defence clause within the Treaty of Lisbon can also be considered to be a major development in common European defence initiatives. Member states, in case of armed aggression on their territory, will be provided ‘aid and assistance by all means in their power’.²⁴

The Lisbon Treaty retains all the provisions of the CFSP/CSDP from the ill-fated Constitutional Treaty. There are, however, minor changes: the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs is replaced by a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, combining foreign, security and aid portfolios. Another new post is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy that bridges the Council and the Commission, by combining the roles of the present High Representative for CFSP in the Council and the Commissioner for External Relations in the Commission. In support of his/her new mission, the HR will be assisted by the creation of a European External Action Service (EEAS) of 5000–7000 staffers of which some 3000 will be diplomats around the globe. The post was given to a relatively unknown British politician, Catherine Ashton. Two new Declarations attached to the Treaty (30 and 31) underline, that the new provisions ‘do not affect the responsibilities of the member states, as they currently exist, for the formulation and conduct of their foreign policy nor of their national representation in third countries and international organisations’; neither do they ‘prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of the member states’ or ‘the primary responsibility of the Security Council and of its members for the maintenance of international peace and security’.²⁵

The Lisbon Treaty that amends the existing treaties aims to streamline the institutional architecture and to encourage collective action. According to Antonio Missiroli, ‘On the whole, the new treaty offers various opportunities for greater policy coherence, effectiveness and visibility, coupled with a number of open questions related to its actual

implementation'.²⁶ Although certainly an achievement, the treaty is a far cry from making the EU into a 'single state with one army, one constitution and one foreign policy' that German Foreign Minister Joschka Fisher had called for in 1998, at the outset of the process.²⁷ As such the current structure will be replaced as all functions will be merged into the European Union, which for the first time will have a single legal personality.²⁸ Hitherto, the EC has had this attribute, but not the EU. The new provision does not by itself make the Union's legal capacity the same as that of a state.²⁹ This could make the EU a more unitary actor. For most casual observers the most noticeable difference was a change of acronym as the ESDP changed into the CSDP, the Common Security and Defence Policy, which will be used throughout in this book. What the Lisbon Treaty does not change is that the European Council retains the sole responsibility to define the principles and general guidelines for the CFSP/CSDP, as well as the common strategies to be implemented by the EU. In Pillar II, the EU has embraced unanimity; that is, in principle, each of the 27 members has an absolute veto over any policy.³⁰

Although the new provisions introduce a number of institutional changes that will require further compromises and elaboration the new treaty does not challenge the essential intergovernmental nature of foreign and security policy decision-making. The Lisbon Treaty inserts a unanimity requirement at European Council level into areas of external action otherwise governed by the 'community method'.³¹ The European Council's ability to make determinations of 'strategic interests and objectives' for all of the EU's external actions represents a change from the current Treaties. Under the Lisbon Treaty, the 'Community' areas of EU's external action continue to comprise trade, development assistance and other types of cooperation with third countries. Issues such as humanitarian aid and urgent financial assistance have become subject to qualified majority voting.³² The political positions and political will among the member states are more important than institutional changes in determining the quality of EU foreign policy. How the new EU foreign policy will operate is far from certain. Commentators were underwhelmed by the new HR and Council President. One German newspaper labelled it 'Selbstverzwergung' – a word meaning 'making oneself into a dwarf'.³³ An EU Commission official interviewed used more sober terms:

It is a real shame. Apparently all actors are given a greater hand without anybody losing any. This is a fallacy. The result is that the next five to ten years will likely more than anything be defined with internal infighting as the various actors establish their checks

and balances. The question is whether it is worth the effort. If the member states do lend their ambitions and abilities to the venture it will turn into a ridicule-inviting exercise, another League of Nations.³⁴

Power and powers in international politics

'Power is', as Leslie Gelb begins the book *Power Rules*, 'the heart of foreign policy'.³⁵ Perhaps because the concept of power is the basic currency in international relations, it is also difficult to delineate. Most attempts at definition tend to start off with Bertrand Russell's definition: 'Power is the production of intended effects'; or, as Gelb has it, 'power is the capacity to get people to do what they don't want to do, by induction and coercion, using one's resources and position'.³⁶ Power has two main components, namely, the resources and the effects of influence. The ability to exert influence depends on the resources that can be mobilized. Resources vary in relevance. A given capability – military, economic or diplomatic – might be indispensable in one situation and irrelevant in another. Resources translate into influence only if they can be mobilized for political purpose.

The above is no new observation. Scholars such as Max Weber, R. H. Tawney and Kjell Goldmann all define power in terms of the ability of the influencing party to attain his objectives, what is sometimes referred to as 'the influencer's preferences definition of power'.³⁷ Graham T. Allison (1971) was one of the first scholars to challenge this approach systematically by objecting that clear-cut intention is not such a normal feature of the human consciousness as academicians often presuppose and that often the will is not unitary which undermines the assumed criteria for power to operate. This goes against the criticism that that intentions and goals cannot be reasonably ascribed to collective actors such as the EU. There is actually very little difference between identifying the preferences of a power and the powers of other complex actors such as the EU. Therefore the monitoring of the strategic use of power is, as Ken Booth has pointed out, 'an art rather than a science'.³⁸ The complex games that are played among institutions, agencies and individuals in Washington are similar to those carried out in Brussels. Although we know the intricacies of EU decision-making, the statement 'the EU failed to meet its objectives in Darfur' is clearly a meaningful statement.

Since the end of the Cold War, redefining power has become somewhat of a rite of passage for scholars eager to earn their professorial spurs. The initial schism was that of 'hard' power versus 'soft' power,

where hard power was seen as relating to coercive power – both military and economic – and soft power was seen to refer to diplomacy and cultural influences. Joseph Nye defined soft power as ‘the power to make the other want the same as yourself’ by acting as a model or example.³⁹ In Europe this morphed into ‘normative power’. The obvious problem is that normative power fails the basic test of delivering intended outcomes. Ian Manners’ claim that normative power works like ‘water on stone’, as opposed to ‘napalm in the morning’ – which is a refreshing if not altogether persuasive standpoint. Extending the time horizon does not absolve it from intentionality.⁴⁰ It replaces the aspects perceived to be underestimated by hard power with an exclusive focus on the same soft power aspects. The proponents of normative power fail to see that normative and soft power is proportional to hard power, that normative power without hard power to back it up is – to stay in the world of metaphors – a velvet glove without an iron fist inside it.

The analysis of power has tended to be treated as the domain of realism.⁴¹ Most realists set out from the assumption that power is one actor influencing another to do what it would not otherwise do. This is by no means an uncomplicated perspective. Foreign policy actions often have unintended consequences. The many volumes written on the ‘paradoxes of power’ are testimony to the often erratic link between capabilities and outcomes.⁴² Since focus here is on relations between the EU and external actors the book focuses on direct power, in a relationship between actors. The debate over the existence and nature of power and powers pivots off what Barnett and Duvall calls ‘compulsory power’.⁴³ In his study of small powers in international relations David Vital is right in stressing the duality of power in the sense it is not only about being able to influence, it is also to resist adverse external pressure.⁴⁴ There is a direct if imperfect transmission belt from being powerful to being a power. The world has changed little since the day of Thucydides: ‘The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.’

Power manifests itself in practice, potential power does not count. But, should potential plus intention be equated to the existence of power? Kenneth Waltz, among others, has noted that for those at the receiving end, power does not hinge on intentionality.⁴⁵ Power operates even when those who directly dominate others are not conscious of the effects produced by their actions. An actor that does not control the means of power, however potentially formidable, will not exercise directly controlling effects similar to those who do. To the extent that displayed power is the key, then, evidence

of power may best be found not in the intentions of the subject but instead in the consequences as viewed from the objects of that power. Often an aggressive posture can be an indicator of weakness rather than strength. Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is attributed with the quote: 'Being powerful is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you are not.' In order to better understand the power of the EU, it is necessary to consider the European Union's presence as a power on an international level. The term 'presence' is here intentionally chosen for its lack of precision; the most recent relevant debates on this question goes under the heading 'actorness'. Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler have written extensively on this subject.⁴⁶ Presence is important in an EU context because it captures the challenges involved in EU's aspiration to become a *power*. According to Jack Nagel (1975) the internal dynamics of a social entity – the behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, or policies of an actor is clearly of importance in power relations.⁴⁷ After all, possessing a 'self' is a precondition for self-interested behaviour. Christopher Hill asserted that 'true actorness' requires 'a clear identity and a self-contained decision-making system' as well as the 'practical capabilities to effect policy'.⁴⁸ In other words, powers occur at the intersection of three interlocking dimensions: presence, procedure and capability. While presence alludes to the relationship between the actors and third-party expectations, procedure refers to factors in the policy process environment that enable or impede deliberate action. Finally, the capability dimension refers to the capacity to formulate and carry out foreign and security policies once they have been agreed.

Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall consider power in two main analytical dimensions: the social relations through which power works; and the social relations through which effects are produced.⁴⁹ Consequently, because great powers command military strength their non-coercive measures are also more effective. The relevance of thinking about non-coercive power is relevant to the tendency among some academicians to applaud multilateral means and see foregoing unilateral instruments as evidence of an EU bid for great power status. The concept of displayed power also invites the question of whether the reliance on coercive means is necessary for being seen to belong in the top power league. Displayed power concerns the direct control of others, but consists of a variety of mechanisms that allow one party to control the behaviour and circumstances of another. Almost all studies of power in international relations focus on great power politics and it will for this

reason not be discussed here. For, as László Réczei noted, power status hinges on the capacity for violence:

If the notion of war were unknown in international relations, the definition of 'small power' would have no significance; just as in the domestic life of a nation it has no significance it has no significance whether a man is less tall or has a weaker physique than his fellow citizen.⁵⁰

In his seminal study of great and small powers in international law, Karol Wolfke notes that 'the existence of great and small powers side by side has always been a source of particular difficulties and international conflicts'.⁵¹ This study takes a view where great powers and small powers distinguish themselves through patterns of behaviour. Small powers are not great powers in a small shape – or oversized small states. A great power is an actor or state that has the ability to exert its influence on a global scale. Great powers characteristically possess military, economic, diplomatic and cultural might, which compel other actors to take them into consideration when making policy decisions. A. F. K. Organski has observed that 'world politics consists primarily of the doings of America and Russia, of Britain and China and of the other great nations'.⁵² This is only partially true. Over time the impact of a small power in the international system may never equal or surpass the impact of greater powers. Nevertheless small powers can influence the workings of the international system together with other states causing reactions from other nations. Small powers are instruments of great powers and they are actors; they may act to strengthen stability or they may promote chaos. They may at times be dominated, but they cannot be ignored.

There is also another reason why it is timely to reintroduce the small power category. In past multipolar systems the shifting allegiances of small powers have been an indicator of greater systemic shifts. The reason is that small powers are more mobile in terms of balancing and bandwagoning and can be disproportionately important when the system is in flux. As Robert Rothstein write about the run-up to the First World War, 'As the solidarity of the great powers crumbled, the status of the small powers rose and rose beyond any relationship to their *apparent* power'. He concludes 'The small powers were the unintended beneficiaries of a major structural alternation of the international system'.⁵³ So small powers are different from small states who are the recipients of systemic shifts; small powers are actors. This shifts attention to the traits that distinguish small powers as actors in the international system.

Small power politics

There is a considerable literature on the foreign policy challenges of non-great powers, termed variously as middle powers, small states, regional powers, secondary powers and the like.⁵⁴ There is no agreement about the distinction between small powers and the equally frequently used term 'middle powers'. The father of modern geopolitics, Rudolf Kjellén subdivides what he calls 'the middle class' of powers into 'middle powers' and 'small powers', the former being distinguished by greater military strength and a great-power past.⁵⁵ Since this work builds on definitions first employed by Robert Rothstein, 'small power' will be used throughout. The formalization of the division between small and great powers is usually seen to have come about with the signing of the Treaty of Chaumont in 1814. Before that the assumption had been that all independent states were in theory equal regardless of physical strength and responsibilities.⁵⁶ Most small state studies and virtually all inquiries into presence have defined small powers by what they are not. Lumping small powers and small states together, in a 'not great power' category is unhelpful because being less powerful is not the same as being powerless.

From the second half of the twentieth century, the bipolar power blocs decreased the strategic room for manoeuvre for smaller actors. The late 1960s and early 1970s briefly saw strategic studies orienting towards smaller actors. The problem with bundling all small actors together is that the members of the group have so little in common that little can be learnt from seeing them together. A more fine-masked classification is therefore required. There are several possible ways of defining a small power. Robert Rothstein points out in the only comprehensive book on small powers written to date that most attempts at definitions have been in reference to quantifiable entities. An obvious contemporary yardstick could be weapons technologies – great powers have nuclear weapons, small powers do not; or prestigious great powers have a seat at the UN Security Council while small powers do not.⁵⁷

Different point of entry is in reference to resources, for example in terms of men in uniform or pieces of cannon.⁵⁸ Rothstein is himself sceptical of a definition based solely on objective or tangible criteria, since it carries the danger – through an 'A is stronger than B but is weaker than C' logic – of ending up projecting a hierarchy on the international system that does not actually exist. Instead, he adopts a definition in which small powers are seen to 'develop behavioural patterns which decisively separate them from non-group members'.⁵⁹ In other words, a small power is as a small power does. Small powers are something

more than or different from great powers writ small. This study couples this assertion with Robert Keohane's distinction between different categories of powers by examining their impact on the international system.⁶⁰ Keohane sees three types of powers: 'system-determining', that is, those that can influence the international system through unilateral or multilateral action; 'system-affecting', that is, those that cannot influence the international system on their own but that can do so together with other states; and 'system-ineffectual', that is, those that adjust to the international system and cannot change it. Small power is a term used in the field of international relations to describe states that are not small states or great powers, but still command influence and international recognition. They are not giants, but nevertheless, what Stephen Walt calls, 'states that matter'.⁶¹

One method for identifying small power status is by focusing on behavioural attributes. This entails that small powers can be distinguished from great powers and small states by their foreign policy behaviour. Robert Rothstein sees small power behaviour as unique 'because it rests on a perspective which is itself unique'.⁶² Small powers carve out a niche for themselves by pursuing a narrow range and particular types of foreign policy interest. In this way small powers are actors that mobilize their military, diplomatic and economic resources in the service of their security, autonomy, wealth and prestige. They attempt to increase their total resources at the expense of their neighbours. Such a policy springs from questions of how to avoid, mitigate, or postpone conflict and how to resist superior force once conflict has developed.

Different scholars have adopted different approaches and produced a range of conclusions while attempting to define what these rules of thumb are.⁶³ However, to reach a single definition has proved elusive, because of the numerous potential variables and their particular interpretation under given conditions. Although much research analyses small powers as strategic actors, in the surveyed literature, some recurrent traits can be discerned. That is the format chosen below to define as succinctly as possible the essential norms of small power strategic culture. They are nowhere stated in the research cannon as comprehensively as in what follows, but can be imputed legitimately on a basis of observed behaviour, as well as on the basis of the diverse statements of the small power research and diplomatic tracts. This *modus operandi* is not deterministic. Yet it is equally clear that statesmen often operate with a set of loosely defined 'rules of thumb' based upon their experience and perception of the international environment. One means of

defining a set of observed and imputable behavioural norm is through a descriptive summary that minimizes duplication.⁶⁴ In the simplest terms and the most convenient definitions:

1. The strategic behaviour of small powers is characterized by dependence. A small power recognizes that it cannot obtain security by reliance on its own capabilities alone.⁶⁵ A small power is one which, in times of systemic stability, is a dispensable and non-decisive increment to a great power's total array of political and military resources. Depending on their previous experiences with great power politics, small powers tend towards either a policy of neutrality or a policy of alliance.⁶⁶ When in an alliance, small powers tend to follow the alliance leader closely, lend it what support they can, and avoid antagonizing it.⁶⁷ It is partly for these reasons small powers and small states in close proximity to great powers are the most likely candidates for bandwagoning.⁶⁸ In times of systemic transition small powers are prone to seek to opt out of great power politics by adopting hedging strategies.⁶⁹
2. Small powers and small states are primary beneficiaries of international institutions.⁷⁰ A small power will often seek to minimize the costs of conducting foreign policy and increase the weight behind its policies by engaging in concerted efforts with other actors. This leads to a generally high degree of participation in and support for international organizations. Formal rules are actively encouraged to curb the great powers and increase their own power and influence.⁷¹ Cooper, Higgott and Nossal identify small powers by 'their tendency to pursue multilateral solutions to international problems, their tendency to embrace compromise positions in international disputes, and their tendency to embrace notions of "good international citizenship" to guide their diplomacy'.⁷²
3. Although themselves sometimes opportunistic, small powers are generally weary of the *realpolitik* associated with unbridled great power politics.⁷³ They differ from great powers in their attitudes towards risk and are forced by their limited resources, their location and the system to prioritize more strictly, establishing a hierarchy of risks while attempting to minimize those considered to be most serious.⁷⁴ Perhaps for this reason small powers are more likely to undertake intervention closer to home.⁷⁵ Small power policies, holds David Vital, are aimed at altering the external environment by 'reducing an unfavourable discrepancy in strength, broadening the field of manoeuvre and choice, and increasing the total resources on which the state can count in

times of stress⁷⁶ Small powers are therefore most often status quo oriented, in the sense that they *wish to be seen* as upholding the established order even if they are themselves violating the rules. They work within the established order, rather than attempting to revise the order itself. Small powers see more dangers than opportunities in unregulated international politics, which leads them to frequently taking to moral and normative policy positions.⁷⁷

4. In international affairs the smaller they come, the harder they fall. Small powers are local and defensive by nature. Because of the risks of being wiped off the map when challenging greater powers they can have 'only defensive ambitions'.⁷⁸ Small powers are not revisionist and their hope of altering their relative inferiority is in order to become a less attractive target. They have a narrower range of interests and less freedom of activity. Anette Fox sees small powers as regional powers in the sense that their demands are restricted to their own and immediately adjacent areas, while great powers exert their influence on a global scale.⁷⁹ Subsequently, small power strategic behaviour is characterized by a general reluctance to coerce and a tendency to promote multilateral non-military solutions to security challenges.⁸⁰ Small power leaders concentrate on local or regional threats and challenges because they are better equipped to do this than to evaluate fully or address the global issues.

This study takes the same view as Robert Rothstein, namely that 'small powers' do not make up a fixed group but rather the weaker state in any given situation. 'Small' is a quantitative term, but it is also a qualitative and relational one. In international studies, the concept is often used to denote something 'un-powerful'. But this is not necessarily the case. Small powers can be relatively strong, and great powers can be relatively weak. As Robert Keohane points out, small states and small powers frequently make the mechanisms of the international system work to preserve their interests.⁸¹ As previously discussed, strategy is the endeavour to reconcile the ends and means for powers with extensive interests and obligations.⁸² Not all small powers are strategic actors – but some are. Small powers can be remarkably adept at manoeuvring in the international system to further their strategic ambitions.

For a small power to develop a strategy reconciling ends and means, it must operate within the established power spectrum with the capacity to persuade, reward, deter and coerce – and be able to resist attempts at such. A primary curbing factor for small powers that attempt to become

strategic actors is the limited amount of power resources that can be mobilized for strategic use. The quantity of capabilities – be it pieces of cannon or currency reserves – is certainly important in this respect, but far from sufficient. Depending on context, certain capabilities are more relevant than others. They are more coveted as rewards or more disagreeable as retribution. The relevance and credibility of a capability will always be subject to the ability to mobilize it for strategic purposes. Nuclear weapons are of little use in trade disputes. Small powers are frequently disproportionately strong in certain sectors. Maurice East sees such ‘variable geometry’, where relative strength is coupled with relative weakness, as a defining trait of small powers as strategic actors.⁸³

The above mentioned behavioural patterns all orbit the twin precepts of dependence and threat. Of equal importance to capabilities is the ability to contrive and implement policy. Vital’s criterion for measuring the strength or weakness of an actor is ‘the capacity... to withstand stress, on the one hand and its ability to pursue a policy of its own devising, on the other’.⁸⁴ Strategy thrives on autonomy; the more self-reliant the actor is, the easier it is to project power. ‘Autonomy’ is, of course, a relative term – from states that have contracted out their security via various forms of alliance to complete self-reliance – which allows for the development of a strategic presence in its purest form. That said, all states – great and small – operate in a strategic environment inhabited by the power of states that they do not control.⁸⁵

Since the small powers are distinguished by behavioural patterns it is possible to label EU a small power. That, of course does not mean that doing so is necessarily valid. The perspective is introduced to help capture some of the unique traits of the EU, namely what can be expected of a collective actor that is solely made up by small powers and small states. The former great powers of Britain and France may cling to their regalia but they are no longer among the great. The perspective can also help explain the seeming paradox of policy output. Why is it that the combined foreign policies of the 27 states is so limited? The perspective captures another seeming paradox: the EU’s lack of clout. The EU does not relish in setting the agenda and defining the rules and forcing others to play by them. We will return to discuss the questions of the EU’s small power presence and behavioural patterns in Chapters 7 and 8.

2

The European Union as a Historical Phenomenon

In a vintage bookshop in Stockholm, I happened upon a book by fellow Scandinavian Konrad von Schmidt-Phiseldeck. The 1821 bestseller *Europa och Amerika* is an account of Europe's place in a multipolar world.¹ The book also offers insights into the idea of Europe. The book is all the more interesting since the arrangements put in place after the end of the Napoleonic wars were showing strains. To gain the gift of hindsight it helps to read Henry Kissinger's *A World Restored* which covers the same period as a running commentary.² Schmidt-Phiseldeck favoured a united Europe, but at the same time he was concerned that integration might weaken Europe's 'warrior spirit', its will to power and was concerned how territories beyond Europe might affect the great power concert that guaranteed peace. Schmidt-Phiseldeck was, in addition to his many other accomplishments, a leading foreign policy thinker of his day and his analysis does not come across as quaint; on the contrary they seem highly relevant, if somewhat overly sentimental for the sensitivities of the modern reader.

Intended in some small way to follow in the Danish scholar's footsteps, this chapter seeks to place the EU in the *longue durée* of European history. To this end, it pursues two lines of enquiry. The first section examines the rise and fall of the systems of governance of the past and the roles they played in maintaining order in Europe. The second section traces a key trend providing a strategic environment in which the EU exists, namely the shift from unipolarity to multipolarity. It may strike the reader as odd to begin in the Middle Ages in a book on the state of EU as a power. Commentators all too often view integration as its own end, a self-sufficient technical enterprise. That is unhelpful. The European Union is first and foremost a response to the acute security dilemma that has persistently marred European politics; it is the latest

mechanism in an evolution of attempts at finding a sustainable order for Europe. A sense of context is required in order to give the reader a clear idea about the functions the EU is expected to perform, and will help explain why the Union has taken the shape we see today.

In the second half of the nineteenth century Europe reached its zenith of power when most of the world was governed from European capitals. Only a few years later the European primacy was challenged by emerging non-European powers. The decline in the twentieth century was accelerated by the world wars, which fragmented the region and toppled the European powers from the top of the power league. The end of the Cold War represented another turning point in the history of the European system. The disintegration of the Soviet Union coincided with a surge in European integration that took what had been a for the most part economic endeavour in the direction of political unity. The post-war integrationists had a rich intellectual tradition to draw on. The European orders of the past feed into the modern phenomenon of the EU. This perspective seeks to bring attention to the hybrid nature of the current European order. It makes it all the more important to balance the inescapable teleology with nuanced historical analysis. The basic argument presented is that ever since Europe came into being as a political system, supranational organization has existed in tension with other loyalties – between universalism and exceptionalism; between sovereignty and interdependence; between unity and diversity – and that it is in the intertwining of these concepts that the systems of governance for the current European order are to be found.

Christian universalism and balance of power

As a political order, Europe is a relatively young entity. For centuries, Europe was synonymous with 'Christendom', or what Werner Fritzemeyer succinctly called *das abendländisch-christliche Gemeinschaftsgefühl* ('Western-Christian sense of unity').³ The Early Middle Ages saw a territorial expansion of Christianity that by the year 1000 AD enveloped most of what we today call Europe. The Catholic Church constructed a pan-European administrative framework governed by universalism, that is, incorporation of all people through baptism into a Christian community transcending any localizing boundaries.⁴ It is not incidental that what was to become the EU's motto 'unity in diversity' first gained currency at the time the Roman Catholic Church was formulating and implementing a politico-theological framework for its universalist claims. It became a prominent ecclesiological theme under

Pope Gregory the Great (540–604). In his essay *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, Carl Schmitt notes that the political merit of the Church lies in understanding itself as a *complexio oppositorum*, a complex of social and doctrinal opposites fused into harmonic unity. The early Church placed unity above all else in the belief that it presided over the society and represented it before God. According to Schmitt what sets Christian universalism apart is that it sees the Church as representing the entire body of the faithful, rather than particular individuals.⁵

The combination of a superior organization and the ‘normative power’ of religion made the Church the dominant political supranational structure in Europe. The plethora of statelets that made up European Christendom orbited around the Papacy, a single nucleus that jealously guarded its authority to govern in ‘matters religious’ – a term that the Church continuously strove to expand. The struggle between Christian universalism and secular exceptionalism was a constant feature of the Late Middle Ages. The Church attempted to establish a system of values, rules, norms and laws, with sufficient strength to curb even the strongest powers. Rome strove to regulate intra-Christian warfare through the *bellum iustum* tradition, in part by imposing rules on when and by what means wars among Christian rulers could be fought and in part by directing armed aggression towards the fringes of Christendom.⁶ One example is how the second Ecumenical Lateran Council outlawed the use of the crossbow among Christians in 1139. The track record of these arms control measures, it should be noted, was decidedly patchy. Europe as a secular entity emerged as the religious superstructures were challenged by the rising aristocracy towards the end of the Middle Ages. A way had to be found to reconcile the political fragmentation encouraged by the Renaissance and the Reformation with the need for a degree for supranational order.⁷

As the existential threat represented by the Islamic countries to the West-Christian states waned, the rationale of ‘Europe’ as a negatively defined community united in a shared goal of defence against rival civilizations also grew weaker. This, in turn, created the need to establish a new system that would allow powers in Europe to interact with a degree of predictability.⁸ In time, the Ottoman Empire came to be considered an acceptable ally for Christian powers. Jean-Baptiste Duroselle pinpoints the early 1540s – when François I of France allied himself with German protestant princes and Moslem Turks to balance against Charles V of Spain – as the moment when ‘modern Europe was born’.⁹ That is not to say that Christianity completely lost salience as demarcation criterion, as is strikingly captured in Tintoretto’s painting *The*

Rape of Helen (1578), in which the dastardly Trojans are portrayed as Muslims, and the Greeks as righteous Christians, when five decades later Henry IV's Minister Duc de Sully called for a 'Grand Design' in the shape of 'peuples très-Chrétiens de l'Europe'. This community explicitly excluded Orthodox Christians and Muslims, unless they converted to Catholicism or Protestantism.¹⁰ Although Christianity and the idea of Europe parted ways, the notion of Europe as 'Christendom' continued to have what Denys Hay calls 'a profound hold on the public imaginations of the peoples of Europe'.¹¹

The creeping decline of unipolar theocracy and the rise of a multipolar secular system took centuries.¹² The Thirty Years War (1618–48) further loosened the ties between the Church and the notion of a European community by lastingly dividing West Christendom in Catholic and Protestant camps. The failure to find a workable balance between unity and diversity finally split the Church, weakening its power. The transition from papal monarchy to sovereignty was *inter alia* justified in Jean Bodin's 1576 legal treatise, *Six Livres de la République*, where he made the case for the divine authority of the sovereign.¹³ This was an essential step towards the principle of 'sovereignty' that would form the basis of the European order over the next centuries. Under sovereignty, the internal situation in a state remained solely the concern of the ruler of that particular state. Each individual state in Europe acknowledged no superior and recognized no moral code other than that voluntarily accepted by the conscience of its leaders. This can be seen as the beginning of a European order in which states with equal rights acknowledged that the survival of each was dependent on an implicit system of governance. The goal was no longer to fuse the constituent elements into a greater single entity, but rather to safeguard the sovereignty of each by preserving the diversity of the order.¹⁴

The 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years War, is usually seen as the formalization of a European order based on sovereign states.¹⁵ Bringing to an end the most prolonged and destructive war to date, the agreement established the framework for peaceful coexistence among its states and principalities.¹⁶ The signatories were treated as members of one body with equal right to sovereignty regardless of size and power status.¹⁷ The treaties were underpinned by the assumption that any change in circumstances for one signatory could change the existing power relations among them all, but that equilibrium would be maintained by inviting previously defeated or emerging powers into the system.¹⁸ In other words, the maintenance of the European status quo was seen as desirable, but not of primary importance.¹⁹ In the

Westphalian order, balance of power replaced Christian universalism as the system of governance in Europe. The thought of safeguarding the status quo through a doctrine of equilibrium is, as David Hume pointed out, not a new discovery, but rather a time-tested recipe for stability. In his *Essay on the Balance of Power*, Hume observed that the task of the system was that of preventing any of the constituent states from becoming so strong that it endangered the security of others.²⁰ The logic is that although inequality of power might tempt greater powers to impose themselves on weaker ones, this urge will be tempered if they are likely to find themselves confronted by powerful counter-coalitions.

The balance-of-power mechanism is crude yet effective. In such a system, the smaller powers are preserved by the mutual jealousies of the great powers. Sheltering Europe's diversity can thus be seen as a by-product of the balance-of-power principle. The French attempt to challenge the established order in Western Europe in the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–13) persuaded other European powers that their very existence depended on upholding the regional balance of power. In the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, the term was explicitly mentioned for the first time in a binding accord. Morton Kaplan concludes that the primary goals of balance-of-power orders are to increase capabilities and prevent any actor from assuming a position of primacy, as well as to constrain those that favour supranational organization. In fact, this system is distinguished from other international governance systems by the absence of supranational structures. The actors are national actors.²¹ It is no coincidence that the system was established at a time when the French bid for hegemony had been checked, Spain's European possessions were divided, and the great powers of Europe were of roughly equal size.

While contemporaries such as William Penn and Abbé de Saint-Pierre presented supranational governance as preferable to sovereignty in terms of delivering durable peace, there is little to indicate that such texts had notable political impact during the time in which they were written.²² One effect of adopting balance of power as the system of governance in Europe was that the states geographically situated beyond Europe were invited to play a role in upholding the European equilibrium. By the turn of the eighteenth century, not only the Ottoman Empire, but also Prussia and Russia had grown to become integral players in the European order. It was also during this period that Europe established a strategic connection with the left bank of the Atlantic. This opening up of Europe to the west and the south was a development no less extraordinary than the ideology of colonialism, which also grew in significance in those years.

The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) concerned itself narrowly with the political and territorial issues of Europe proper. Less attention was paid to the distribution of colonies.²³ The overseas territories of the European states remained beyond the European order, largely unaffected by the treaties signed by the powers. During the 1700s, the European powers, Britain chief among them, embarked on a period of overseas exploration and exploitation. Over time Britain gained a predominant position that challenged the European equilibrium. This, in turn, triggered French policies aimed at counterbalancing British power in the new world, notably by seeking to bring North America into the European balance-of-power system through alliance. This policy ended in disappointment when French support for the secessionists in the American War of Independence (1775–83) failed to spur the newly formed United States to join in the European balance of power. On the contrary, George Washington's farewell address explicitly warned of the dangers of meddling in European power politics.²⁴

Efforts to maintain the European system by extending it to other parts of the globe through colonization did, for some time, bring a measure of stability, not least because the riches of the new world distracted European princes from squabbles closer to home. But the globalization of Europe also made the system more complex, more volatile. The balance-of-power principle encouraged Europe's great powers to compete. It helped provide the aggressive spirit and innovation-friendly climate that fuelled Europe's ascent in international affairs. Both Edward Gibbon and Charles de Montesquieu singled out the freedom-loving, competitive spirit as characteristic of Europe and saw it as an antithesis to the 'dead hand' of Asiatic and African despotism.²⁵ Charles Tilly has elaborated on this perspective, pointing to conflict as not only destructive, but also as an energizing force in European history.²⁶ While it seemed that France and Britain lost much of their traditional interest in continental affairs, Prussia and Russia were less interested in global geopolitics, focusing instead on its own exposed borders. This region had up to this time resided on the fringes of the Westphalian order. As the eighteenth century drew to a close, British leaders grew increasingly anxious that the revisionist intent of the great powers in the East could eventually jeopardize the European equilibrium.

Such concerns were sidelined by the French Revolution. The rise of a revisionist France led by Napoleon Bonaparte strengthened the voices calling for a new European state system to ward off the French bid for primacy in Europe. In the turmoil that followed, there were renewed attempts to grasp the political nature of the idea of Europe. Friedrich

von Gentz, Madame de Staël and Benjamin Constant, all influential columnists of their day, rallied to the defence of pluralism as the distinguishing feature of European civilization. They shared the concern that Napoleon's ambitions would undermine the diversity of Europe, and replace it with the uniformity of empire.²⁷ At first it seemed that the Westphalian order would prove too weak to defend the diversity of the European system, as states great and small were defeated by the French arms. France's confidence in the superiority of its laws, economy, values and forms of organization soon grew chauvinist. What began as a struggle for survival morphed into a grand French civilizing mission. The goal was to 'bring fraternity and assistance to all peoples desiring to regain their liberty' and in the process endow them with the French societal model.²⁸ It soon became clear that France would also pre-emptively afford such assistance to peoples who had not asked for it. Napoleon spoke of himself as 'the First Consul who laid down the law to Europe'.²⁹

Then, in an apparent validation of the effectiveness of the balance-of-power mechanism, Europe's remaining powers rallied to defeat Napoleon at Leipzig in 1813. When Austria, Prussia, Russia and Britain met at Châtillon-sur-Seine in 1814, they declared themselves to be representatives of Europe rather than individual states and negotiated with France in Europe's name. The Napoleonic wars encouraged leaders to think anew concerning the principles governing the European order. A new system was needed that would reduce friction among the major powers and lend greater stability to the region. The great power concert mechanism made important changes to the balance-of-power system. The new political order did away with much of the equality of states from the Westphalian system. Despite being committed to restoration on a rhetorical level, the Congress tacitly accepted the French liquidation of a great number of small states. This decreased the number of states in the German lands from over 300 to 38. The Congress restored France to the frontiers of 1790 but resisted calls for further downsizing, instead reaffirming France as a first-rank power. The victors agreed to continue to meet 'at fixed intervals for the purpose of consulting upon... the maintenance of the peace in Europe'.³⁰ In 1818, the signatories of the Quadruple Alliance admitted France as a fifth member, inviting it to take part in all future meetings.

'There are two ways of constructing an international order', Henry Kissinger wrote of the system of great power concert: 'by will or by renunciation; by conquest or by legitimacy'. Kissinger attributes the durability of a given order to the legitimacy derived from 'an international

agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the permissible aims and methods of foreign policy'.³¹ The system of great power concert came into being at the intersection of competing political agendas. Austria's Prince Metternich desired a European federation that could defend monarchy against the revolutionary ideas of nationalism and liberalism. Metternich believed that monarchy could only survive as an actual form of governance if practised on a Europe-wide scale. This was less of a concern for Britain, the most democratic of the great powers. Lord Castlereagh saw a form of supranational organization as the best safeguard to save Britain from having to act as an 'offshore balancer' in continental affairs. Such supranational governance would lighten the continental commitment for a country whose attention was directed towards other parts of the world. French goals were similarly self-interested. Talleyrand saw the great power concert as the best strategy for France to regain its lost prestige. In Russia, Tsar Alexander I desired the reconstitution of the European order based on a shared Christian faith. For Russia, firmly committed to a reactionary agenda, the goal was to re-establish Europe as Christendom.

The great power concert as a system of governance is notable for at least three reasons. First, it was a first attempt at presenting collective security arrangements as a means to maintain regional stability. The European order would no longer be subject to the constantly shifting alliances of Westphalian dynastic politics, but would have to be unified and closely monitored on a European level. Second, the system had a *status quo* bias in that diplomats genuinely sought to keep an equilibrium that would safeguard the security and self-governance of smaller powers. A third factor was that the system allowed European states to free up resources and direct their ambitions to areas beyond Europe – not only in quest of new resources, but also for new allies to help increase their relative strength. Subsequently, Europe's great powers looked with new attention at the Americas and the recently liberated parts of the Ottoman Empire.³²

The political order that the system of great power concert sought to revive and preserve was one that concentrated political power in the aristocracy at the expense of democratic forces. The system's architects ignored populist sentiments, pretending that there was no place for mass politics in the nineteenth century. All over Europe, but in no place more diligently than in imperial Russia and in Metternich's Austria, the new order was used to repress ideas and movements that were seen to threaten the *status quo*. Yet as soon as the threat of French hegemony had subsided, the European order began to crumble, slowly but surely.

The pledge to seek common solutions to common problems through deliberation proved to be short-lived. According to Henry Kissinger, the system of great power concert was doomed by its failure to accommodate nationalism – the awesome political force that had been unleashed by the French Revolution.³³ In saying this, Kissinger voices the same opinion as Napoleon Bonaparte. In exile at Saint Helena, amidst bouts of depression, the former emperor pondered the concept of Europe arriving at a conviction that its future lay in the nation-state.³⁴

Concerted power and collective security

Deep fissures in the system of great power concert became apparent in the Greek freedom struggle against the Ottoman Empire in 1821. Departing from the agreed-upon position, Tsar Alexander I declared that his policies on the Greek question would be dictated by Russia's interests, not those of Europe.³⁵ At that time, Europe was at the height of its prestige. European powers were the masters of the world. It was taken for granted that international affairs should be dictated by Europe's needs. Since the relative positions of European powers in the European system to some extent now rested on their overseas dominions, the competition in faraway lands was destabilizing the European order. In 1822, British Foreign Secretary George Canning referred to this in his famous remark of having 'called the new world into existence to redress the balance of the old'.³⁶ The 1823 Monroe Doctrine, which declared the American objective of keeping the continent outside the European system and vice versa, was seen in London as an advantage to the purposes of England and to the peace of Europe. The year 1823 marked a milestone on the road to a truly multipolar world order. Europe was at a crossroads. Yet few at the time foresaw the far-reaching consequences that the rise of the United States of America would have for Europe.

Over time, the great power concert principle grew increasingly implicit, not least because of rapid economic development and a second wave of colonial expansion. The underlying tensions became more obvious with Britain's First Reform Bill (1831), the independence movement in Belgium and the reconstitution of the French monarchy. The post-Napoleonic order proved more resilient than many had expected. It survived the liberal revolutions of 1848–49 and the decline of aristocracy. Balance of power reasserted itself as soon as one of the powers outgrew its traditional place. One such trial of strength was the Crimean War (1853–56), in which a force led by France and Britain checked Russian aggression towards the moribund Ottoman Empire.

To the aristocrats, the idea of Europe was tied to a specific order, inseparable from their own privileges. It may therefore seem paradoxical that the idea of Europe was embraced by the rapidly swelling nationalist and liberal forces that sprang up all over the continent to counter the reactionary bias of the old order.

The pluralist vision of Giuseppe Mazzini advocated a democratic Europe built on nations rather than on the *ancien régime*.³⁷ The new nationalism glorified the diversity of tongues and cultural practices and openly advocated the new gospel of 'one state for each nation'. In a nationalist perspective any multinational state, no matter how liberal, was inherently illegitimate. The logic was much the same as that of Metternich – that success would depend on a pan-European change.³⁸ On this issue, Hans Kohn notes, 'European nationalists hoped that the triumph of nationalism in Europe would usher in a period of constitutional liberty, of lasting peace, and of fraternal association'.³⁹ But the nationalist movements failed to merge into a genuine European awareness or identity. Nationalism is not the best platform for cooperative multilateral endeavours. The liberal revolutions that ran like wildfire through Europe in 1848–49 failed to fuse and bring about systemic change.

Some monarchs tried to tap into such sentiments by purporting to speak on behalf of a European polity.⁴⁰ Napoleon III appeared flanked by liberals and nationalists at the Paris Peace Congress of 1849, advocating a United States of Europe. Less idealistically inclined leaders such as German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck questioned the very notion of European-level politics. In 1876, when confronted with 'European opposition' to Prussian policies, he simply stated: 'I have always found the word "Europe" on the lips of those who wanted something from others which they dared not demand in their own names!'⁴¹ While denouncing European-level of politics, Bismarck took care to unify Germany without openly challenging the European equilibrium. The large number of conferences and summits in the 1870s and 1880s is testimony to the fact that the idea of Europe survived even in the arid soil of realpolitik. By the 1870s Bismarck had, through skilful manoeuvring, created the greatest challenge to the European system since the French Revolution – a united Germany stronger than all other European powers. Wilhelm II conveyed the self-confidence that came with this position when he told a ruffled British foreign secretary: 'The balance of power in Europe, am I.'⁴²

By the turn of the century, the voices for pan-European unity grew faint while Europe wallowed in diversity. All over Europe unique customs,

clothes, foods, traditions, even languages were rediscovered or manufactured – depending on one's perspective. This was accompanied by a wave of anti-Europeanism. Intellectuals rebelled against the values of equality, tolerance and shared civilization, which many saw as the antithesis of national culture. In Germany, 'Europe' became synonymous with something *undeutsch*, something 'un-German', an obstacle to the progress of the nation.⁴³ Also in America and in Russia national identities were cast in opposition to the European idea. The Orthodox Church had traditionally viewed the idea of Europe with suspicion and now found a strong ally in the pan-Slavic movement, which distanced itself from the decadence and degeneracy seen to originate in Western Europe.⁴⁴ Similar negatively defined 'isms' eroded the sense of a broader European community in other states. The British notion of the Empire, the French dedication to Francophone civilization and the culture-derived Scandinavian equivalents were all different facets of the same phenomenon. The decline of great power concert destabilized the order as the Industrial Revolution led to rapid shifts in the strength of nations. The European order that accompanied the dawn of the twentieth century was now underpinned by a tangle of bilateral arrangements and alliances.

With the shared notions of equality, commitment to equilibrium and community – the preconditions for close and permanent cooperation – weakened, the First World War was enthusiastically welcomed by the peoples of Europe. In 1914, the philosopher Max Scheler sought the answer to this paradox in the eclipse of the idea of Europe and the failure to connect what he calls *die geistige Einheit Europas* – the spiritual unity of Europe – with the European political order.⁴⁵ On a systemic level, what started out as an essentially intra-European war escalated into a global conflict as a direct consequence of external actors having been invited into the European order. The German bid for primacy in Europe was a renewed reminder of the European balance-of-power principle, that is, that the equilibrium powers must be collectively strong enough to defeat a revisionist power. A. J. P. Taylor notes in his matter-of-fact manner: 'If the war had been confined to Europe, Germany would have won.'⁴⁶ The European system maintained its plurality only with the support of an outside power. The tardy, but decisive, American intervention in the war earned the US the seat at the head of the table at the peace treaty negotiations, handing it a significant part in re-forging the European order. Although President Woodrow Wilson's efforts to bring the US into the League of Nations were eventually blocked by the US Congress, this happened only after he had instilled the peace treaties with distinctly American ideals and objectives.

The idea of a united Europe was always more mainstream in the US than in Europe. Many Americans saw Europe as a single entity similar to the US, albeit at an earlier stage of development. Marcus Eli Ravage observed: 'The minute distinctions between the people of Europe [are like] the minute variations within a unity, the individualities within a family.' Ravage felt that Europeans should be treated as one people 'because the Americans are themselves an all-European people'.⁴⁷ President Wilson's First World War speeches reflect a similar view, that the US was putting an end to what was essentially a European civil war. Wilson had expressed a firm conviction that the early American federation (1787–1861) could serve as a model for a future European federation. He stressed the need to balance unity and diversity: 'Instead of centralisation of power there is to be a wide union with tolerated divisions of prerogative'.⁴⁸ In the collective security system that was initiated in 1918, the participants agreed that any breach of the peace was to be declared a concern to all the participating states and would result in a collective response. According to Charles and Clifford Kupchan under collective security, states agree to abide by certain norms and rules to maintain stability and, when necessary, band together to stop aggression: 'Stability – the absence of war – is a product of cooperation', as opposed to balance of power, where stability emerges from competition'.⁴⁹

Wilson's fourteen points failed to synergize. While encouraging national self-determination – increasing the number of states in Europe and advocating equality between these states – the greater diversity stemming from it made cooperation – at least in the short term – more difficult. This was intended to be offset by a supranational organization, the League of Nations. But this organization lacked both inclusiveness and an independent power base and soon got bogged down in diplomatic posturing. The unity of institutions, capabilities and ideas – and the willingness to hand over sovereignty – that might have made a global collective security order possible was simply not present. Without this, the supranational system that was envisioned in the League was doomed to failure. Furthermore, the combination of self-determination and economic protectionism triggered by the American policies contributed to atomization in Europe.

In the interwar years, a number of factors colluded to undermine the European system. The revolution in Russia led to the withdrawal of that country from the European system. Similarly, the US failed to follow up on Wilson's vision and withdrew into semi-isolationism. More importantly, the European powers failed to reintegrate a defeated

Germany into the European community, as had been done with France in 1815. While Britain retreated in the notion that the country's foreign policy interests lay primarily beyond Europe, France was still eager for revenge. As a result, Weimar Germany was denied its rightful place in the European order. Attempts to stabilize the post-war territorial settlement with the 1925 Locarno Pact were flawed. Although the agreements guaranteed the borders of France, Germany and Belgium against aggression, they gave few guarantees to Eastern Europe – the region singled out in Adolf Hitler's manifesto, *Mein Kampf*, as favoured for German expansion.⁵⁰

French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand was one statesman who saw European unity as the solution to the disintegrating status quo. In 1928 he presented a moratorium to 26 European states.⁵¹ Briand's peace plan was welcomed by the war-weary European population and intellectual elite.⁵² From the responses to the Briand Moratorium, it is apparent that while the states were willing to consider a new system of governance for Europe, they were individually fearful of making the concessions that could bring this about.⁵³ Although better suited to connect with the broader populations than with the Church and the aristocracy, the new European movement failed to gain momentum. The experience of the League of Nations had done little to inspire confidence in collective security. The glue that had held the European order together had been weakened by the recession. Responses to the economic crisis led to protectionism, which not only slowed down the region's economic recovery but also virtually halted any integration process. With little more than utopian intellectuals and declassed elites to defend it, collective security proved no match for the forces of the exceptionalist and expansionist ideologies of communism and fascism. The 1934 Abyssinia Crisis illustrated the problem with collective leadership – the pledges failed to translate into action.

Curious as it may sound today, many hoped that Adolf Hitler would be able to deliver the stability and unity that the traditional European system proved unable to provide. The European states failed to display unity and to defend diversity and were, one by one, subjugated by revisionist Germany. Hitler often spoke of Europe as the home of the white race. Jean-Paul Sartre noted how the term had been tarnished. 'In Europe', he said 'you can hear the boots of Nazi Germany'.⁵⁴ Although rarely rising above narrow self-interest, Hitler did provide some indications in his writings of how Europe was to be organized after Germany had achieved primacy.⁵⁵ In *Mein Kampf*, the German dictator envisioned a system of states orbiting a German nucleus. This plan reminded faintly

of the system of great power concert, but with Germany in the position of primacy that had eluded Napoleonic France and with Britain again effectively decoupled from the European order.⁵⁶ The system might have been something akin to that established by the Soviet Union and the US in Europe after the war – with the states bandwagoning with the most powerful country rather than balancing against it.

In 1940, Europe was even less able to resist a German bid for primacy than it had been in 1914. Neither the British nor the French economies had fully recovered from the previous conflict. After the fall of France, some, Lord Halifax among them, urged a peace deal on the grounds that Britain could not hope to prevail alone and that there was ‘nothing particularly heroic in going down fighting if it could somehow be avoided’.⁵⁷ But Churchill understood that Hitler could never permit an independent Britain, which would always threaten Germany’s control of the continent, and would use peace only to gather strength for a final assault. Only a grand alliance with both the US and Soviet Russia could manage to thwart Germany. This assistance came at a price: external primacy. The Nazi order proved even less durable than that of Napoleon. Churchill’s challenge lay in the gap between his own great power aspirations and the nation’s limited ability to meet them. He succeeded in making the country great enough to be able to take place at the victor’s table between Stalin and Roosevelt. This was perhaps his greatest achievement as Prime Minister. But he managed not to prevent the empire’s collapse and relegation to the division below the new superpowers.

External primacy and peace through integration

In his memoir *Present at the Creation*, United States Secretary of State Dean Acheson described the efforts to construct the institutional frameworks for a new international order. He notes how he came to realize ‘that the whole world structure and order that we had inherited from the nineteenth century was gone’, and that the old methods of foreign policy would no longer apply.⁵⁸ Acheson helped lay down the basic tenets of American post-war foreign policy: the ideological division of the world, the equation of ‘freedom’ with American strategic and political interests, and the belief that institutions such as the United Nations and NATO were indispensable both to further American national interests and to provide stability to the system.

In one of the founding texts of the European Studies tradition, *The Uniting of Europe*, Ernst Haas observes that in addition to its other failings,

National Socialist ideology failed to make allowances for diversity and to provide the peoples with the prosperity, stability and self-governance that might have made the Europeans accept German dominance.⁵⁹ As we have seen there have been many attempts at escaping what A. J. P. Taylor called 'the perpetual quadrille of balance of power in Europe', and the ceaseless watchfulness that came with it.⁶⁰ The easiest solution would be for one power to simply subdue the others. This solution has – as seen – presented itself with regularity in European history, only to be denied by the effectiveness of the balance-of-power mechanism. The obvious alternative would be some form of supranational organization. While attempts at attaining order through systems of great power concert and collective security both proved untenable, the current attempt at 'peace through integration' proved possible only after Europe had suffered a grinding decline.

A European war had escalated into a global conflict that irrevocably undid the old European order. The post-1945 European order was simple and one, as John Lewis Gaddis pointed out, 'did not require sophisticated leadership to maintain'.⁶¹ At the onset of the Cold War, it soon became clear that the main fault line between the communist and capitalist blocs – championed by the Soviet Union (USSR) and the US, respectively – would run through Europe. The new level of engagement by the external powers was manifested in a large permanent military presence in the region. After 1945, the US and Russia went from being powers in Europe to becoming European powers. In addition to taking the sting out of European geopolitics, external primacy served to 'freeze' the European state system, effectively blocking fragmentation or, indeed, political integration. For the first time in centuries, Europe was no longer a centre for the global order; the European powers not masters, but auxiliaries. The US and the USSR enthusiastically exported their economic systems, values and forms of organization to their respective blocs. In Western Europe, these values, rules, norms and laws would, in turn, provide the foundation for the European economic integration project.

Although European integration has had many advocates over the centuries, such thinkers had only a marginal impact on the actual European order until after the Second World War. That conflict left regional balance of power discredited as an organizing principle. This led to a renewed interest in supranational governance. The integrationists argued that a more stable European system could be established by institutionalizing arrangements for peaceful cooperation and conflict resolution. The essence of integration was to induce governments

to voluntarily venture into permanent cooperation. The aim was to make sovereignty – the cornerstone of the Westphalian order – a scarce commodity. A new European order envisioned integration and interdependence as the best means of preventing a return to Europe's troubled past, with its brew of national interest-driven policies, military power balances and war as the final arbiter. In other words, integration was a goal in itself. There was also the less frequently stated goal of breaking away from external primacy. In 1946, the former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill held a much-cited speech at Zürich University, which can be seen as a first vision of the EU.

I wish to speak to you today about the tragedy of Europe. [...] Yet all the while there is a remedy which, if it were generally and spontaneously adopted by the great majority of people in many lands, would as if by a miracle transform the whole scene, and would in a few years make all Europe, or the greater part of it, as free and as happy as Switzerland is today. What is this sovereign remedy? It is to recreate the European Family, or as much of it as we can, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom. We must build a kind of United States of Europe.⁶²

Paradoxically it was the suspension of Europe between two superpowers that helped make European integration possible. America's underwriting of the regional order paved the way for a European integration project in that it removed the fears smaller states were bound to have when integrating with greater powers.⁶³ The integration project came to contain two different ideas concerning the measure of unity and diversity. One was a confederation of nation-states – the Gaullist *l'Europe des Patries* – summarized in a policy document in which the British government negotiated the terms of British entry to the European Economic Community in 1972. 'There is no question of any erosion of essential national sovereignty.... What is proposed is a sharing and an enlargement of individual national sovereignties in the general interest.'⁶⁴ Many of the grand debates in integration history have pitted this group against those who believe in a supranational federation that will, in time, supersede the nation-state, sometimes referred to as *Vaterland Europa*.⁶⁵ In the late 1980s, the latter group gained the upper hand. The EC embarked on an unparalleled burst of integration, deep into policy areas that had previously been the exclusive domain of the nation-state. The Europeanists understood the power of the European idea and embraced it in their efforts to transform the EC into the European

Union. For the first time since the Middle Ages, the idea of Europe came to be associated with a specific institution, so firmly that the idea of Europe and the European Union are today inseparable.⁶⁶

Over time the EU has adopted ever more statehood symbols, adding to the flag and anthem a shared currency and, in 2000, a new motto: *In varietate concordia* – ‘United in Diversity’.⁶⁷ The oxymoron was received with everything from thinly veiled scorn to muted applause. European Parliament member Alain Lamassoure took charge of the detractors by describing the process of choosing a motto as haphazard and chaotic.⁶⁸ This is difficult to believe, not least because the motto is so very appropriate. *United in Diversity* accurately brings the analytic and existential sides of the idea of Europe together in a promissory juxtaposition. The EU avoided the religious or ideological affirmations that are usually favoured on such occasions. Rather than focus solely on unity, as might be expected, the EU motto pays homage to the fundamental tension in European history – the balance between unity and plurality. It captures the fundamental goal of the EU to provide peaceful coexistence through unity, while preserving the diversity that has been the source of Europe’s innovative strength.

Europe mobilized its traditions to produce something historically new. It took the idea of recognition of sovereignty and made it the foundation of a historically novel counter-logic. It is a conscious attempt to counteract the chauvinism that in its nation-state form had made European modernity bring about inhumanity on an industrial scale. It is in many ways an attempt, in the words of Ulrich Beck, ‘to distil a European antidote to Europe’.⁶⁹ The heterogeneous architecture that is the result of these efforts has been remarkably successful in adapting to changes in the status quo, such as the unification of Germany and the disintegration of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. The malleability of the structure allows it to contain not only the national/supranational tension, but also the endless list of other binary oppositions (rich versus poor, Atlanticists versus Europeanists, new members versus old members, big versus small, aligned versus neutral, and so on).

This flexibility has come at a price, as attempts to find a transcendental scale of values that unites Europeans has so far proved difficult. The EU has chosen to dissociate itself from the most obvious common denominator, Christianity. Instead of divine endorsement, the EU has sought legitimacy in the populi. The failed Constitutional Treaty also represented a hope of fostering *Verfassungspatriotismus* – constitutional patriotism – based on proto-liberal values such as democracy, individual rights, market economy and shielding of minorities.⁷⁰ Yet this project to

infuse the peoples of Europe with 'Europeanness' – or *abendländischem Gemeinschaftsgefühl*, if you will – has thus far proven elusive, as indicated by the repeatedly demonstrated indifference of the European street. The idea of 'Europe' continues to enjoy greater resonance with the elite than with the masses. The popular rejections of the EU Constitutional Treaty in 2005 and again in 2008 highlighted the mistaken assumption that the transition from national to supranational governance would take place without opposition.

The EU has chosen 'peace through integration' as its official narrative, yet there is every reason to look more closely. The Union is clearly not the diet envisioned by William Penn, nor is it the union proposed by Saint-Pierre or, indeed, the Perpetual Peace republic of Immanuel Kant. Observing the evolution of Europe helps us identify the evolutionary traits in the multi-purpose, multidimensional, semi-supranational, semi-intergovernmental phenomenon that is the EU. The Union contains elements of all the main systems of governance from Europe's past. The EU is founded on universalism – the joining of states into a European community that transcends any localizing boundaries based on the observance of certain dogma. Yet the member states still retain their sovereignty, albeit not in a strictly Westphalian sense. The Franco-German axis, often described as the 'engine' of the integration project, is essentially a balance-of-power understanding. Furthermore, alongside Britain, France and Germany make up a trilateral informal great power concert mechanism that is at the core of the EU policy-making process, especially in foreign policy issues. Also, in 2010 European security still rests on a foundation of external primacy. The EU has no collective defence mechanism, and the US remains what President Clinton called 'the indispensable nation' of the European security order.⁷¹ At the same time, collective security thinking lies at the core of the peace through integration approach.

American Interlude

The end of the Cold War was a moment of triumph, but also one of uncertainty for the transatlantic partners. The bipolar balance, around which the European security architecture had been constructed, collapsed and with it, the very concepts with which we had come to understand international order and disorder were challenged. 'East' and 'West', the 'communist' and the 'free' world, were replaced by new constructs like 'American empire', the 'Moslem world' – and an increasingly defined EU. Some, even many, believed that 'the end of history' had come to

pass and that the entire world would surely embrace the Western way.⁷² Disparities in economic and military power between America and the other major powers widened during the 1990s. Between 1990 and 1998, the American economy grew by 27 per cent, almost twice that of the European Union (15 per cent).

Europe brewed its own batch of catch-all postmodern theory preferring to see the end of the Cold War as an end to history, what Zaki Laïdi, called a 'a world without meaning'.⁷³ It was also a world characterized by uncertainty regarding what would be the currency of power. Would power and prestige be drawn from military tenacity, economic endurance or strength as a team player? The end of the Cold War created a sense of opportunity among political elites and masses alike. Many hoped that the cynical power calculus of the Cold War would be replaced by fair-mindedness and justice. As Charles Kegley put it:

The long-term trajectories in world affairs appear to have converged to create a profoundly altered international system in which ideas and ideals now appear less unrealistic and more compelling.⁷⁴

The assumption, made famous by Francis Fukuyama, was that the end of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy was 'the final form of government'.⁷⁵ It is not coincidental that in academia the end of the Cold War was followed by a bitter struggle between realist and liberal thinkers in the so-called 'neo-neo' debate.⁷⁶ The liberal internationalists won, at least the struggle over the narrative of what had come to pass. Hence it was not the Reagan administration's arms race that had driven the Soviets into the ground, but rather it was the 'soft power' of liberal democracy, the rule of law, and human rights that had eroded the systems from within. This victory was shared by the Americans and Europeans alike and gave birth to a shared idealistic foreign policy outlook where the Western partners placed a will to defend and promote liberal democratic values at the top of their foreign policy agendas.⁷⁷

In Europe the 1990s was a period of unprecedented integration as captured in the twin concepts of 'widening' and 'deepening'. The act of widening by taking in new members (from the EC of 12 to the EU of 15, 25 and, eventually, in 2009, 27 member states) led to deepening through an increase in the number and scope of the tasks handled by integration (from the Single Market to the Treaty on European Union and the 2009 Lisbon Treaty). By signing the 1992 Treaty of the European Union, the EU countries outstripped the US in terms of population size

and foreign trade. These trends boosted European confidence in framing common policy goals in new areas. If the EU – an actor of nearly 500 million people with a combined gross national product (GNP) of US\$8 trillion – was able to unite its resources into a combined foreign policy effort, it would be one of the world's leading powers. In the eyes of many, economic integration, foreign policies and security policies could no longer be kept apart.⁷⁸ It was to be expected that the demise of the Soviet Union would impact the Euro-American bargain. It was generally assumed that the European security tasks would be simpler; the burdens lighter. Some even suggested that the US should exit gracefully before being shown the door by an increasingly self-confident EU.⁷⁹

A political gap opened across the Atlantic during the 1990s. The failed intervention in Somalia in 1992 and the blocked health care reform weakened the Clinton Administration, and the demoralizing 1994 mid-term elections, in which the Democrats lost their majority in the House of Representatives, led to a sharp turn in President Clinton's policies. From being a strong proponent of liberal internationalism, even contemplating placing US troops under UN command, he shifted towards rhetoric centred on national interest. This shift also impacted US–EU relations, sparking a series of transatlantic disputes. There were disagreements over a range of trade issues, the International Criminal Court (ICC), the United Nations, the Kyoto Protocol, the Kosovo crisis and differences over the EU and NATO enlargements. Complaints regarding the sometimes alienating and contemptuous manner in which the US treated its European allies were, all too often, valid. The American unwillingness to consider the use of ground forces in Kosovo, its use of NATO enlargement to favour US economic interests and the ruthless treatment of what were essentially legitimate concerns over the war against Iraq are but a few examples.⁸⁰

President Bill Clinton had been a critic of the policy of American primacy in Europe. Towards the end of the 1990s with the economy growing at breakneck speed and the transition from the Cold War posture underway the administration seemed willing to hand more independence to Europe. What became known as the 'New Transatlantic Agenda' did not offer any 'made in America' European compromise such as the post-war understanding. Indeed President Clinton did not offer any grand designs – instead he encouraged the Europeans to agree on their own arrangements. It is in this context one must see President Clinton's decision to cede initiative to the EU when the Yugoslav civil war erupted in 1991. It seemed that America was eager for the EU to take some of the role it had hitherto played. Secretary of State, James

Baker, famously summarized the American position: 'We do not have a dog in that fight.'⁸¹ The European mismanagement of the crisis was the single most important factor in the EU states agreeing to add a military dimension to its Common Foreign and Security Policy.

For the EU as a foreign policy actor the 1990s was a decidedly mixed report. The Yugoslav civil wars darkened much of the decade. Although much can be said about the obstacles and impossibilities faced by the EU, the fact remains that Europe failed to rise to the challenge. But in a trend that could perhaps be best summarized as 'integration through failure' the EU translated its shortcomings into the Saint Malo compromise, which paved the way for the CFSP's military dimension. Coincidentally the CSDP reached full operability in 2003, the year when the Iraq war spelled the end of the post-Cold War era. The EU's difficulties in adapting to the events of the late 1990s and early 2000s were far from exceptional. Most powers struggled to find their feet, first in the unipolar order that arose from the rubble of the Berlin Wall and again when it became clear that the post-Cold War order was transitional. Just as it seemed that the post-Cold War order had settled with a US from 'Mars' and a EU from 'Venus' – the landscape changed yet again.⁸²

After the post-Cold War

For the past two decades, our present times have been referred to as an appendix – the 'post-Cold War' era. Many expected America's role in Europe to diminish after the end of the Cold War. Yet, surprisingly little changed. Europe maintained a privileged position in US policy throughout the 1990s, illustrated by the American engagement in the Balkan conflicts and the enlargement of NATO. For Europe the combination of diminished threats and wide-ranging security guarantees provided a unique setting. It was only a decade into the post-Cold War that serious thought was again given to a self-sustained system of governance in Europe. The American security guarantees rendered EU's security cooperation voluntary and this would give it much of its distinct flair throughout the first decade of its existence.

Many saw the end of the Cold War as an opportunity to make a break with the way that international affairs had been conducted under bipolarity. The 1990s saw a revival of what E. H. Carr called utopianism and which its proponents, many of whom were to be found in Europe, embraced as 'idealism'.⁸³ They hoped that humanity now could set a new course towards an international society based on shared ideals and regulated by supranational institutions, a world where soft power and

idealist inclination would be more important than national interests and power resources, and that the world should follow the footsteps of the EU. In Washington the world was seen in different terms. In a speech at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in April 2002, Condoleezza Rice observed that an earthquake of the magnitude of 11 September can shift the tectonic plates of international politics. She went on:

The international system has been in flux since the collapse of Soviet power. Now it is possible – indeed probable – that that transition is coming to an end. If that is right, then ...this is a period not just of grave danger, but of enormous opportunity ...a period akin to 1945 to 1947, when American leadership expanded the number of free and democratic states – Japan and Germany among the great powers – to create a new balance of power that favoured freedom.

Most in Europe simply assumed that a multipolar system would be cooperative and that it will operate much the same way as unipolarity. This view was defended by French foreign minister De Villepin who welcomed a multipolar order: 'To be truly stable, this new world must be based on a number of regional poles, structured to face current threats. These poles should not compete against one another, but complement each other. ...The determination of European countries to develop a common foreign and security policy must reflect that.'⁸⁴ This optimism was countered by the British concerns of what multipolarity might mean for an integrated transatlantic West. Tony Blair was uncompromising in his defence of unipolarity: 'some want a so-called multi-polar world where you have different centres of power. ...others believe, and this is my notion, that we need a one polar world which encompasses a strategic relationship between Europe and America.'⁸⁵ On a different occasion he elaborated his position:

My fear is that if we don't deal with the world on the basis of a partnership between Europe and America, then we will in a sense put back into the world the divisions that we wanted to get rid of when the Cold War finished.⁸⁶

Kurt Campbell and Michael O'Hanlon warn that the times ahead are likely to be less marked by inspired collective leadership than by power politics.⁸⁷ This point is repeated because the new concern with polarity runs counter to EU Strategic thinking as summarized by Robert Cooper,

the leading EU strategic thinker. He divides the world into three zones: 'pre-modern' regions of chaos; areas ruled effectively by modern nation-states; and zones of 'postmodern' cooperation with the EU as a primary exponent where national sovereignty is being voluntarily handed over. In his view, chaos in critical parts of the world must be actively countered. Cooper writes 'It was not the well-organised Persian Empire that brought about the fall of Rome, but the barbarians'.⁸⁸ Many have worried about failing states ever since the end of the Cold War. With the attacks on America in September 2001 such places were increasingly seen as a threat to the entire world.⁸⁹ This perspective is changing as emerging powers are not only refraining to join in the 'collective endeavours' of policing the pre-modern zones, but are actively seeking relative gains as is apparent in China's policies in Africa and by Russia in the Ukraine and Iran.

In the early 2000s the transatlantic West came under increasing strains. Since 2001 the US has come up with a number of different ploys to make the transatlantic alliance work for global American objectives. These processes will be visited in greater detail in the following chapter. For now it suffices to say that, rightly or wrongly, there is great concern in many European capitals that the US is disengaging from Europe and that it is looking for ways to downscale its responsibilities vis-à-vis Europe. It is in this context one must see the frosty reception in Europe to 2008 presidential hopeful John McCain's planned 'League of Democracies' which would open NATO to global membership.⁹⁰ The EU states plan and hope for the US continuing to underwrite the order in Europe also under multipolarity. This chapter started off with the ancient beginnings of the idea of Europe and traced it up to the present where the Cold War international order that nurtured and shaped EU shows signs of coming apart. This is why the period 2003–2010 is of importance.

3

European Defence: The State of the Union

Winston Churchill said of the plans to create a United European Army in 1948: 'We're not making a machine, we're growing a living plant, and we must wait and see until we understand what this plant turns out to be.'¹ This still rings true for the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). In the years that have passed since it became operational in 2003 the agenda has been dominated by a continuous stream of new initiatives. Discussion has centred on the strengthening of the CSDP; generating European military capabilities and facilitating intra-institutional cooperation. The agenda is not new. In fact, these three questions have constantly recurred in the debate for two decades. Over that time many initiatives have been launched. Some were successful, many less so. The process has given rise to a new set of propositions aimed at adapting to changed circumstances – in part as a way to find a new transatlantic power and burden sharing equilibrium, but also in terms of gaining greater legitimacy and efficiency in European defence cooperation.

This chapter uses the European defence agenda of the early 2000s as a looking-glass into the state of the union. To this end it pursues two distinct – but related – lines of inquiry. The first section examines international trends that provided a favourable environment for the initiatives: demands for more, not less, EU security policies; the altered role of Europe in American foreign policy, and NATO's transformation challenge. The second section traces three sets of specific policy initiatives: improving CSDP–NATO cooperation; strengthening CSDP and the pooling of military capabilities. The concluding section has some thoughts on lessons learnt after five years of reform. Some of the initiatives discussed in this chapter came to be associated with the 2008 French Presidency of the European Union. It would, however, be wrong to see the efforts as the ambition of a single member state or, indeed a

coalition of states. The agenda is but the last step in an ongoing process of transformation and adaptation to which no state can claim exclusive ownership.

European security is one of those topics that become more confusing with attempts at simplification. It is important to keep in mind that the developments discussed are but the latest in a line of initiatives in various organizational settings aimed at realizing one or more of the three objectives mentioned above. Although the specific initiatives discussed in this chapter could seem small, even insignificant, it is important to keep in mind that they are seen to represent much more. Some hopeful commentators have labelled the current process 'Saint-Malo II' in reference to the Franco-British initiative that launched the European Security and Defence Policy in 1998. A more accurate description would perhaps be that the current process is concerned with delivering on the pledges made in the original 1998 Saint-Malo Declaration, which is the obvious point of departure.

It all began at Saint-Malo

Those who had hoped that the Common Foreign and Security Policy that sprung from the 1992 Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU) would operate in a manner fundamentally different from the European Political Cooperation of the 1980 were sadly disappointed. Consensus often proved difficult to attain, also in cases where national positions are not far apart. In the years following the TEU, the 'spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity' often proved elusive, as did the agreement 'to refrain from any action contrary to the interest of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international affairs'.² The 1999 Kosovo war was a moment of truth for Britain and France. The clash made the lack of military clout and cohesiveness among the EU states painfully obvious. When French and British leaders met in December 1998 to approve the Saint-Malo Declaration, many hoped that the EU was finally gaining a momentum that would help Europe to transform into a power in its own right.

The resolve to increase Europe's military capacity was the key ingredient of the 1998 Franco-British Saint-Malo Declaration, often referred to as the 'birth certificate' of the CSDP.³ In the declaration the two countries set out a common agenda for European security. The accord paved the way for the Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP) at the Cologne European Council summit 6 months later in June 1999. The initiative was, inextricably linked to imbalances in

Euro–American security cooperation. Jolyon Howorth summarized the remarkable energy that characterized the initial progress: ‘more has been achieved in the 18 months since Saint Malo than in the entire 50 years preceding the summit’.⁴

The goals of the initiative were a mixed lot: To give the EU foreign and security policy a limited but real military capacity for crisis management; to find a use for the Western European Union (WEU), ideally to fill the institutional gap between the EU and NATO; to bind the member states to the EU by deepening political integration and solidarity; and to give Europe a presence in the world proportionate to the power resources of the members combined. So far, of the three goals, only the second can be said to have been achieved, although progress has been made on all counts. The WEU was cannibalized by the EU and has disappeared in an institutional, if not legal sense. The CSDP aims to give Europe the capability to deal with the Petersberg Tasks, that is tasks of crisis management, peacekeeping and peacemaking.⁵ These were the tasks that the US did not want NATO to take up at the outset of the Balkan wars. A further aim, of bringing the member states into a European defence pact, seemed to have been solved ad hoc; the EU Lisbon Treaty even contains something resembling a collective defence clause.⁶

The ‘Helsinki headline goals’ from 1999 included a 60,000-strong Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) as the centrepiece for EU military operations.⁷ The CSDP drew legitimacy from the battlefields of Bosnia. The European experience of being unable to intervene effectively as the crisis spiralled out of control and finding itself in an unequal military partnership with the US in Bosnia was repeated in the 1999 Kosovo war. In 2003, five years after Saint-Malo, the CSDP’s first peacekeeping operation was carried out in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. That same year, the CSDP’s geographic focus moved beyond the Balkans, and the members completed its first EU-only operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Of the early construction efforts, arguably the most important was reaching an understanding with NATO known as ‘Berlin Plus’ that enabled the EU to use the Alliance’s military assets should it desire to do so.

There has been no lack of predictions regarding what is likely to be the result of newfound interest in European defence. Where some saw the embryo of a European Super Power others saw the emergence of an EU–US two-pillar transatlantic structure bridged by NATO. Others again saw yet another addition to Europe’s already over-institutionalized security landscape. For over a decade, the CSDP has been skidding

along the runway, without quite reaching take-off speed. A problem that has undone past attempts at reform is that discrete policy initiatives have failed to fuse. The context in which the current process is taking place is important, mainly because the present circumstances are providing added incentives for change. Three trends point to a revised role for the EU. They are a demand for a stronger EU defence, America's strategic retrenchment and the decline of NATO.

Demands for more, not less, EU security policies

Trends in international affairs rarely all pull in the same direction. In the case of European security cooperation there is a contradictory trend where the 'supply' forces for European political integration was weakened by the repeated blocking of what eventually became the Lisbon Treaty, while at the same time 'demand' factors for EU foreign policies have moved in the opposite direction. The paradox is captured in a Eurobarometer 2007 opinion poll that showed 67 per cent of the respondents answering that they would like to see more defence and foreign affairs decisions made jointly within the EU. Not long after, a poll from the same agency showed that only 52 per cent of EU citizens consider EU membership to be a good thing for their country.⁸ This is a testimony to the added value of the defence dimension to the EU project in a world that seems, if not more dangerous, then certainly less stable than before.

The focus of this debate has shifted markedly over the past decade. The relevant question is no longer the appropriate level of Europe's contribution to a US global strategy, but rather Europe's own place in the world. During this period EU security policy has grown in stature. Anand Menon claims that the 2003 Iraq crisis was, paradoxically, salutary for the EU in that it helped focus the minds of European leaders on the issue of European defence.⁹ Among the tangible results of this was the 2003 EU Security Strategy (ESS).¹⁰ The claim that 'the European Union is a global actor, ready to share in the responsibility for global security' as expressed in the 2010 Headline Goal rings more true in 2010 than it did at the time the claim was made, in 2004.¹¹

The demand in the outside world for aggregate European engagement is also growing. In 2007 the EU participated in 84 ministerial meetings with third countries, one every four days. Since its first mission in 2003 the EU has engaged in more than 20 crisis management operations. Although many of these operations were small (the largest mission to date was the 3,700 strong EUFOR in Chad) most of the operations are

seen to have achieved their objectives. The operations are noteworthy not only for their complexity and range but also for the manner in which they are carried out. The EU has made considerable headway in combining civilian and military assets in crisis management. In 2010 the two missions in Kosovo where the EU has deployed 1,900 law enforcement personnel to work alongside the 16,000 strong NATO military contingent and in Chad where the 3,700 strong EU military stabilization force recently became fully operational illustrate the EU's ambition to fill a niche in regional and global security.

This shifts focus to the funds and capabilities that are necessary to perform core tasks. While the unit price of military hardware has risen dramatically, European defence budgets have been kept at historic lows – in 2010 less than a quarter of NATO members meet the agreed spending target of 2 per cent of GDP on defence. Most European states are today faced with the dilemma of having to shed certain capabilities in order to modernize others.¹² As a result the force catalogues of most European armies look like half-empty bookshelves. This is not just a problem facing small states. Even Britain and France, Europe's strongest military powers, have in their respective defence white papers had to own up that they cannot afford to develop, procure and operate even a basic spectre of armaments in all services.¹³

The EU finds itself in a difficult situation where member states are expected to be able to conduct both territorial defence and out-of-area operations at a time when few are able to effectively carry out either of these tasks effectively. In this situation the pooling of resources in order to acquire major new capabilities is a virtue of necessity. Although joint efforts such as the Eurofighter and the A-400M transport aircraft have had mixed results, joint development and procurement seems likely continue to grow in importance.¹⁴ Similarly, pooling of resources such as the multinational EU Battle groups and the proposed multinational naval flotillas are a reflection of what could perhaps be a new collective *modus operandi*.

The altered role of Europe in American foreign policy

America is turning its military resources and policy attention away from Europe. As was discussed in the previous chapter, American attitudes towards the EU have been characterized by ambivalence. The US has been in favour of a greater role for the EU in regional and global security, yet has often opposed specific attempts at common policies. America's conditions for supporting the CSDP were first spelled out in Secretary

of State Madeleine Albright's warning directed at European leaders not to 'Duplicate' NATO assets, not to 'Discriminate' against non-EU-NATO members or attempt to 'Decouple' the EU from the transatlantic security architecture.¹⁵ These 'three Ds' were a direct response to the Saint-Malo Declaration and are imbedded in the 2003 Berlin Plus agreement concluded between the EU and NATO.

The trend is also apparent in US military deployments. The past decade has seen steady reductions in US troop levels in Europe – from a Cold War strength of over 300,000 to 41,000 in 2010. It is in the process of withdrawing its nuclear deterrent from Germany. The ongoing global redeployment has led to the closing of a number of installations such as the symbolically important Keflavik base on Iceland. New installations in Central and Eastern Europe are skeleton structures with little permanent personnel. America has also been scaling back its troop presence in the NATO missions in the Balkans where the European Union is now carrying the brunt of the burden. Changes in force posture is also reflected on an operational level where a preference towards coalitions of the 'willing and able' has gone some way towards replacing the collective ethos of the Cold War.

Although all NATO members are present in International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan, the US has made no secret of its impatience with what is seen as token participation on behalf of most members. In a confidential report leaked in September 2009 top US and NATO commander in Afghanistan Stanley McChrystal made clear that only a few countries participating in the NATO mission were doing what was expected of them.¹⁶ The most significant indicator that a paradigmatic shift in American policy towards Europe is taking place is the willingness to rethink the 'three Ds'. There is a new sense in America that the EU's efforts should be nurtured rather than contained. It seems the assurance that a stronger EU defence policy will complement rather than compete with NATO has gone some way towards persuading US decision-makers. The Washington consensus not only understands the 'Europeanist' logic concerning European defence – it also subscribes to it.

The position was put in plain terms by Victoria Nuland, the American ambassador to NATO, in a speech in Paris early in 2008: 'I am here today in Paris to say that we agree with France', she continued, 'Europe needs, the United States needs, NATO needs, the democratic world needs – a stronger, more capable European capacity'.¹⁷ Five days later she reiterated the same message in London. At the 2009 Munich Security Conference in February, Vice President Joseph Biden stressed that America 'support

the further strengthening of European defence, an increased role for the European Union in preserving peace and security, (and) a fundamentally stronger NATO–EU partnership'.¹⁸ The *Europapolitik* is one of the lines of continuity from President Bush the Younger's second term in office to President Obama.¹⁹ The shift in focus from ideological unity and institutional frameworks towards displayed willingness to contribute to joint efforts has been dubbed by Ivo Daalder as 'the end of Atlanticism'.²⁰

The permanence of the shift is also apparent in that it carries bipartisan support. What is apparent is the convergence of two dominant agendas in American foreign policy thinking. One favours continued American engagement in European security through the primacy of NATO; the other sees the EU emerging as a power in its own right as the best long-term strategy to ease America's burden in an increasingly multipolar world. Although these are often contrasting perspectives they occasionally overlap. The current coherence stems from a shared understanding that US political and military resources in the years ahead will face a new set of challenges beyond Europe, and in order to face these challenges effectively America will need both greater flexibility and more able partners. The EU is seen as a catalyst for both.²¹

The past years have also seen a shift in American policy attentiveness. European leaders could in the past rely on ample 'face time' with US leaders. They can no longer expect the same degree of attentiveness to their individual concerns. This is in part the understandable consequence of the fact that the number of American allies in Europe has nearly doubled with NATO's successive enlargements. But the main reason is positive, namely that the transatlantic region today is peaceful. Instability is endemic in other corners of the world. Anyone familiar with the foreign policy debate in the US is sure to note the degree to which the policy agenda has shifted away from matters European. While speaking in Paris on 'the Future of European Security' in January 2010, US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton mentioned Russia 29 times whereas she referred to the EU only thrice.²² President Obama's decision to skip the annual United States-European Union summit meeting in 2010 underlined the same message: that European security now is seen by Washington as a European concern.²³

There are, in other words, two elements to the American policy shift. One is changing strategic priorities, the other a need for more active allied support. This is not to be underestimated. For better or for worse the unipolar era is drawing to a close and the US is adjusting accordingly. This means that whether or not the Europeans decide to strengthen

their defence cooperation the US is set to play a less pronounced role in European security. This is also how the signals are received. Polish foreign minister Radoslaw Sikorski drew the following conclusion upon hearing that the American missile shield was to be down-scaled: 'This decision and the way it was announced should make everybody in Poland aware of the fact that for the US Poland is just a regional ally', adding 'only the whole Europe can be a strategic partner for the US'.²⁴

NATO's transformation challenge

Seven years after the signing of the Berlin Plus agreement on EU–NATO cooperation the Alliance finds itself in difficult circumstances. The 2008 South Ossetia war put territorial defence back on the agenda. Continued tensions over Russian territorial ambitions in its former sphere of interest kept it there. The lesson was, in the words of the aforementioned Sikorski: 'I think the rules have changed in the sense that Europe, in which we could dispense security guarantees to countries without anticipating having to bear any cost for them, has just ended. The Russians have forced us to think in a more disciplined way about the future of NATO, the value of the guarantees, the practicalities that go with them.'²⁵ It is not clear how this will impact out-of-area operations. In 2010 the largest of these, the 55,000-strong ISAF in Afghanistan, is in its eighth year. The Afghan mission is a challenging one. The task of providing stability to a country larger than France is a massive task.

In Afghanistan NATO took on an operation that absorbed much of its political and military resources throughout the 2010s. The Alliance did so before resolving what has been referred to as the 'transformation challenge' which is made up of three interconnected questions. One, the post-Cold War era has seen a steadily growing transatlantic gap in military capabilities that threatens interoperability and places a disproportionate share of the operational burden on the US. Two, much the same situation is reflected in the case of political cohesion where the US over time has grown accustomed to primacy, and three, the end of the Cold War opened a debate as to whether the Alliance should continue to focus on territorial defence or to shift towards out-of-area operations.²⁶

The difficulties involved in reforming NATO while at the same time carrying out a low-technology, high-intensity crisis management operation is illustrated in the fate of the NATO Response Force (NRF). The initiative was launched at the 2002 Prague NATO Summit and declared operational four years later at the summit in Riga. The NRF

was pitched as a dynamo for the continued relevance of NATO and a catalyst for the transformation of the Alliance – a reformed instrument of collective action. The 24,000 strong task force was to be drawn from the best capabilities available among the NATO members. The NRF was also intended to strengthen the European pillar of NATO and bridge the growing gap between US and European military capabilities.²⁷ At the meeting in Noordwijk in October 2007 NATO defence ministers acknowledged that the NRF has not delivered on its original intentions, leaving the initiative's future in doubt.²⁸

The military weakness was compounded by the lack of cohesion that characterized NATO's political dimension. An obvious example was the planned Missile Defence project. In the face of firm Russian opposition, alliance unity cracked. The inability to reach a consensus was all the more noteworthy because the shield is a defensive measure that will increase allied security. The US reaction to dissent has not been, as was the case over the 1981 deployment of Pershing II missiles, to craft a consensus, but rather to rely on bilateral agreements with the states that were to host the installations. President Obama's unilateral scrapping the plans to install the ground base interceptors that would include Europe in the National Missile Defence (NMD) in September 2009 created an almost overnight mood swing in Europe from concerns over unnecessarily provoking the Russians into fears that the US is setting Europe up to deal with Moscow alone.²⁹

These developments point to a deeper challenge. While the so-called 'transatlantic gap' in military capacity is well known, the adding of 13 new European members to NATO has opened up a second divide within the European caucus. The growing asymmetry in terms of capabilities has given rise to questions with regard to the future of NATO. Will it continue to be a military alliance or is its destiny to become a political-military forum and a reservoir for 'coalitions of the willing'? In other words is it a shift from the Article 5 spirit of solidarity towards the more discretionary logic of Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty?³⁰ Leading voices in the US would like to see a 'global NATO' comprising like-minded states from around the world.³¹ The notion is that while NATO may well be unwieldy as a military alliance it could still be a vehicle for Western interests if geographical bars on membership are dropped. In Europe many fear that this may be a codeword for American disengagement, what might be dubbed 'de-alignment through dilution'.

In this situation there has been a change of heart among the supporters of NATO regarding the desirability of cooperating more effectively with

the EU. Few today see the CSDP as a ‘dagger aimed at the heart’ of the Alliance, to quote American UN Ambassador John Bolton’s memorable one-liner. On the contrary many in NATO see the EU as a catalyst for mobilizing European military capabilities. Cooperation at an aggregate EU–NATO level is now generally seen as complementing rather than supplanting the Alliance. The NATO Bucharest Declaration states: ‘We recognise the value that a stronger and more capable European defence brings, providing capabilities to address the common challenges that both NATO and the EU face.’³² This is not only a matter of coordinating capability goals, but also of working more effectively on a political level in order to improve alliance cohesion.

Towards a stronger Europe

The Saint-Malo Declaration set the European defence agenda for a decade. The carefully worded text charted a middle path between the traditional ‘Europeanist’ position (‘the European Union needs to be in a position to play its full role on the world stage’) and the ‘Atlanticist’ view (‘while acting in conformity with our respective obligations in NATO’), agreeing that both ends are best served by the EU having ‘the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible military force’.³³ While some obstacles have been overcome, others persist. The compatibility of NATO and the EU has proven more challenging than first anticipated: the CSDP that emerged from the Saint-Malo initiative still lacks operational capacity and the problem of insufficient European military hardware is arguably more acute than at the time when President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Tony Blair met in the French port city. The Saint-Malo agenda has translated into a set of specific questions on institutional cooperation, European cohesion and on capability initiatives.

Facilitating EU–NATO cooperation

The awkwardness of EU–NATO interaction is well known. Their organizational cultures are simply not very compatible. Despite overlapping members and missions there is surprisingly little substantial cooperation between the two primary European security frameworks. The formal framework for dialogue, the Political and Security Committee (PSC)–North Atlantic Council (NAC) meetings, has not become the Security Council envisioned in the 2003 Berlin Plus agreement. When NATO and EU ambassadors meet, they are only authorized to discuss

‘joint EU–NATO operations’ – of which there at the time of writing is just one, *Althea* in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as select capability initiatives. Other important issues, such as anti-terror cooperation, Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan are simply not on the agenda. It is no secret that this state of affairs owes to no small degree to the fraught political relations between EU member Cyprus and NATO member Turkey. The intricacies of the dispute are too complex to revisit in detail but the outcome of the impasse is that EU missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo have been denied military protection from NATO, which hampers the Union’s efforts.³⁴

While there are no obvious solutions to the Turkey-Cyprus issue there are other bottlenecks that can be removed to allow for more effective EU–NATO interaction on a practical level. One such question is bridging differences in bureaucratic culture that have bred inter-organizational rivalry in the past, including differences over equipment procurement. This is in part because the EU and NATO have failed to synchronize the ‘capability goals’ they set for their respective members, notably with regard to priorities. The 21 European states that need to allocate their defence budgets in accordance with both EU and NATO requirements can ill afford such competition. The gap between the EU’s European Capability Action Plan (ECAP) and NATO’s Prague Capabilities Commitment, for example on network-centric warfare capabilities has, according to sources in the joint NATO–EU Capability Group, encouraged non-compliance on both counts.³⁵ This question filters through to the operational level. One example is that the EU is not being helped by states afraid that if they pledge certain resources – for example helicopters – they will immediately be questioned in NATO as to why these capabilities are not already deployed in Afghanistan.

That is why France rejoining NATO’s integrated military structure is of relevance.³⁶ French reintegration was important both on a symbolic and practical level. The official return, announced at NATO’s sixtieth anniversary summit in Strasbourg and Kehl in April 2009, has helped ease concerns that the CSDP is competing with NATO. More substantially the move has increased the overlap between NATO and the EU. Dispatching an estimated 500 French staff officers to the NATO structures could make the EU and NATO organizational cultures more complementary. One important benefit for the EU could be learning from NATO’s experiences in pooling capabilities and joint funding. After all, NATO has tried and failed several of the plans the EU is considering.³⁷ French reintegration could also spell the end to what in some quarters has been seen as blocking tactics in order to prevent EU–NATO

meetings from becoming a forum for global security issues, such as counter-terrorism, Kosovo and Afghanistan. Defence analyst Tomas Valasek argues that the impasse at the EU–NATO meetings stemming from Cyprus and Malta’s non-membership in NATO’s partnership-for-peace (PfP) programme could be more easily overcome with French support, although he does not explain why or how.³⁸

This leads onto another question, namely whether French reintegration will, as it is widely assumed, reopen the Berlin Plus’ agreement for debate as *quid pro quo*.³⁹ If such is the case the first question of many will be over strategic dialogue and cooperation. That would include the fraught question of which organization should have ‘first pick’ and thereby be the primary security organization.⁴⁰ The issue is surprisingly tricky. American policy has operated under the assumption that, on the basis of the 2003 agreement, NATO is the ranking institution, something that especially France disputes. The EU’s first military mission, to the Congo in 2003, irked some in Washington because it was launched without consulting NATO and is part of the reason why the EU and NATO later ended up launching separate missions to the Sudan to assist the African Union (AU) in handling the Darfur crisis.⁴¹

There are also signs of improvement. Substantial dialogue between the two organizations does take place outside the formal venues. The EU and NATO ambassadors meet regularly on an informal basis to discuss subjects of mutual interest that are barred from their formal agenda.⁴² These informal meetings are likely to be important when seeking to transform the EU–NATO relationship into an effective partnership. Two areas for collaboration are currently under discussion. One is a greater overlap between the NATO Strategic Concept and its EU equivalent, the European Security Strategy (ESS). It is expected that such a process will focus on infusing the two organizations with a common language, a common agenda and a common sense of purpose. Another project in the pipeline is the development of exchange-programmes for officers in EU/NATO states.

Difficult negotiations lie ahead. One continually fraught topic is the role of the EU in NATO decision-making. Should the EU be treated as a bloc so as to ease decision-making and increase symmetry? Most members wish for the Alliance to be preserved as a defensive military alliance consisting of sovereign states, rather than as a political-military forum for EU–US consultations. Even if the US should agree to such an arrangement there is simply no consensus within the EU to act as a caucus in NATO. The question of which posts should go to French officers upon their reintegration into the NATO command structure also remains. France has so far avoided requesting the sort of high-profile

posts that derailed a previous attempt at reintegration, in 1995.⁴³ Negotiations were eased by the French goodwill gesture of dispatching a battalion of 700 combat troops to Afghanistan following the NATO Bucharest Summit in April 2008, but key questions remain.

Strengthening the CSDP

The single biggest issue on the CSDP agenda is the question of whether the EU should have an autonomous capacity to plan and command crisis management missions. The idea of an operational headquarters first surfaced, in 2003, in the poisonous transatlantic climate during the run-up to the Iraq war. The ambition is to have a more capable, more autonomous EU capacity under the authority of the CFSP High Representative. Those that opposed the plan argued that several countries, notably France, Britain and Germany, have national headquarters that are adequate for commanding EU military missions on a rotational basis. In addition, NATO also has several functional command centres that are available to the EU. The result is that EU military command is farmed out to seven different headquarters. Proponents of a more stronger EU argue that this nomadic arrangement is unsatisfactory due to variations in operational cultures that require constant retraining and limit the ability to learn from experience.

In 2003 a compromise was reached where the EU set up a skeleton planning centre, rather than a full planning and command structure. The Operation Centre (OpCen) is tasked with planning joint civilian–military operations. It is only intended to manage high-intensity military missions in the unlikely event that no NATO or national HQs are available. Those in favour of an EU operational HQ have tended to view this arrangement as temporary. France has made no secret of its interest in autonomous EU operational planning and the American opposition to this appears to have softened, not least since the civil–military focus ensures less apparent duplication of NATO structures. This leaves Britain, in particular, in a difficult situation. Like many other states, London has been sceptical of any initiative that could undermine NATO. But policymakers both in the EU and in NATO see French reintegration into NATO's military structure and with it the prospect of better EU–NATO relations as hinging on finding a compromise on the question of headquarters.

This has been a difficult issue to resolve. Most members see the need for a stronger EU planning capacity. The Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability cover the purely civilian crisis management

operations. What the EU needs is a functioning civil–military agency. At the same time such a capacity would be symbolically important. Critics see it as the thin end of the wedge that could lead to the EU eventually becoming independent of NATO. Several possible compromise solutions have been floated. In 2008 Britain found itself in an unfamiliar situation. Having grown accustomed to act as interpreter between the EU and Washington, they found the tables had turned. The French enlisted the Americans to help persuade Britain to accept a permanent EU planning and operational headquarters.⁴⁴ It proved to be a hard sell. The Brown government took a view that the CSDP was already over-institutionalized and was opposed to new structures (see Figure 1.1).

A less-debated, but no less important initiative is Permanent Structured Cooperation (PSC) as catalyst for increased CSDP policy output. In the envisioned arrangement a pioneer group of members could decide a deeper level of commitment in their defence cooperation through the pooling of capabilities or specialization of resources. The Lisbon Treaty stipulates ‘those member states whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments to one another in this area with a view to the most demanding missions shall establish permanent structured cooperation within the Union framework.’⁴⁵ The arrangement is to operate on an ‘opt-in’ basis, open to any member that fulfils the four main criteria, namely to agree on objectives for the level of investment in defence equipment, to enhance their forces by setting ‘common objectives regarding the commitment of forces’, to address the shortfalls identified by the Capability Development Mechanism (CDM), and to take part, ‘where appropriate’, in equipment programmes in the context of the European Defence Agency (EDA).

Under President Nicolas Sarkozy France favours the advantages of an informal arrangement. Sarkozy has suggested the forming of a defence bloc within the PSC made up by the EU’s six largest members that would pledge to meet defence-spending targets, to invest in up-to-date military hardware as well as work together on cooperation projects including common procurement and furthering operational interoperability. Pierre Lellouche, defence spokesman in Sarkozy’s UMP Gaullist party, has already tentatively outlined possible qualifying criteria.⁴⁶ All countries taking part in the grouping would be expected to commit to the goal of spending 2 per cent of their GDP on defence and allocate a fixed part of that sum to research and development. The six would each provide 10,000 troops for a 60,000 strong EU rapid reaction force, join in

co-funded security infrastructure and consent to form a common procurement market for defence equipment. The group's members would also be expected to agree a common disarmament policy and coordinate civil protection programmes.

The plan for a vanguard has so far proved unrealistic. The spending target was never likely to be met by Spain (1.2 per cent/GDP, 2007) and Germany (1.3 per cent/GDP, 2007) in the short to medium term. Poland (1.9 per cent/GDP, 2007) and Italy (1.8 per cent/GDP, 2007) are closer to clearing this threshold alongside Britain and France.⁴⁷ The lack of a treaty base for the initiative proved a welcome excuse for underperformers to opt out. Furthermore, general budgetary requirements are not as effective as some believe. They have proven to be prone to non-compliance or the sort of selective compliance that sin against the spirit of the measure.⁴⁸ Also criteria designed to monitor spending patterns (i.e., pledging to spend a fixed percentage on research, development and procurement) have a mixed track record for achieving concrete results within a practical timeframe. Similar schemes have, after all, been tried in NATO with little success.⁴⁹ Former Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency Nick Witney agrees with the general idea of 'pioneer groups' in a multi-speed CSDP, but argues that such groups should be self-electing.⁵⁰

A different angle would be for the six to pledge a certain amount of deployable troops. Such a 'rapid reaction force' consisting of 60,000 men sustainable for twelve months and equipped with appropriate air and naval support is well known. It was the centrepiece of the Saint-Malo process and has reappeared in various guises in a number of contexts. Reintroducing the force in a 'members only' form might succeed where other initiatives have failed. As the countries behind Saint-Malo, Britain and France will be inclined to deliver, as will Germany possibly on the basis of the existing Franco-German brigade. The hope is that Poland, Italy and Spain are sufficiently pleased at having been invited into the 'EU-3' circle that they might strengthen budgets more than they otherwise might have in the free-riding atmosphere of collective engagement. This would substantially increase the EU's operational capacity to two or possibly three substantial crisis management operations while carrying out several smaller civilian operations in separate theatres. The hope is that the force will be what Deputy Director, European Affairs Veronique Roger-Lacan called a 'production incentive for defence capabilities'.⁵¹ Despite the many suggestions on the table a viable capability generating mechanism has yet to be found.

More and better European military capabilities

The transatlantic defence-spending gap is real. The US defence budget for 2008 exceeds \$650 billion, about 4 per cent of the country's gross domestic product. The 2006 average for European alliance members was 1.78 per cent.⁵² While the US spends 9 per cent of its budget on research and development, the EU states combined spend a meagre 1.5 per cent. Similar spending gaps are also opening up between Europe and the emerging powers in the international system. According to the 2008 SIPRI Yearbook there was a 45 per cent rise in global defence expenditure 1998–2008.⁵³ The US, Russia, India and China account for most of the increase. This gives food for thought. The period in question coincides with the life-span of the CSDP, whose core objective was to boost European capabilities, yet very little of the expenditure increase derives from Europe.

A comparison of EU military capability statistics in 2009 with 1999, underscores this point (see Table 3.1). Of the over 2 million personnel in uniform in the EU-27, only roughly 5 per cent are actually deployable in offensive operations. European defence industries are losing their competitive edge due to underinvestment in research and development, low European procurement rates and rising protectionism in external markets. The obvious way for Europe to break this trend would, of course, be to substantially increase defence spending, to American, Russian or Chinese levels. This remains improbable. Despite pronounced deficiencies in military hardware and training no substantial increase in European military spending can be expected in the short to medium term, unless a clear and present danger was to arise. The EU agenda has therefore been focused on spending the money available more efficiently.

There is much to be gained from closer cooperation. The most obvious challenge is that while the cost of defence equipment is rising on an average of 6 to 8 per cent per year, most European states have kept their defence budgets low, typically adjusting for inflation only. Had defence budgets been spent effectively, Europe would easily keep pace with other actors. But money is not being spent effectively. Too much is spent on non-deployable assets; there is an overabundance of certain capabilities and a debilitating lack of others; there is unnecessary capability duplication; there are shortfalls in 'projection capabilities' (especially strategic transport, command, control and communications), and using military budgets to further non-military objectives.⁵⁴ The transformation from Cold War to post-Cold War capabilities and from territorial defence to expeditionary warfare is moving at an agonizingly

Table 3.1 Comparing EU military capabilities in 2000 with 1999^a

	1999: EU-15	1999: EU-27	2009: EU-27	Change '99-'09
<i>Defence expenditure</i>				
Total expenditure (1997/2007)	€156.2 Bn	€162.9 Bn	€209.7 Bn	+29%
Expenditure / GDP (1997/2007)	2.1%	2.1%	1.7%	-19%
Budget / GDP (1998/2008)	1.7%	1.8%	1.4%	-22%
<i>Armed forces</i>				
Total active military	1,759,568	2,478,608	2,013,990	-19%
Army	1,125,718	1,516,378	996,234	-34%
Navy	281,450	327,400	222,313	-32%
Air Force	381,605	538,925	345,153	-36%
Conscripts	669,770	1,131,020	212,785	-81%
<i>Equipment</i>				
<i>Land</i>				
Main battle tanks	10,827	17,814	9,823	-45%
Armoured fighting vehicles	6,851	10,622	7,951	-25%
Armoured personnel carriers	19,751	26,311	22,844	-13%
<i>Aviation</i>				
Fixed wing aircraft	5,600	7,453	5,401	-28%
Fighter jets	2,684	3,835	2,410	-37%
Transport (incl. tankers)	439	612	898	+47%
Helicopters	3,515	4,732	3,573	-24%
Attack	1,000	1,312	826	-37%
Combat support	969	1,305	849	-35%
Utility (incl. transport)	445	584	1,076	+84%
<i>Naval</i>				
Aircraft carriers	6	6	7	+17%
Destroyers	29	31	26	-16%
Frigates	145	155	108	-30%
Patrol and coastal	314	521	811	+56%
Mine warfare	208	296	243	-18%
Amphibious	267	274	494	+80%

Note: ^aThe table is taken from Strength in Numbers? EU-ISS Policy Brief, Comparing EU military capabilities in 2009 with 1999, compiled by Daniel Keohane and Charlotte Blommesteijn on basis of figures from *The Military Balance* 1999-2000 and 2008-2009.

slow pace. On this count the EU's biannual Capability Improvement Chart makes for sobering reading.⁵⁵

The Headline Goal 2010 and the European Defence Agency, with the European Capabilities Action Plan, have so far been the primary capability generator for the EU as is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6. The aim is to make collective action possible, and to encourage research and development (R&D). The European defence industries are fragmented. This fragmentation has been compounded, since the end of the Cold War, by underinvestment. The US spends roughly six times as much on defence R&D as the Europeans combined. Much can be done to bring down costs *inter alia* by using more dual-use technologies and by co-development of joint rather than competing technologies. The European Defence Agency was set up to break down barriers to cross-border trade in military goods, and to harmonize the process of research, development and production of new armaments among EU member states.

There are ongoing discussions regarding what aspects of ESDP missions could warrant joint funding. New initiatives have been suggested to encourage common export regulations efficiency in arms procurement and production. The EDA will be a likely dynamo in any such efforts as recommended in the European Commission's Green Paper 'Proposal for a Directive on Defence and Sensitive Security Procurement'.⁵⁶ The agenda will also provide a welcome arena for EU-NATO cooperation on the practical level. Obvious areas of cooperation are developing common rules for certifying and benchmarking capabilities, and harmonization of defence education and infrastructure. But the area where the need for coordination is arguably the greatest is in developing a shared approach to common funding and common procurement.⁵⁷ Although there has been much talk of this, very little has so far been achieved with regard to the practical side of co-ownership and joint procurement.

In December 2008, EU governments agreed on a 'Declaration on Strengthening Military Capabilities', which highlighted the need for EU member states to develop more military capabilities together.⁵⁸ Other initiatives include the EDA-sponsored technology research based on pooled research funding as well as CSDP funding for security cooperation and, conceivably, joint funding for efforts at strengthening the EU's industrial base in terms of defence technologies. Although there are plenty of ideas on how to improve funding this process has proved cumbersome since most funding come from already stretched national defence budgets. The EU would be wise to learn from NATO in this process. The alliance has, after all, decades of experience in attempting

to solve the funding conundrum. A less high-profile, yet potentially beneficial, new arena is the EDA-coordinated cooperation on technical capability development. Rather than relying on statistical criteria that the member states could either distort or fail to comply with, it would be better to set criteria aimed at specific and concrete results to be achieved gradually, a method successfully applied to monetary union. Closing the gap on heavy airlift where the A-400M planes is filling a much-needed niche is a precedent that could be applied in other potential joint ventures such as heavy-helicopter cooperation, *unmanned* aerial vehicles, a new generation of observation satellites and joint naval flotillas. Other potential initiatives include pooling of certain capabilities such as carrier groups, strategic airlift and in-flight refuelling capabilities. There is hope that the EDA's 'Long-Term Vision Report' will be a yardstick for such initiatives.⁵⁹

A compromise creature

When added up, the sum of the trends mapped in this chapter are less than auspicious. There persists a lingering distrust, especially between Britain and France, that the current process may be covertly attempts at promoting 'Atlanticist' or 'Europeanist' agendas. Painstaking negotiations failed during the 2008 French Presidency to translate general objectives into detailed compromises. In this process a recurrent challenge has been striking a balance between the French inclination towards a top-down ends-focused process and the bottom-up means-oriented approach favoured by Britain.

As is always the case with EU initiatives, the timing and the context are rarely equally favourable in all capitals. Due to the global economic crisis that has eaten into the GDPs, budgetary constraints is a significant obstacle. A number of states, France among them, are in the process of a fundamental restructuring of their armed services. Other member states are hesitant to emulate the lead given in the French White Paper published in June 2008, which directs more resources to fewer, more deployable forces.⁶⁰ This, combined with the many out-of-area operations in which EU members are involved, will likely impose rigid constraints. Equally important, the domestic politics are not conducive to any grand declaratory attempts at accelerating the process. The return of territorial defence to domestic agendas all over Europe following the 2008 South Ossetia crisis is also an issue that must be expected to have implications for EU defence on tactical and strategic levels.

So what went wrong? Whatever it is, it certainly cannot be blamed on the French Presidency. President Sarkozy had learnt from his predecessors' mistakes. He did not issue any public demands for retribution for rejoining NATO's military structures. France skilfully directed its efforts through former Ambassador to Washington and President Nicolas Sarkozy's chief foreign policy adviser Jean-David Levitte to 'sell' the CSDP to the Americans and explaining that the venture would have little hope of developing into something of use unless it was allowed to have its own operational structure. Britain was opposed to this. Interviews from London indicated that although Foreign secretary David Milleband himself was favourable to the initiative, the Prime Minister was not. Gordon Brown made little secret of his lack of interest in foreign policy and inherent scepticism towards further institutions building – he was concerned that efforts should be directed at actually delivering on the capability pledges already made.

But what mandarins in London and Paris seem to agree on is that what prevented the French drive to reach take-off speed was Germany. In Germany the Angela Merkel government was deeply sceptical of any new initiatives on European security.⁶¹ Sources close to the German Kansleramt said that the Merkel government was concerned that it could only loose from putting defence, and thereby potentially the controversial Afghan operation, on the agenda in the run-up to a general election. An American observer suggested the question was more fundamental: 'There simply is no way Germany is going to put its weight behind a tool for military interventionism. The Germans are very old school about defence.'⁶² Whatever the reason, Germany failed to support the initiative with any degree of enthusiasm. Finally the financial crisis that erupted in September of 2008 directed political attention to more pressing matters. The result was that the various initiatives failed to synergize. The French reintegration into NATO was not coupled with a strengthening of the CSDP, the attempts at forming a 'hard core' of defence leaders did not happen and the efforts to update the European Security Strategy ended in an uninspiring compromise.

When looking at the traits that characterize small powers in Chapter 1 there clearly is a substantial degree of overlap in the EU's patterns of behaviour, as the strategic behaviour of small powers is characterized by dependence. The EU dependence on the United States is above all made manifest in the lack of a collective defence pact. The EU is happy to leave territorial defence – and the obligations that go with it – to the US through NATO. The EU's problems in applying its foreign and security policy in a determined manner has much to do with weariness

of the *realpolitik* associated with great power politics. The EU is a status quo actor that seeks to perpetuate the current arrangement, that is, a de facto asymmetric alliance with the US. This is the major reason why the CSDP has not been allowed to develop into an autonomous force. Like small powers the EU is defensive by nature. This is the reason why the member states fail to channel their foreign and security policies through the EU. Although there is a clear demand in Europe for more active engagement the EU prefers to stay on the margins focusing on dialogue, declarations and foreign aid.

The conclusion on the attempts to tune up the CSDP will have to be that the initiatives failed to fuse and synergize, failing to generate a general shift towards a more united European presence on the world stage. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, initiatives aimed at building a more cohesive security architecture in Europe are a recurring phenomenon. There have been many false starts. There has been a tendency to take refuge in process as an easier alternative to delivering hard-fought outcomes. One lesson we can draw from past efforts might be not to expect any single 'grand bargain', but rather a number of discrete initiatives that may, or may not, grow into a stronger EU in world affairs. This shifts focus towards the stated ambition and actual policy behaviour as the best yardstick by which to assess the EU as a strategic actor.

4

The European Security Strategy Revisited

Introduction

The EU security policy was a leap in the dark. It was constructed under an agreement that the EU should have such a policy, but not what it should be about. On 12 December 2003, the leaders of the European Union approved the first-ever European Security Strategy, the ESS, proclaiming an intention to 'share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world'.¹ The ESS summons up the EU's external dimension, in a manner that transcends the metaphorical 'pillars' intended to visualize the workings of the Union. It encapsulates foreign and security policy – from the development and neighbourhood policies of the European Commission, via the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), under the auspices of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to police and judicial cooperation.

The ESS is important, as Sven Biscop and Jan Joel Andersson have argued, because it sums up the EU's political project, its hopes and ambitions.² Its significance lies not so much in what the document actually states as in what it is *seen* to represent. For decades Europeanists called for a document such as this as a foundation on which to construct a viable, active and influential collective presence.³ Five years later, on 11 December 2008, the European Council published a *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy* (RI-ESS) titled *Providing Security in a Changing World*.⁴ Highlighting the achievements of the common EU foreign and security policy while identifying the shortcomings was never going to be an easy task. At first glance, the document looks uncontroversial, even generic. A closer examination reveals notable discrepancies from the document it comments upon.

This chapter offers a comparative analysis of the 2003 ESS and the 2008 RI-ESS with the aim of highlighting trends and changes in EU strategic thinking over the five-year period.

The organization of this chapter is a little different from the preceding one. Since the EU agreed to develop a foreign and security policy without having defined policy objectives in place, the first section of the chapter focuses on the development of EU strategy. A brief summary of changes in the international context is followed by an examination of what can reasonably be expected from a strategy document, and what function this document serves in an EU context. This leads to the main section, which consists of a discussion of four pairs of concepts of special relevance to changes in EU strategic thinking: strategic culture and human security; war on terror and terror and crime; preventive engagement and hedging; and effective multilateralism and normative power. The final section offers some thoughts on the changes from the 2003 ESS to the 2008 RI-ESS, and what they say about changes in EU strategic thinking during the transition from unipolarity to multipolarity.

Five years and a world of change

In 2003, amidst the tensions in the run-up to the Iraq war, the EU undertook a first appraisal of its strategy and foreign policy interests. At that time many still believed that the world was on a path towards a global society based on shared ideals and regulated by supranational institutions: a world where soft power and internationalist inclinations would be more important than interests and power resources. The resulting European Security Strategy was, among other things, characterized by a strong affirmation of liberal internationalism. While embracing American strategic leadership the ESS at the same time asserted a distinctly European approach to this agenda. The EU embraced different means to the Americans. Measures such as dialogue and economic aid were emphasized over coercion and armed force.⁵

Five years later, the world has changed profoundly. The postmodern agenda so present in the original strategy have been joined by more familiar threats, notably war. As American satirist Jon Stewart commented, 'while we were building a bridge to the future, the nineteenth century was busy tunnelling'. The return of intra-state warfare to Europe, and the global financial crisis, has in a remarkably short time altered the modus operandi of international affairs. The shift towards multipolarity has been accompanied by a resurgence of power politics, at a time when the institutional and normative framework constructed in the

aftermath of the Second World War is coming under pressure. Amidst a confusing mix of traditional and postmodern threats, the benign security conditions of the post-Cold War interlude is fading. The new powers seem less interested in playing the role of system upholders, leaving the West to shoulder most of the burden.

It has been argued that the EU is an altogether 'different' kind of actor – a 'different kind of Super Power' as one study had it.⁶ Ten years after the Saint-Malo Declaration that initiated the CFSP/CSDP, the EU has assembled a 'unique range of instruments' – economic, diplomatic and military.⁷ Although the EU is a potential superpower in terms of size of economy, population and defence spending, the CSDP was, as seen in the previous chapter, never about creating a European army or supplanting NATO's responsibility for territorial defence. Each member state remains solely responsible for its own defences. Each has a veto on the approval of every individual operation, and none is obliged to take part. Rather, the CSDP developed from an understanding that many of today's security challenges are not interest-driven: they are conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict stabilization. The emphasis is on how to build states that have market economies, rule of law, human rights and democracy – the cornerstones of modern statehood.

Logic dictates that for the CFSP to be effective, member states must channel relevant components of their foreign and security policies through the EU. For this to occur, they must set common goals and agree on how to achieve these goals. This taken into consideration, perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the security strategy is that it did not arrive earlier. It is noteworthy how little serious discussion has taken place among the member states over the future direction of the EU security policy. However, looking back, the call to write the ESS was not the offspring of the debate over the need for a firmer policy platform. It was rather triggered by the American decision to go to war in Iraq. The 2003 Iraq crisis brought the US at odds with key European Allies. It also made obvious a lack of common policy grounding among the EU states. Something they so far had successfully clouded in ambiguity.⁸ Faced with the most pre-announced crisis in modern history, the EU states failed to reach an agreement on how to tackle the Iraq question and the US attempts at influencing the policies of its European allies. Despite overwhelming public opposition to pre-emptive war, EU unity crumbled under the conflicting short-term interest of the member states.

Although nobody had suggested that the EU should play a role in the Iraq war, the crisis paralysed the CSDP through the spring of 2003. The

rift also stole the thunder from the EU Constitutional Treaty that was being canvassed at the time. A broad majority of Europeans opposed the intervention. After all the talk of unity, the handling of the Iraq crisis made the EU look impotent. At the Informal General Affairs and External Relations Council at Gymnich in Greece in May, Greek Foreign Minister, George Papandreou concluded on an 'urgent need of a European strategic concept'.⁹ The ESS was, in other words, driven – not by calls for reform from within the EU – but by outside pressures.

This considered, the basic aims of the commissioned document can be said to have been threefold: to provide the EU states with an agreed platform on which meaningful policies could be formulated; to craft a foreign policy consensus among the EU states that would make it possible for the EU to mobilize resources; and to give some indication of the purpose of EU power. All these questions point towards policy output. Even when military capabilities and institutional frameworks are present the EU frequently fails to put them to strategic use. For all the talk that the EU is the world's biggest aid donor, it is hard to find examples of economic clout being used to gain influence beyond the states seeking EU membership.¹⁰ As a result, the EU's impact on world affairs has been somewhat less than the 'formidable force for good in the world' that it aspires to be.¹¹

It was in this context that the 2008 French EU presidency called for a review of the ESS.¹² In integration history 'great leaps' forward are often associated with the EU presidencies of the three largest powers – Germany, France and Britain. Importantly the EU presidency coincided with a number of parallel processes being completed, notably the CSDP reached full operability, a possible French re-integration into NATO's military structure and a new American president taking office. Commenting on the rebranding of the document, a member of the EU Policy Unit said: 'It was clear for us [in the EU Policy Unit] from the beginning that we wanted to write an updated version of the ESS – in much the same way that the US updates their National Security Strategy (NSS) at regular intervals'.¹³

By late 2008, President Sarkozy wished the French presidency of the EU to be marked by the EU states agreeing on a new ESS. France gained strong support for this initiative from a number of countries, but it was not to be. Over 2008 the expectations were progressively lowered. In an interview, a senior French diplomat involved in the security policy aspects of the 2008 French EU presidency noted that 'Britain and Germany opposed any new strategy'. The British, particularly, were concerned that the CFSP/CSDP should deliver tangible capabilities, not more

visionary statements. In Germany the previously mentioned debate over their forces in Afghanistan made any debate on military security difficult.¹⁴ There were also concerns that a new ESS would complicate the drafting of a new NATO Strategic Concept being penned at the time.

The European Council instead agreed to write an 'Implementation Report'.¹⁵ In an interview a member of Javier Solana's staff stated that the document was intended to be 'a guide to be used while pursuing the ESS agenda that expresses the purpose, nature and fundamental security tasks of EU. It was also meant to identify the central features of the security environment while specifying the progress made on the ESS'.¹⁶ Helga Schmidt, the Director of the EU Policy Unit where the RI-ESS was written, claimed that the report 'does not supplant the ESS, which remains fully valid, but examines how it has fared in practice, what more needs to be done'.¹⁷ This is imprecise. Unlike the EU-ISS background report, the RI-ESS does not evaluate the progress made.¹⁸ The obvious problem with the report is that, although it aims to complement the ESS, it does not offer concrete recommendations for the future, nor is any follow-up mechanism provided.

To compare the ESS and the RI-ESS is arguably a bit like comparing apples and pears. The two documents are different not only in terms of formal categorization but also political function. The ESS was written to spur, and the RI-ESS was meant to consolidate. Yet it remains clear that the RI-ESS reads like a new version of the ESS. The two documents are similar in terms of date of presentation and title (*A Secure Europe in a Better World/Providing Security in a Changing World*) and are structured in a similar manner. More to the point the RI-ESS looks and reads much as one would expect an updated ESS to read. Furthermore the RI-ESS spends remarkable little time in reporting on the implementation of the ESS. On the contrary, the document is for the most part dedicated to forward-looking. The reason for this is simple: it was intended to be the new ESS. Several functionaries involved in the process admitted that the RI-ESS was indeed written as if it were to 'fill the shoes of the ESS', as one of them put it. Several voiced a view that there would be no new strategies, only implementation reports.¹⁹ As it stands the RI-ESS offers the best available indicator of shifts in EU strategic thinking during the first years of the CSDP since reaching full operability.

Security and strategy

Strategy is the weaving of policy threads into predefined patterns. It is an activity that requires constant requires constant adaptation to

changing conditions and circumstances where the actions or intentions of others are uncertain, and where intentions and outcomes are often interrelated in a tenuous way. It weds political objectives to a larger context and to resources – political, economic and military. Strategy is a process, which is why academic attempts to define it often fail. There is no direct transmission belt between power resources, strategic choices and outcomes. Carl von Clausewitz concedes that strategy is often undermined by the endless complexities of the real world,²⁰ while Gideon Rose specifies that ‘the impact of power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening unit-level variables such as decision-makers’ perceptions and state structure’.²¹ It is, at the same time, a subject of great importance to the fate of the EU and its member states.

Strategy is one of the most over-used terms in the international relations vocabulary. Like people tend to attribute virtue to whatever makes them happy, powers are prone to attribute strategy to whatever they happen to be doing. In order to understand the ESS in its past and present incarnations it is important to keep in mind that the term ‘strategy’ has in contemporary use lost much in terms of precision. Russell Frank Weigley begins his seminal text by distinguishing between ‘military strategy’ and ‘national strategy’ where the former is concerned with achieving objectives by threat or the use of force, and the latter is the development and use of political, economic and psychological powers to secure predefined objectives.²² The ESS and the RI-ESS are clearly attempts at strategy in a national, not military, sense. Political objectives vary over time; traditionally, a strategy paper is expected to define goals and establish priorities to achieve policy objectives. It should describe what means can be used, and under what conditions, in order to fulfil that specific purpose. Both the ESS and the RI-ESS fall short of these criteria. As Richard Wright, a Director at the European Commission points out, the ESS reads more like a ‘policy concept’.²³ Robert Cooper, rumoured to have penned the original ESS, admits, ‘initially the term strategy was not in the first draft... because we did not think it was a strategy’.²⁴

The RI-ESS repeatedly refers to the ‘complexities’ of the international situation as if complexity was something that invalidates strategy when, in fact, strategy is a response to complexity. In this sense, the EU can be said to use strategy to ‘black-box’ phenomena that could have been better explained in reference to measurable variables. For example, rather than specifying the policy goals to be attained – in terms of security, autonomy, wealth and prestige – the strategy is spun

into an almost mystical connection with reference to the ‘uniqueness’ of the EU approach.²⁵ All strategies seek to make a link between means and political, evaluative, ends – and they can be criticized on the basis of the validity and logical consistency of this link.²⁶ The greatest weakness of the ESS and the RI-ESS is that they do not offer even the roughest guide as to how the EU’s foreign policy ‘tool kit’ can be administered to deliver concrete results. Frank Weigley notes that before 1941 the US did not have such a strategy for the use of power to attain political ends.²⁷ The same can be said about the contemporary EU. The ESS and the RI-ESS are clearly attempts to write ‘national’ not military strategy.

Javier Solana is said to have been opposed to updating the ESS, fearing that the policy climate was not conducive to such a process.²⁸ Events have proved him right. Three developments in 2008, the Irish rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in May, the South Ossetian war in August and the financial crisis that erupted in September, served to limit the range of policies influenced by the document and are important reasons why it has attracted relatively little attention. One EU pundit who followed its development closely blames the unsatisfactory outcome on the EU obsession with process. He noted: ‘While the ESS was written without due process, the RI-ESS was written with all the process one could wish for. The documents illustrate the dangers when precision is traded for inclusiveness. The ESS is frankly a much better strategic document.’²⁹

From strategic culture to human security

The most frequently quoted phrase from the ESS is the ‘need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and when necessary, robust intervention’.³⁰ While strategic culture means different things to different scholars, most will agree that the term refers to the management and exercise of hard power.³¹ The implementation report refrains from referring to strategic culture altogether. In its place is a stronger emphasis on ‘providing security’. There is no echo of the 2010 Headline Goal’s opening line, ‘the EU is a global actor, ready to share in the responsibility for global security’.³² In the RI-ESS, the EU is not referred to as a strategic actor. As a matter of fact it is not referred to as an actor of any sort. The implication of this shift is that the great-power ambition of the EU seems to have been abandoned.

The ESS did not offer even the roughest guide to the sort of situations in which coercive military and economic power might be used. The only direct reference to the use of armed force is as follows: ‘In failed states military instruments may be needed to restore order’.³³ The RI-ESS

takes a similar line. Its only reference to the use of armed force is hidden in a none-too-clear passage where conflict management and conflict prevention is mixed with ideological affirmations in a decidedly un-strategic manner.³⁴ By failing to spell out the instances where EU military capabilities might be called upon, the RI-ESS indicates that EU strategic policy will continue to find its *raison d'être* in low intensity, low technology crisis management. One centrally placed commission official explained the apparent lack of ambition with a shrug: 'We only recognise as much threat as we can afford.'³⁵

In the RI-ESS, it could be argued, the EU dispenses with some of the ambition to be what in Chapter 1 was called a 'system-determining power' that can influence the international system through unilateral or multilateral action; instead, it settles for playing a part in maintaining 'an effective multilateral order around the world'.³⁶ Both the ESS and the RI-ESS opt for a 'status quo' focus on making sure that the ordering mechanism of the system is multilateralism, rather than positioning the EU in relation to a unipolar or multipolar strategic view. Charles Grant has explained this by claiming that Europeans recoil from balance-of-power politics: 'They believe that the major challenges of the 21st century, such as climate change, energy security, migration and terrorism, require co-operation among all the leading powers, rather than just the democratic ones, and strong multilateral institutions'.³⁷

The EU is in its 'comfort zone' when focus is on mapping institutional frameworks or listing statistics indicating a high level of activity. The focus on process diverts attention away from the elephant in the room, namely, that the EU lacks agreed *ends* towards which *means* are to be applied.³⁸ There are at least three schools of thought on the geographical role of EU security policy. One school, consisting of smaller states led by the neutrals Finland and Austria, would like to see the CSDP continued as a consensus-guided, altruistic, regional crisis-management instrument – somewhat like a regional branch of the United Nations. They are opposed by Europe's two remaining military powers, Britain and France, who would like to see the EU safeguarding European interests on a global scale. They do not, however, agree on what these interests are. Finally, Germany has focused on the need for UN mandates and common assessment of missions, preferring to see the CFSP/CSDP less as a tool for power projection than as a means to deepen European integration.

The same three lines of argument can also be discerned in the current literature on EU foreign and security policy. Zaki Laïdi takes an optimistic view, stating that the EU is acquiring military capabilities while

maintaining its character as an essentially civilian power: 'European defence will remain an instrument of soft power; more to do with peace-keeping than coercion.'³⁹ A second perspective, in which the majority of EU security studies make their case, applauds the progress and laments its shortcomings, but without making any attempt to think about what role a European power might play on the world stage. A third view is that the European security and defence policy is a token gesture that does not reflect any real intention to defend or deter. Anand Menon argues that the EU does not have the capacity to become an effective strategic actor and that 'the ESDP may even serve to promote European insularity and strategic myopia'.⁴⁰

A significant obstacle to developing an effective EU strategic presence is that the current mode of collective decision-making limits policy output. Surprisingly, the period 2003–2010 failed to produce the anticipated increase in policy co-ordination among France, Germany and Britain. The EU finds itself bound by the *modus operandi* of formulating security policies with 27 potentially vetoing states. Experience has shown the difficulties involved in building consensus under pressure. For this reason there is much optimism about the reforms, but it is not yet clear how the Lisbon Treaty's plan for a common EU Foreign Minister will fit with the strategy's recurring theme of 'multilateralism' as the essence of EU foreign policy. In the RI-ESS much of the pretension of becoming an integrated actor is done away with and the EU is treated more as a multilateral arena, than as a player in its own right. In this sense the RI-ESS represents a return to the status quo ante, that is, before the ESS called for the rise of the EU as a strategic actor.

In the RI-ESS there is no reference to strategic culture, or indeed to 'security culture', a term that figures prominently in the EU-ISS Assessment Report (2008).⁴¹ Instead, a new concept is introduced, namely, 'human security'.⁴² Human security is a postmodern 'theory' that challenges the traditional notion of national security, arguing that the proper referent for security should be the individual's welfare rather than that of the state. The concept stems from a post-Cold War, multi-disciplinary understanding of security that draws from a number of research fields, including development studies, international relations, social constructivism and human rights. Proponents of human security have criticized realists for having a 'state bias' – where the focus on the nation state as the source of international relations overlooks important perspectives and encourages an amoral approach to international politics.

Human security, on the other hand, is open to criticism that it has yet to prove its worth as a guide for actual policymaking. The limited

success of transforming human security into a workable basis for policy making in those countries that subscribe to it, such as Canada and Norway, indicates that developing a workable human security doctrine is going to be challenging.⁴³ What is important in the present context is that the human security paradigm is in many ways the opposite of the geopolitical aspiration captured in the call to develop a strategic culture. The RI-ESS simply claims that the human security paradigm is already in operation: 'We have worked to build human security, by reducing poverty and inequality, promoting good governance and human rights, assisting development, and addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity.'⁴⁴ In this respect, the RI-ESS could be seen as indicating a shift away from the great-power ambition found in the ESS.

From war on terror to terror as crime

The unipolar context which the EU security policy had been constructed in response to is showing signs of strain. This is the end of the post-Cold War. As the difference in power between the US and its rivals diminished, old threats began to reappear, not least in the form of rapid Russian rearmament. The EU security cooperation was a child of the post-Cold War security environment, in a period when the choice of whether to act or not was optional. It was, therefore, to be expected that the RI-ESS should devote much attention to redefining the 'threats and challenges' of the ESS. The lists attempt to provide a common policy for the EU states and in these can be seen the clearest attempts at independent European strategic thinking. The documents have notable dissimilarities in their conclusions.

The ESS identified 'failed states' as a primary threat on the assumption that such states may provide sanctuary and support to terrorist organizations. In the Key Threats section terrorism, WMD proliferation and failed states were highlighted, while regional conflicts and criminal networks were emphasized as enablers for WMD terrorism.⁴⁵ Fundamentally, the two documents differ in teleology. The ESS assumes that these three threats can be expected to converge in a situation where WMDs are placed in the hands of terrorists by failed/rogue states: '[t]aking these different elements together – terrorism committed to maximum violence, the availability of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, the weakening of the state system and the privatisation of force – we could be confronted with a very radical threat indeed'.⁴⁶ In this, the ESS subscribes to the logic of the American-led 'war on terror', even if the term itself does not appear. The RI-ESS changed the EU's list

of priorities, placing terrorism in the category of 'terrorism and organized crime'. In doing so, it signals that the EU now sees terror as a severe form of crime, not as a military matter. The threats are still referred to but terrorism has been relegated and WMD proliferation has been placed at the top of the list. The two remaining categories from the ESS, 'failed states' and 'regional conflicts', have been replaced by 'energy security' and 'climate change'.⁴⁷

Initially, EU security policy focused on the crisis management lessons learnt from the Yugoslav civil war of the 1990s; it has evolved with the international security agenda. This point should be emphasized since the EU has, in a number of policy areas, found it difficult to respond to new challenges. The fear of upsetting hard-fought for consensus has frequently led to the EU getting stuck in ineffectual policies.⁴⁸ The various European countries face different threats and, therefore, tend to view priorities differently. Wyn Rees has noted the apparent paradox in that the primary anti-terror instrument the 2001 'Action Plan against Terrorism' has failed to meet its objectives. The reason is simple – there is little shared understanding among EU members of what constitutes terror.⁴⁹ Since the 2001 initiative has proven to exceed the consensus capability of the EU it is perhaps to be expected that terror is downgraded to crime in the RI-ESS. It is all the more curious that the Lisbon Treaty in a parallel development chooses terrorist attacks as the basis of its new 'solidarity clause', the remnants of a proposal for collective defence.⁵⁰ The talk of 'mobilizing... the military resources' is surely not appropriate to fight crime? The mixed message leaves an impression of strategic immaturity.

The 2003 ESS made a clear distinction between the general 'global challenges' and specific 'key threats' sections. The RI-ESS combines them, replacing the hierarchy of the ESS with an assortment of goals. It is worth noting that the global challenges and threats facing the EU are understood to be identical and interchangeable. There is no longer any attempt to prioritize, as was the case in the ESS. The RI-ESS states that the EU should simply 'be still more capable, more coherent and more active'.⁵¹ Keeping in mind the patchy record over the past decade, the combination of the lack of focus and the monumental tasks chosen could be a formula for policy overload. No priority is given for the tasks listed and the RI-ESS offers few answers. The authors in the EU Policy Unit have probably judged such a prioritization as too divisive and left it out in order to ensure unanimous support for the document. The difference between the clarity of the ESS (when subscribing to a modified US agenda), and the lack of clarity and structure in the RI-ESS suggests that

an EU willingness to set its own security agenda has not been matched by a corresponding rise of independent EU strategic thinking.

Preventive engagement and hedging

Stephen Walt distinguishes between ‘balancing’ and ‘bandwagon’ powers in the international system.⁵² Far from making the distinction between the two a moral one, Walt asserts that the ‘soft balancing’ entailed in coordinating positions on minor issues means that actors may become more comfortable with each other (and thus better able to collaborate on larger issues); repeated success can build the trust needed to sustain a more ambitious revisionist coalition. It is meant to not directly shift the balance of power but rather to undermine, frustrate and increase the cost of unilateral action for the stronger power. Thus, successful soft balancing today may lay the foundations for more significant shifts tomorrow. If other states are able to coordinate their policies so as to impose additional costs on the US or obtain additional benefits for themselves, then America’s dominant position could be eroded and its ability to impose its will on others would decline.⁵³

Recent research has argued that the ESS represents such an attempt at ‘soft balancing’ against the US.⁵⁴ EU satisfaction with an overall favourable status quo exists alongside policy aspects that in some respects make the EU act as if it were a balancing power. Analysing these arguments, Jolyon Howorth and Anand Menon reach the conclusion that the soft balancing concept cannot reasonably be applied to the particular case of the EU. At least not in the sense of actively amassing power in order to prevent or resist American influence.⁵⁵ Developments over recent years have clearly made European governments think anew about the EU’s strategic position. The question of pre-emption is perhaps the most important difference between the 2003 ESS and the 2002 NSS, the latter noted for its open-minded attitude towards pre-emptive warfare.⁵⁶ In an apparent response, the ESS claimed that ‘preventive engagement can avoid more serious problems in the future’.⁵⁷ This is restated in the RI-ESS: ‘Prevention threats from becoming sources of conflict must be at the heart of our approach.’⁵⁸ Usually, preventive engagement is understood to be an attempt to defuse a conflict before it erupts. The RI-ESS lists diplomacy, aid and sanctions as elements of the preventive engagement approach. This implies a curious logic where the EU proposes to respond to a crisis by preventing it from arising.

The EU position in the RI-ESS could be understood as an implicit criticism of American use of armed force, or even as an attempt at

influencing the Obama administration, which was at that time in the process of drafting an updated version of the NSS. The EU wishes to handle rogue states by offering them a way into international society through dialogue and cooperation. The EU non-proliferation efforts directed at Iran indicate that those failing to meet EU standards will primarily be met with the offer of rewards for compliance or – as in the case vis-à-vis Russia over the South Ossetian conflict – with threats to withhold rewards. This approach has proved effective with EU candidate countries, although it is less clear what leverage it provides with states not seeking EU membership.⁵⁹

The ESS confirmed the EU as a power concerned with maintaining the current international order. Still, it is questionable whether this suggests it is a power that seeks to maintain the status quo. In the ESS the EU members' pledge, to 'share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world', manifests a desire for the EU to become a more powerful actor on the world stage.⁶⁰ The idea of fashioning the EU as a counterweight to the US is a goal often encountered among the European intellectual elite and popular opinion.⁶¹ Instead, the RI-ESS underlines the EU's preference for multilateral solutions and international governance. The justification for this is the wish to preserve elements of the status quo that it sees as threatened by the US, such as international norms, the integrity of multilateral institutions, and barriers to the use of force that provide protection to small and middle-sized states.

It seems apparent that the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have eroded the faith of many European leaders in the American brand of liberal interventionism. In its shift away from the made-in-America security agenda, and non-interventionist logic, the RI-ESS invites a question about whether the EU is pursuing a strategy of abrogation vis-à-vis the US. Glen Snyder defines abrogation as a 'fail[ure] to provide support in contingencies where support is expected'. This is less hostile than de-alignment, or 'fail[ure] to make good on explicit commitments', which could be seen as the 'soft balancing' option, although in substance the two amount to much the same thing.⁶² One example can stand in the place of many. The manoeuvres in 2007 of the new Spanish government to send less of the NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps Spain to Afghanistan than promised offers an interesting insight into the subtle differences of abrogation and de-alignment.⁶³ By substituting the American global agenda with a distinctly European one the RI-ESS offends against what Stanley Hoffmann once called the 'true destination' of an integrated Europe, namely, 'playing its part in America's orchestra'.⁶⁴

One way to think about these developments is to consider that the EU is 'hedging'. Hedging is a term borrowed from finance sector that refers to risk reduction by spreading investments in contradictory developments.⁶⁵ Hedging has become a new buzzword in US strategic discourse, most notable in the 2006 NSS, which stated that American strategy 'seeks to encourage China to make the right strategic choices for its people, while we hedge against other possibilities'.⁶⁶ Hedging is a behaviour in which an actor seeks to offset risk by pursuing multiple policy options that increase the likelihood of a beneficial result from a range of different outcomes. The term has been utilized in international relations to refer to a strategy that can be distinguished from balancing and bandwagoning. The term is in many ways related to 'soft balancing'. Hedging behaviour, as an alternative, is seen as pursuing policies that combine 'engagement and integration mechanisms' with 'realist-style balancing in the form of external security cooperation and national military modernization programs'.⁶⁷

Although the hedging concept clearly is underdeveloped as an analytical tool, it has been used not only to describe great-power reactions to power shifts, but also small-power strategies.⁶⁸ In the case of the EU this could help to explain the apparent willingness to accept and enjoy the benefits of American hegemony while doing as little as possible to sustain it in terms of military spending or commitment to shared endeavours. After all, the role as auxiliary carries a greater inherent danger under conditions of multipolarity than in a unipolar system. To hedge, the EU and the US are pursuing policies that, on one hand, stress engagement and integration mechanisms and, on the other, emphasize alternative security cooperation in the shape of the CSDP and regional military modernization programs. The RI-ESS spends a considerable amount of time listing other 'partners' such as Russia, China and India.⁶⁹ The attempts of the EU in acting as a buffer between emerging powers such as China, Russia and Iran on the one hand and the US on the other could also be understood as examples of hedging.⁷⁰

Effective multilateralism and normative power

While the RI-ESS differs from its ESS counterpart with regard to the main threats to international peace and stability, it concurs on the means by which international security is to be upheld – and on whose authority. Multilateralism is at the core of the ESS, which commits the EU to work for 'an effective multilateral system'.⁷¹ The UN Security Council,

the World Trade Organization and NATO are singled out – followed by a string of regional institutions – as influential proponents of multilateralism. This is reinforced by the RI-ESS: ‘The UN stands at the apex of the international system. Everything the EU has done in the field of security has been linked to UN objectives.’⁷² A bold claim. Although the document is sprinkled with references to ‘friends and allies’, these are expected to accept UN authority.

In explaining the logic of multilateralism, Martin Ruggie has noted that in order to define the concept it is necessary to move beyond what he calls the ‘nominal’ definition: that multilateralism is the practice of coordinating national policies. What is characteristic about multilateralism is its qualitative aspect: ‘what is distinctive ... is not merely that it coordinates national policies in groups of three or more states, which is something that other organizational forms also do, but that it does so on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among states’.⁷³ It is these rules of conduct, and not the particular interests of states or the ‘strategic exigencies’ of a specific situation, that specify what is the appropriate course of action. In this way Ruggie negates the assumption that the state with most resources at its disposal can, on this basis alone, expect to have the final say on any given question in such a multilateral setting. This collective ethos helps explain why the ESS/RI-ESS do not bestow any similar authority on the 27 member states about when to act militarily.

The EU does not look to NATO as the arbiter of war and peace as it did in the lead-up to the Kosovo war.⁷⁴ Instead, it calls for a strengthening of the UN as the keeper of international peace and the ESS states, and that the EU must ‘be ready to act when [UN] rules are broken’.⁷⁵ In establishing this, the EU keeps to its founding myth of supranational governance, which is seen as an antidote to international anarchy.⁷⁶ This perspective is likely to prove popular with the EU electorate, who are generally in favour of the UN. That said, the UN Security Council seldom agrees upon firm mandates for assertive action, and when it does, the result has frequently been less successful than this stance by the EU would imply. According to the RI-ESS, threats and challenges are to be countered with ‘political, diplomatic, development, humanitarian, crisis response, economic and trade co-operation, and civilian and military crisis management’.⁷⁷

‘Effective multilateralism’ has been the Leitmotif during EU’s first ten years (1999–2009). Looking back, effective multilateralism has had mixed results in resolving key issues facing the EU in the period from the 2003 Iraq war, through Kosovo’s independence, to the Afghan

stabilization mission and the South Ossetian conflict of 2008. It is worth noting that mounting evidence to suggest that ‘effective multilateralism’ is an oxymoron has not led the EU to distance itself from the UN, at least not in rhetoric. Robert Kagan posits that the real tension is not, as many assume, between unilateralism and multilateralism as foreign policy outlooks, but between effective multilateralism and pragmatic multilateralism.⁷⁸ This poses a particular challenge to the EU. The continued insistence on effective multilateralism when it has been tried and found wanting underlines a distinctive trait of the EU as a security actor, namely, its belief in the concept of ‘normative power’, that ‘in its ideal or purest form, is ideational rather than material or physical. This means that its use involves normative justification rather than the use of material incentives or physical force.’⁷⁹ For this reason the lessons learned are not reflected in the use of ‘effective multilateralism’ in the 2008 RI-ESS.⁸⁰ Recently, Zaki Laïdi has argued that ‘normative power’ should be understood in the sense that EU does not stand for abstract values, but for those that reflect social preferences embedded in European societies.⁸¹ These preferences, furthermore, reflect European interests that the EU promotes and defends. The RI-ESS espouses an approach where values are not seen as being in causal relation with interests, but that the two are identical: ‘the EU’s security interests [are] based on our core values’.⁸² It remains to be seen whether this rhetorically pleasing, yet intellectually flawed, logic will prove workable in practical terms as a means of giving direction to policy.

Europe hedging its bets?

Given the challenging internal situation of the EU, it would have been a difficult task to write a traditional strategy paper. Therefore, it is easy to understand why the 2008 RI-ESS – like the 2003 ESS – fails to make the grade as a strategy document. The complexities of the current international system, along with the dynamic and multifaceted character of the threats facing Europe, also meant it was problematic to compose a conventional strategy document. Moreover, the text was written at a time when intra-European views on the role of the EU as a strategic actor were in flux. The long time-frame in which the text was written allowed for extensive deliberation, and the evaluation of much information; the lack of any shared understanding of an EU *raison d’état* precluded any focused document from emerging. The difficulties were compounded by traits latent in the EU: the lack of an agreed policy platform; lack of access to independent intelligence; an unwillingness to subordinate

national positions to EU foreign policy; and a continued belief in voluntary security – that is, the EU should freely define its own security agenda unhampered by such old-school principles as deterrence or territorial security.

Above all, the RI-ESS underlines the lack of a strategic culture that would enable ‘early, rapid and robust’ decision-making. The 2003 ESS implied that such a culture would materialize as a result of experience. To this purpose, the strategy rightly states that ‘Common threat assessments are the best basis for common actions’.⁸³ If anything, the RI-ESS illustrated that the EU cannot hope to be an effective strategic actor without defined policy goals and the means by which they are to be attained. As a result, the RI-ESS was unable to state in unambiguous terms the territorial challenge facing the EU in the shape of Russian autocracy. The rapid rearming and apparent revisionist intentions of modern Russia also poses a challenge to those states concerned that a very traditional threat is materializing on their outer borders – a threat that the RI-ESS largely fails to acknowledge.

The 2008 strategy update is a dubious strategic concept. The authors chose to de-emphasize the transatlantic security partnership, with regard to shared agenda, vocabulary and the sense of urgency found in the ESS, through the removal of the term, ‘strategic culture’ and castrating the ‘failed state supplies terrorist organisation with WMD’ line of reason. Less high-profile, but equally important, the RI-ESS illustrates that the EU is trying to create a European alternative to the US global agenda. The strategy sets itself apart from the ESS by reaffirming the EU as a pragmatic force, less concerned with upholding the current international order than with preserving the ordering mechanism of UN-centred multilateralism. The EU will not strive to uphold the US primacy, nor will it work against it. The document makes it clear that the EU continues to favour non-coercive means to counter threats and that it will draw legitimacy for action from somewhere other than its own Council or the transatlantic partnership.

Thus far, the shift towards multipolarity has failed to bring new impetus to the EU security dimension. That said, the RI-ESS threat assessment displays a laudable ability to respond to the evolving security agenda. In terms of delivering a foundation for EU security policy, the strategy represents a return to status quo ante. It tips the scales in favour of those who see EU security policy primarily as a means to deepen European integration. The politically correct tone and somewhat naïve belief in multilateralism in times of systemic shifts is clearly

not meant to signal the rise of a great power. European leaders, at least for now, tacitly accept that the EU is not ready to become an individual pole in a multipolar system.

It is popular to berate those who focus on hard power, in the case of the CSDP, while forgetting that the initiative has everything to do with the power status of the EU.⁸⁴ Realists, like the author of this book, are left with the question whether the EU developed military means in order to become a power, or whether it is an idealistic effort. Thus the RI-ESS re-establishes the ambiguity that existed prior to the Iraq crisis, where all agreed that the EU should have a security policy, but not what it should be about. Whether the 'effective multilateralism' of this strategy will ensure continued relevance for the EU, in a system where national interests and power politics play a more prominent role than under unipolarity, remains to be seen. That said, it is difficult to ignore the tendency that EU strategic thinking has grown increasingly bland and postmodern at a time when the South Ossetian war could have been expected to focus European minds on the selfish aspects of security policy.

So what does EU security strategy tell us about its ability to remain 'an anchor of stability' on the world stage?⁸⁵ By mixing global challenges and key threats, the EU reasserts a liberal internationalist understanding that the international system is a global community with common goods and interests. At a time when the global financial crisis is challenging the assumed community of values and interests, the EU may well find it difficult to get members to sign up to ever-new altruistic endeavours. Various scholars have suggested that at times international actors use hedging strategies to manage risks, retain strategic flexibility, keep a maximum amount of options open and develop fallback strategies as alternative to balancing or bandwagoning.⁸⁶ The vagueness of the RI-ESS allows for different interpretations. Actors choose to hedge at times of uncertainty. The uncertainties involved in the shift from unipolarity to multipolarity encourage such behaviour. The EU's apparent distancing from the US global agenda and friendly ties with emerging powers is to be expected at a time when American power is on the decline.

The EU security strategy confirms the pattern of small-power politics, as the strategic behaviour of small powers is characterized by dependence. The EU displays a mix of dependence on the US and strong attachment to international organizations that is expected. It is noteworthy that an organization made up of 27 democracies should defer the legitimacy of whether or not to act militarily to the United Nations. The recurring theme of 'multilateralism', as the essence of the Union and the means by which the international order should be upheld reflects a

general weariness of great-power politics. In the RI-ESS the EU is more concerned with the order being observed than by American power per se. Like a small power the EU seeks to stand in the background as powers rise and fall, seeing itself less as a rule enforcer than as a referee. As we will see in Chapter 8 the hedging strategy is typical of a small state in times of transition. Like small powers the EU is defensive by nature. It is noteworthy that the RI-ESS is less offensive than the ESS even if the capacity of the EU has increased; that is the topic of the next chapter.

5

Lessons from the Field

That you do a lot of something does not necessarily mean that you are very good at it. That is something every amateur footballer knows. The same might be said about EU conflict management. The European Union has in a surprisingly short time earned a reputation for sluggish response and token engagement. While much has been written on the United Nations and NATO crisis-management operations so distinct to the first decade of the new millennium, the role played by the EU as a crisis manager has received surprisingly little attention.

European Union conflict management efforts in Central Africa are of special interest to the study of the EU as a strategic actor because it represents a 'live-fire' test of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The twin conflicts in Darfur and Chad examined in this chapter took place during the five years that have passed since the CSDP was declared fully operational in 2003. Amid the many declarations and institution-building it is sometimes forgotten that the CSDP was created in order to handle real-world problems. The aim of the chapter is therefore to give the reader better understanding of the EU as a crisis manager. While the operations discussed in the following were clearly aimed at addressing acute challenges, they were also a means of showcasing the EU as a power on the international stage.

The sources for this chapter are drawn from five categories. For anyone eager to understand the conflict in a historical context, the anthology *Darfur a New History of a Long War* provides a good background – as does Mahmood Mamdani's *Saviours and Survivors from 2009*.¹ With regard to the actual events of 2003–2009 interviews given by decision-makers have been used extensively for verification and fact-checking in Brussels, Berlin, London, Paris and Washington. A wealth of official sources are also available. The European Union

Institute of Security Studies's collection of EU Security and Defence: Core Documents provide a helpful list of primary sources, as do the internal reports posted at the EUFOR website.² A third category consists of commentaries on the unfolding events, including media sources such as television documentaries and newspaper reports.³ In addition, there are the post-conflict assessment reports by over-seeing bodies such as the UN/EU's interim assessment of EUFOR Chad/CAR, the French National Assembly and the European Council conclusions.⁴ Finally, there is a full array of scholarly analysis and commentary.⁵

Before embarking, a few words about the choice of operations that have been singled out for closer scrutiny. The Darfur/Chad case was selected because it represents the very core tasks that the CSDP was called into being to address. Another reason is that while the missions in the Congo, Banda Aceh, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Georgia et cetera have been analysed thoroughly, notably in the EU-ISS study *EU Security and Defence Policy: The Ten Five Years (1999–2009)*, the handling of the twin Darfur/Chad mission is notably less well mapped.⁶ The Chad operation is of particular relevance because it illustrates a key point, namely that the EU operates in the same system as its member states – in this case notably France. In developing this argument, the chapter challenges some established truths about the EU, notably about its aptitude for pre- and post-crisis management. The chapter has three main sections. The first part deals with how the EU has expanded its view of crisis management tasks. The second section assesses experiences of EU crisis management in Darfur and Chad. The final section turns to what the EU as crisis manager says about the Union as a power.

Operationalizing the Petersberg Tasks

Curious as it may sound, one of the key challenges since the CSDP came into being in 1999 has been to agree on a purpose for the policy. Since the EU leaves territorial defence to NATO it was always clear that the EU's field of operations would be 'out of area'. The original mission statement for the CSDP was provided in the Western European Union (WEU) 1992 Petersberg Tasks, which was written into the Treaty on the European Union.⁷ The Petersberg Tasks fall into three categories: humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping and post-conflict management; and, finally, crisis management, including peacemaking and peace enforcement. Since then the range of EU missions has moved

beyond the traditional understanding of humanitarian rescue missions and peacekeeping, reflected in the Lisbon Treaty.

Since the Petersberg Tasks were made the capstan of EU security policy, their scope has been progressively widened. Given the changing nature of security threats as well as the EU's improving capabilities, there have been several additions to the original mission statement. The first expansion of the Tasks came at the EU Council meeting at Feira in June 2000. The Feira Council emphasized the civilian dimension of crisis management under the Petersberg Tasks, which so far had focused on military aspects. The EU honed its skills towards the specific undertaking of nation-building. In particular, the areas of policing, the rule of law, civilian administration and protection were spelled out. The EU also agreed to provide up to 5,000 police personnel to be deployed for conflict prevention and crisis-management operations.

The need to find a workable arrangement with the main security provider in Europe, NATO, further widened the EU's mission statement – taking in elements of alliance support. The so-called 'Berlin Plus' compromise is a framework agreement between the EU and NATO dated 17 March 2003, consisting essentially of an exchange of letters between the EU High Representative for the CFSP and the Secretary-General of NATO based on the conclusions of the 1999 NATO Washington Summit.⁸ Besides granting non-EU NATO members access to CSDP structures, the Berlin Plus agreement is widely seen as the reason why the EU has not yet incorporated the Article 5 collective defence clause of the WEU. By coupling the CSDP to NATO the EU received 'assured access' to NATO (and, thereby, American) assets such as intelligence, strategic airlift, and so on. By engaging with NATO the EU took on an ad hoc alliance-support dimension which inter alia is apparent in the mission in Afghanistan.

Since the 2003 Iraq crisis the EU has gradually expanded the scope of its missions to also cover security challenges that go beyond the narrow understanding of humanitarian rescue missions and peacekeeping.⁹ The furthest the EU has gone in spelling this out was in the draft version of the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) which stated: 'pre-emptive engagement can avoid more serious problems in the future'.¹⁰ The wording was changed in the second draft, according to a source involved in the drafting of the document, primarily due to the American experiences in Iraq. The main area of operations is defined as:

joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping

tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation.¹¹

The missions the EU has engaged in so far reflect the full range of the Petersberg Tasks guided by the agreed nation-building and alliance-support functions. For example, in 2003, the EU launched three operations that all serve to underline this point. Operation Concordia, which commenced in spring 2003 in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) as a continuation of NATO Operation Allied Harmony, was a test run for the Berlin Plus agreement. Operation Artemis, which was launched in June the same year in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in response to a United Nations Security Council Resolution (1484), was a very different operation in the humanitarian-intervention spirit of the Petersberg concept. Operation Artemis was a humanitarian stabilization mission in support of the UN's MONUC Mission to Congo, and Concordia was the policing and implementation of a peace agreement.

Overall, the EU missions have been favourably reviewed.¹² Commentators have especially applauded the outcomes in the FYROM missions and in Banda Aceh.¹³ Yet there are also grounds for apprehension, particularly with regard to the operational capacity of the CSDP. The main problem with the missions undertaken has for the most part been their lack of ambition. The twenty odd operations engaged in over the past five years have been so small that many Europeans are unaware of them. In most cases the tasks given the mission are such that mere deployment ensures success. A number of organizations have bemoaned the unwillingness of the EU to guarantee peace and its rules of engagement, which are seen as overly restrictive.¹⁴ Even without any large-scale engagements, the available resources are stretched thin. Compared with the approximately 6,000 troops deployed by the EU in 2009, the African Union (AU) has upwards of 30,000 soldiers deployed in five major peacekeeping operations. The United Nations (UN) has 75,000 troops deployed around the globe, and NATO is leading a force of 110,000 soldiers in Afghanistan.

It suffices to say that the EU is a more active, inter-wired, and more central actor than it was in 2003. Although the various deployments have had various degrees of success, the EU has for the most part received favourable assessments.¹⁵ Yet, the twenty odd operations engaged in over the past five years have for the most part been so small that many Europeans are unaware of them. While it is difficult to escape the conclusion that EU states have failed to meet their collective capability

objectives, it is equally clear that the EU in 2010 has a military capacity it did not have in 2003.¹⁶ Robert Cooper, giving evidence in the House of Lords, stated: 'In Brussels the organisation had been improved in the five year period since 2003 and was more capable of handling the very large deployment [...] than five years previously'.¹⁷

Many missions, many reasons

Although the EU initially relied heavily on means provided by NATO, such as air-lift, it has over time become more autonomous. One indicator is that it now deploys more staff for longer periods. The demand in the outside world for aggregate European engagement is also on the rise. From 2003 to 2009, the EU engaged in some 22 crisis-management operations. The operations are noteworthy not only for their complexity and range, but also for the manner in which they were carried out. The EU has made considerable strides in combining civilian and military assets in crisis management. Operations have ranged in size from the small – 15-man strong – in Guinea Bissau to the 2,500 personnel at the Operation Althea in Bosnia. The recent mission in Kosovo, where the EU deployed 1,900 law enforcement personnel to work alongside the 16,000-strong NATO military contingent, illustrates that the EU has filled a niche in regional and global security.

Missions display a variety of means and ends: monitoring and surveillance (Balkans, Indonesia, Georgia), border posts (Rafah-Palestine, Moldova-Ukraine), police training and reinforcement (Afghanistan, Bosnia, Congo, Lebanon), reform of security forces (Congo, Guinea) and rule of law (Iraq and Kosovo). The missions vary in size, number of participants, duration and intensity of action. The Congo mission was the EU's first autonomous mission. The Concordia mission transformed over time into a policing mission, Operation Proxima. The third of the initial operations was the EU Police Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which took over (for the most part) the UN International Police Task Force (IPTF). The EUPM was the first mission that mixed the military and civilian crisis-management capabilities of the EU including the policing and training elements that make up key elements in the EU 'comprehensive approach'.¹⁸

When the list of EU missions is examined, it is apparent that the EU favours small-scale, low-intensity pre- and post-crisis management in response to issues low on the international agenda. In the words of Javier Solana's aide, Steven Everts, the EU has a preference for 'issues that have a greater chance of being solved by political engagement and huge sums

of money'.¹⁹ Gülnur Aybet concludes from the EU missions that the process of creating and implementing the CSDP had come far in a short time, while asking the question whether the missions actually reflect the security interests and agendas of the member states.²⁰ Most of the operations have been modest in size – the largest was the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia – and have, in their own evaluations, for the most part achieved the goals they have set themselves. It is worth noting that the CSDP missions have for the most part been civilian not military in nature. Only six of the missions have had a military component; there have been seven police missions and four border-monitoring missions, one planning mission, three rule-of-law operations, three monitoring missions and two security-sector reform missions.²¹ The way that the EU likes to see itself was summarized by Javier Solana:

Thousands of European men and women are engaged in these operations, ranging from military to police, from border guards to monitors, from judges to prosecutors, a wide range of people doing well for the stability of the world. This is the European way of doing things: a comprehensive approach to crisis prevention and crisis management; a large and diversified tool box; a rapid response capability; playing our role as a global actor.²²

In the real world the picture is less rosy. A primary stumbling-block is the question of operational finance. According to the Lisbon Treaty, costs of military operations should either be charged to the member states as common costs in accordance with the GNP scale or the Council, acting unanimously, will decide to charge the expenditure on some other basis.²³ The EU has adopted the principle of 'costs lie where they fall'. The system twice penalizes those with capabilities: once during procurement and again when those capabilities are used in the field. This is not an academic dilemma. The NATO operation in Pakistan in October 2005, which cost Spain alone some 16 million €, showed the potentially bankrupting effects a mission can have on single states under this system. The arrangement invites disinvestment and free-riding. One cannot be asked to undertake costly deployments if one does not have the capabilities to do so in the first place. This leads to a situation that is all too familiar to American observers where Europeans are happy to be visionary, but are unwilling to pay for the implementation of the visions. Stanley Sloan calls this a 'defence dependence culture'.²⁴ The anticipated trend where the European pool their armed forces as a virtue of necessity has yet to materialize and

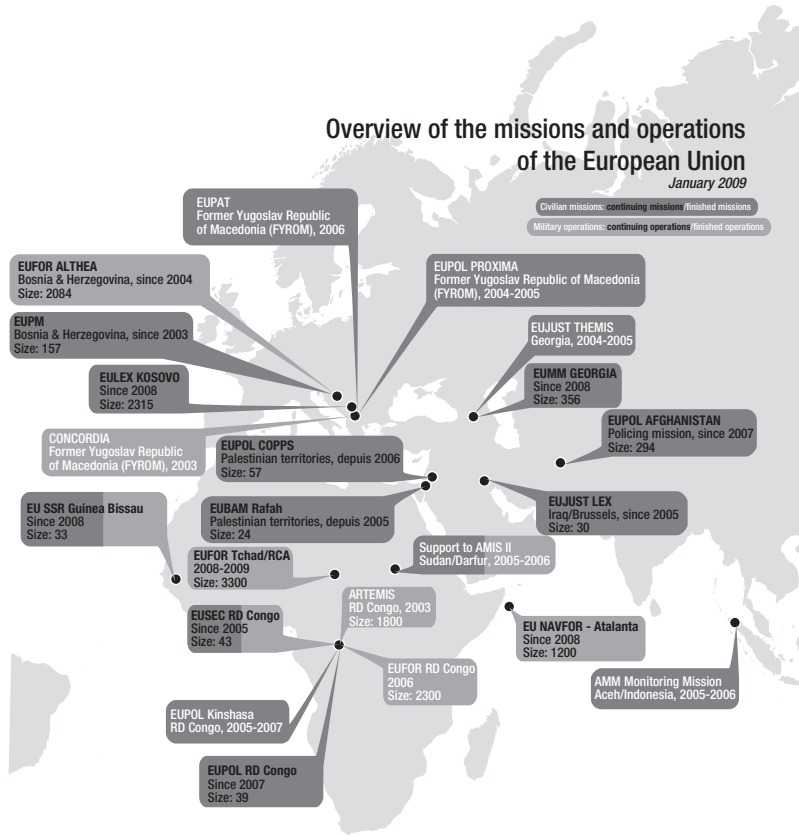


Figure 5.1 Overview of the missions and operations of the European Union, January 2009

there is reason to ask whether it will do so for the simple purpose that states are given the authority to tax and raise an army for the purpose of defending the tax payer – not to do God's work in faraway lands.

One of the disappointments of the Lisbon Treaty is that it does not introduce any changes to the financing of CSDP operations. The current budget to finance (non-military) operations under CFSP reached its limit for 2009 of €220 million. According to the Treaty on European Union, civilian crisis-management operations are to be funded from the European Communities budget. Operations that have military or defence implications, however, cannot be financed from the Community budget.²⁵ The 'Athena' mechanism provides funding for the common costs involved in

such operations. It is up to the European Parliament (EP) to improve these ramifications. Even though subject to EP scrutiny, secrecy and confidentiality by EU member states in mission planning – particularly military operations – still persist, despite inter-institutional agreements to minimize this. This is coupled with deep-seated reluctance in the Council and Commission to subject themselves to EP scrutiny. The implementation of the Athena mechanism has yet to share the increasingly heavy financial burden for external operations among member states, and this remain a primary obstacle to large-scale EU military operations.

During the Cold War African security was linked closely to the geopolitical jockeying between of the Soviet and Western blocs. During the 1990s military development assistance lost much of its credibility and development aid eclipsed the five other types of foreign aid in Hans Morgenthau's much-used typology.²⁶ The past twenty years have seen a surge in international attention interests in armed conflicts in Africa. This led to renewed European interest in African and sub-Saharan security and has over time become one of the main arenas of EU foreign policies. During these years the EU developed relations with the Organization for African Unity (OAU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union which was established in 2002. European military involvement in Africa evolved along two tracks: UN operations and national operations. France and Britain have been leading in the latter category with France having engaged in some 40 interventions in 15 African states since 1960.²⁷

Of all the foreign policy sectors that the EU plays, the crisis-management role is more open to assessment than most. Crisis management is less about regulatory space than about real-world outcomes. There are several ways of assessing the EU. One alternative is a quantitative approach, comparing the EU's many missions to the smaller number launched by NATO and concluding, as Jolyon Howorth does, that the EU is better adapted to the post-Cold War strategic environment.²⁸ This approach is clearly somewhat overly simplistic. Quantity is, after all, not the same as quality. Any assessment must go beyond misleading statistics. Clearly any detailed assessment of all EU missions is beyond the scope of this book. Also, it is too early to make any firm assessment of a number of missions. Nevertheless, some tentative conclusions can be drawn from the twin cases of Darfur and Chad regarding the operational behaviour of the EU.

Crisis in the Sudan

The EU has suffered some of its harshest criticisms in the case when they have not intervened.²⁹ There is a long list of missions that were

suggested but where the EU chose not to engage. The humanitarian crisis in the Sudanese province of Darfur features if not at the top then very nearly at the top of that list. The Darfur crisis provides a looking glass into EU crisis management on an operational level. Any appraisal of the CSDP, then, must take account not only of the impact of those missions that have been undertaken but also of those instances where the Union has failed to intervene at all.

From 2003 to 2008, the conflict between the government-backed Janjaweed militia and the non-Baggara people led to one of the worst humanitarian crisis anywhere in the world. There was broad agreement in the international community that Sudan is a failed state and that some form of external military intervention was needed in order to protect civilians, encourage displaced persons to begin to return home and create conditions for a negotiated political settlement.³⁰ With the United Nations deadlocked and the CSDP having been declared operational just one month prior to the outbreak of large-scale hostilities, the EU was always the most likely candidate to take on such a mission. Based on the 2003 ESS, Darfur would seem exactly the sort of issue that the CSDP was created to handle. The conflict fell within the narrow confines of the necessary use of force agreed on by the EU states.³¹ In addition, acting would not clearly benefit the national interest of any single EU state, which eliminated any claim that the CFSP was being used for that purpose. The Union was anxious to act on the basis of a UN Security Council resolution. Finally, on 2 April 2004, the UN Security Council members expressed concern about the humanitarian situation and called for negotiations.³²

On 7 January 2004, the EU presidency also made a statement, calling on 'the government of Sudan and the rebel groups to fully respect the ceasefire, ... to go back to the negotiating table, ... to ensure the full respect for human rights and the protection of the civilian population, ... and to ensure full and unimpeded access by relevant UN bodies and agencies and other humanitarian actors'.³³ Yet the text eventually agreed on in August 2005 made any deployment conditional on the concord of the Sudanese government – which the government had made clear that it would not give. In December, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan apparently appealed for military intervention. He said that events in Darfur left him 'with a deep sense of foreboding. Whatever terms it uses to describe the situation, the international community cannot stand idly by... [but] must be prepared to take swift and appropriate action. By "action" in such situations I mean a continuum of steps, which may include military action'.³⁴

It should be noted that EU member states already possessed considerable experience of humanitarian interventions in sub-Saharan Africa. One might even say that the EU low technology expeditionary capabilities had been designed specifically for interventions on the African continent. The 2 October 2006 remarks concerning the Sudan addressed by Union's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana to an informal meeting of EU defence ministers noted two key aspects of EU policy in Darfur. First, the UN was to be responsible for the peacekeeping operation. Here, Solana raised the question of Sudan accepting the deployment of a UN mission and stressed the EU readiness to support and assist with the UN's peacekeeping operations department. Second, he noted that responsibility was to be handed to the African Union in this African crisis, although few if any believed that the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) had the necessary resources or experience to succeed in such a challenging operational environment.

The EU promised to support and assist the AMIS mission, particularly by means of airlift, stressing the precedent set by efficient EU and NATO cooperation on this score. There was still many in Brussels who were uneasy about passing the buck. In December 2008, Javier Solana presented EU members with four military options. The deliberations quickly reached a deadlock, with some members taking advantage of the fact that the Secretary-General had requested a force slightly larger than a battle group to question the possibility of deployment, while others insisted that there was no need for a separate EU force alongside the UN operation on the ground. Ultimately, no consensus could be reached. While these deliberations were going on an estimated 400,000 people were killed and approximately 2.5 million people were displaced. In May 2007, after EU states had expressed verbal 'concern' regarding Darfur for the fifty-fourth time, the EU's outgoing Sudan envoy, Pekka Haavisto, told the *EU-Observer* that 'EU diplomacy is hamstrung by the lack of a coherent foreign policy in Brussels'.³⁵ As the conflict worsened over the summer of 2006, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 1706 on 31 August 2006, which called for a new UN peacekeeping force of 17,300 troops to supplant or supplement a badly trained, poorly equipped AMIS peacekeeping force.

The handling of the Darfur crisis

Paul Williams and Alex Bellamy have identified three main factors that explain the international community's failure to intervene decisively in Darfur: increased scepticism in the West towards interventionism after

the Iraq war, the West's strategic interests in Darfur, and the relationship between the Darfur crisis and Sudan's other internal conflicts. These are clearly all valid points that need to be taken into account in any explanation of the international community's response to the Darfur crisis. However, in the specific case of the EU, there is every reason to see these deterring factors in an institutional perspective – which, I hasten to add, the authors do acknowledge: 'Given the EU's increasing experience of peacekeeping and enforcement, the most likely explanation for its failure to contemplate intervention in Darfur was that its leaders lacked the political will to muster the necessary resources'.³⁶ Since 2004, the increase in human rights violations by all parties in Darfur has further complicated the picture.

There will always be good reasons for a state to oppose military action. Different reasons probably mattered more or less to different EU members when they decided against action in Darfur. What is certain is that the member states failed to reach a consensus on how to address the situation, and consequently the EU stood by while widespread massacres of civilians and gross human rights violations were perpetrated by ragtag guerrillas who almost certainly would have proven no match for professional soldiers. Recent examples in Africa have not only illustrated the need for such a capability, but interventions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast have demonstrated how a relatively small number of forces can have a significant effect in a short period of time, provided they are deployed rapidly with the appropriate support. Yet there is reason to question whether the EU would have acted much differently if some of the complicating factors had been removed. As one EU Commission official put it in an interview:

Look, here we have a low-technology, low-intensity conflict taking place in a region where we would not trespass on the interest spheres of Russia or the US. It would be a humanitarian intervention, dispensing effective multilateralism in a failed state for altruistic purposes. The rewards in terms of alleviating human suffering would probably be high – and the likely costs in terms of blood and treasure would be low. Frankly, it is difficult to imagine a more suitable mission for the EU.³⁷

EU diplomats who were interviewed freely admit that in 2003–2004 they had hoped that the US, Britain or even NATO would dispatch a force to Darfur. That would have enabled the EU to engage 'constructively' (and selectively) on the fringes, as it had done during the 1999

Kosovo war.³⁸ It soon became clear that the US was not only unwilling to take on new military missions, but it also actively tried to goad the EU into acting by branding the human rights violations in Darfur 'genocide'.³⁹ This must be seen in context with the efforts at the time to make the 'responsibility to protect' that is, intervene in cases of genocide recognized in international law.⁴⁰ With the issue firmly in the lap of EU decision-makers, an all-too-familiar process played itself out. Chinese brinkmanship meant that any intervention would have to be initiated without a firm UN mandate, Germany and a number of small states were already looking for 'other options' than military measures.

According to one centrally placed source, France was among the first to deflate any talk of a Darfur mission.⁴¹ As one of the countries that would likely be asked to shoulder a significant part of the burden with few prospects of national gain, France signalled that it would not support coercive measures. Yet towards the end of 2004 it seemed that pressure was mounting and that the EU was gaining the critical mass necessary to drive the CSDP into motion. The most vocal proponent of intervention, Britain began very publicly to plan a unilateral troop deployment in July 2004 – only to conclude that such a mission would exceed the capabilities of the already overstretched British armed services. Similarly, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation in Afghanistan made NATO cautious of taking on any new missions. In an interview, a senior European diplomat noted: 'There was no consensus among the member states to do this [intervene in Darfur], so we bowed out.' He continued, 'We went back to sponsoring peace talks and bankrolling other actors, back to applying measures we knew to be ineffective'.⁴²

Once it became clear that the EU would not act, Union officials began a different kind of crisis management, questioning whether the events in Darfur *really* amounted to 'genocide'. 'We are not in the situation of genocide there', said Pieter Feith, an adviser to the EU's Foreign Policy Chief, Javier Solana.⁴³ Feith stressed that, in the absence of any willingness to dispatch a military force and with the lack of an invitation to do so, the EU and others had little choice but to cooperate with the regime in Khartoum. Needless to say, this stance further enfeebled the CFSP in the eyes of the European public. The European Parliament openly challenged the Council's position, declaring that the actions of the Sudanese government in Darfur were 'tantamount to genocide'.⁴⁴ Since 2004, the EU has released a steady stream of statements, joint actions, common positions and declarations, to little avail for the peoples of Darfur. The transition from an AU to a UN mission was to be preceded by various consultations between the EU and the UN. The EU publicly

supported this decision: the Council 'strongly supported UN Security Council Resolution 1706...and reiterated the EU's readiness to support the effort of the UN and others in the planning for transition from the African Union Mission to the UN'.⁴⁵

The most visible European support was financial: the EU dedicated nearly 1 billion € for Darfur, mainly on humanitarian aid (€691 million) or directly to the AMIS and CFC (€325 million). In a glossy brochure, the Commission informs that it is the 'largest cash donor to Darfur' and that €432 million has been pledged since the beginning of the crisis. As the situation in Darfur continued to deteriorate, the EU grew increasingly willing to consider sanctions against the regime in Khartoum – again with little apparent success. The EU also stepped up its financial support for the AMIS in Darfur. Aid channelled through the Peace Facility was particularly significant as it came in cash and provided a type of flexibility unavailable from the support offered by other donors. The EU not only provided funding but also attempted to organize international involvement and advise the AU how to manage it. While the UN takeover was being planned, AMIS's mandate was extended until 31 December 2006. Its troops had not received their salaries for months and were growing increasingly demoralized. The financial support provided by the EU covered salaries, but the Union demanded proper financial accountability before releasing funds for an additional quarter. When this paperwork did not arrive, the aid was suspended.⁴⁶

The Darfur crisis provides a chilling display of Europe's lack of cohesiveness, the capacity to make assertive collective decisions and stick to them. That the EU never intervened was more due to a lack of political will than of capabilities. Even with UN backing, the EU did not act, seemingly validating Catherine Gegout's thesis that European inaction has more to do with realist concerns than with utopian qualms.⁴⁷ The pattern seen with Darfur illustrates just how little headway the EU has made since the 1999 Kosovo conflict as an interventionist. Despite nearly a decade of institution-building and pooling of military capabilities, the manner in which the EU handled the Darfur crisis left lingering questions with regards to the EU's actual capacity for military intervention.

Attention turns to Chad

As the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan raged, it spilled over into neighbouring Chad. An estimated 200,000 refugees fled into the borderlands, setting off ethnic violence in Chad that echoed those in Darfur.

The *New York Times* reported that 'political analysts, diplomats and even the combatants acknowledge that both sides are supporting and arming rebellions on each other's soil'.⁴⁸ The allegations issued between Khartoum and N'Djamena grew increasingly bellicose sparking fears of an imminent war between Chad and Sudan.⁴⁹ Even if the EU was unable and or unwilling to intervene the Union was embarrassed at being sidelined by the UN and the AU in the negotiations with the regime in Khartoum. Eager to reassert itself the EU chose to intervene.⁵⁰ All actors interviewed seem to agree that had it not been for Darfur, the EU would probably not have intervened in Chad.

The idea for the EU to send a stabilization force into Chad was first put forth on 21 May 2007 by the French foreign ministry. This was followed by the drafting of a Crisis Management Concept (CMC) which was adopted on 12 September by the Council, and on 16 October 2007 the Council of the European Union gave its approval to conduct a military operation in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR), based on UN Security Council Resolution 1778 (2007).⁵¹ The purpose of the Chad mission was ambiguous from the outset. Not least because it was motivated by a crisis in a different country, the Sudan. It was spear-headed by a former colonial power with a permanent military presence in Chad, France, and it was invited by President Déby, an autocrat a close ally of France.

As one British diplomat quoted by Jérôme Tubiana noted, 'We do not understand why France does not ask anything in exchange [for EUFOR], like a democratic process and a real dialogue with both official and armed oppositions'.⁵² Some contributing countries such as Sweden and Austria raised similar questions. The lack of enthusiasm among the EU members was never far from the surface. Despite staging five separate force-pledging conferences the desired military contributions were not generated. Despite determined efforts by the French diplomatic service, only Ireland and Poland agreed to contribute significant troop contributions.⁵³ Several of the contingents came with restrictive caveats which made them 'worthless in a military sense' as a senior diplomat to the UN mission in Chad put it.⁵⁴

EU member states negotiated for months over who should provide troops, helicopters and medical equipment, and how the operation was to be financed. This was added to by 'serious disagreements over the reference amount of the common costs' from €420 million subsequently decreased to €120 million by January 2008.⁵⁵ The EU was unable to fill all the capability gaps and the Union had to negotiate an agreement with the Russian Federation in November 2008 for Russian transport

helicopters to assist EUFOR's deployment. In late January 2008, after a series of false starts, the European Union launched what is its largest and most ambitious military operation in Africa to date. The force (EUFOR Tchad/RCA) comprised 3,700 troops from 14 EU countries. EUFOR was meant to be a 12-month bridging operation, intended to allow the UN sufficient time to assemble a follow-on force. The goal of the operations was to provide a safe and secure environment (SASE) for Internally Displaced Persons and Refugee Camps.

The deployment of the EUFOR Tchad/RCA was the spearhead of the EU commitment to a 'regional approach' to resolve the crisis in Darfur. The full range of EU instruments – diplomatic, political, military, humanitarian and financial – was mobilized in support of this effort.⁵⁶ The duration of the mission was one year – to give the UN sufficient time to assemble a follow-on force to take over the operation.⁵⁷ To this effect the EUFOR's activities included carrying out patrols to monitor the security situation in eastern Chad and the north-east of the Central African Republic; protect civilians in danger, in particular refugees from Darfur; to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel; protect UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment and ensuring the security and freedom of movement of UN staff and associated personnel.⁵⁸ The EU mission had no ambitions as to actually altering the situation on the ground.

The EUFOR operation got off to a rocky start when the deployment was temporarily halted following a rebel attack on the capital of N'Djamena on 3 February. After the rebels were routed by Chadian forces (by some accounts supported by the permanently stationed French troops) the deployment resumed in mid February and quickly began protecting civilians and paving the way for the UN follow-on force. The impartial and neutral Initiating Military Directive (IMD) and the statement of requirement identified the need for ten companies. The EU fell one short of that goal. Nine companies were provided and deployed progressively. The rest of the mission was relatively uneventful. To secure the area, EUFOR conducted numerous patrols (more than 2,000 short-range patrols and over 440 long-range patrols) and large-scale operations in areas where it did not have a permanent presence. United Nations forces took over command from EU peacekeepers on 15 March 2009. The EU's EUFOR troops swapped their berets for the UN peacekeeping ones in the eastern Chadian town of Abéché in a symbolic handover ceremony. 'This is clear proof of a new commitment to this part of the world', said EUFOR's commander, General Patrick Nash.⁵⁹

The handling of the Chad Mission

The Chad operation generated widespread public debate. This was not least due to the ambiguous nature of the mission. There was also discord over whether the EU should deploy in such numbers for such missions in Africa at all. Interviews carried out in London and Berlin indicate that France was informed by Germany and Britain that if Paris insisted on deploying in Chad they would be expected to shoulder most of the burden by acting as framework nation. They did not want to create exceptions to the minimalist financing rules set by the Athena mechanism for EU military actions. A number of other EU members such as the Czech Republic approved the operation without being fully persuaded of its rationale.⁶⁰ There was a great deal of discussion, at least in the early stages of the process, whether France was draping its long-standing African interests in EU colours. After all, Chad was an ally of France, the Sudan was not.⁶¹

On 12 September, the UN Secretary-General released the UN/EU mid-term review of the UN and EU missions in Chad. A key finding of the review was the deterioration of the security situation in eastern Chad in the past six months. While the review notes that EUFOR's presence was beginning to have a positive effect, the worsened security situation was seen as troubling – especially given that EUFOR's stated key objective was to provide stability.⁶² The expulsion of 13 humanitarian organizations from the Darfur region and the suspension of their relief efforts, led to a massive influx of refugees into neighbouring Chad.⁶³ When the EU handed over the mission to the UN MINURCAT-mission, the situation had worsened. When interviewing UN personnel there was a degree of resentment over what was seen as EU 'incompetence' at peace-keeping. It was especially noted that the EU which has stressed its focus of integrated missions and comprehensive approach failed to bring civilian components to work within the refugee camps that the military presence was there to protect.⁶⁴ The EUFOR's penchant for patrolling from the air rather than engaging with the local population on the ground was mentioned by one UN diplomat.⁶⁵

Among the aid groups that the EU force had been dispensed to protect the mood was less jubilant. Faced with frequent armed robberies, several aid groups in eastern Chad claimed that the EUFOR had failed to do the job of protecting them. A frequently heard charge was that the EUFOR was ill equipped to fight bandits. 'It came ready to fight the wrong kind of war', CARE International's programme director, Alsy Burger, told the IRIN news agency. 'EUFOR has all these heavy guns and

armoured personnel carriers, expecting they would have major offensives but for EUFOR to protect humanitarian workers and vulnerable populations from the real threat of banditry it needs light weapons and more men on the ground.⁶⁶ The disenchantment was not restricted to participating parties. British MEP Geoffrey van Orden, member of the defence subcommittee in the EU legislature, told the EU-Observer that the EU should focus rather on civil assistance as it is 'not very good at military deployments'. The MEP also claimed that the Chad mission would have been more successful and would have had continuity had the UN taken a role from the beginning, instead of acceding to the EU's politically driven request for military involvement. He criticized the slow deployment and the reliance on Russian helicopters after no member state was willing to offer a capability essential to the mission and concluded: 'There is an appalling humanitarian and security situation in Chad. The EU has not managed the right response.'⁶⁷ The EU was more successful at the public relations aspects of the operation. An estimated 400 media personnel were flown in to report on the mission.⁶⁸

Given the situation on the ground, the vast area covered and the logistical difficulties, the EUFOR Tchad/RCA operation proved a real challenge for the EU. A key lesson is that the clearer the policy objectives, the more clearly they can be communicated to the personnel in uniform who will find it easier to translate them into operating procedures. According to military sources EUFOR spent too much time aimlessly patrolling the vast uninhabited lands that make up the Chad-Sudan border. Whereas the Ministers of Defence of the member states, at their informal meeting in Prague on 12–13 March 2009, stated that the objectives of the operation had been 'fulfilled successfully', the CSDP operation failed to alter the dynamics of the conflict.⁶⁹ So, in the end the mission was a mixed success. It was the result of a series of compromises between various states pushing various agendas. The EU failed to translate a relatively robust UN mandate into workable political compromises over rules of engagement and civilian protection. In the end the humanitarian situation failed to improve, neither did the relations between Chad and the Sudan. In this sense the EU's mission cannot be deemed a success.

The EU as a crisis manager

Behind the talk of the EU security tool box' lies an inconvenient fact: the EU is not very good at crisis management. This does not only

refer to robust crisis management but also, perhaps more worryingly, to pre- and post-crisis management. More concretely, the missions reveal a strategic search for opportunities to convey a specific image of the EU as 'sharing in the responsibility for global security'.⁷⁰ The reason why the EUFOR mission was a success was because the parameter for success was set low. Ambitions shrank in the process: the numbers dropped. European troops could hardly be said to constitute a 'rapid reaction force'. The operation generated several political and operational debates. Many questions lingered regarding the objectives of the operation. The failure to intervene in Darfur proper and the soft mandate of EUFOR Tchad/RCA was the result of a compromise between member states pushing competing agendas. The main argument justifying EUFOR's deployment was the conflict in Darfur, and particular emphasis was placed on its importance in protecting Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad. These refugees suffered less violence, and were easier to protect than most other civilians living in this region.⁷¹ Although focus was on the Darfur refugees, the peacekeepers were charged with protecting all civilians, without any distinction of nationality or ethnicity.

Once deployed, however, EUFOR mission focused on protecting refugee camps. The rules of engagement did not provide the mission with sufficient initiative and strength to tip the scales on the ground.⁷² The lack of overall strategy is also apparent in the failure to use foreign aid, to achieve political objectives, or indeed, sound economic development. The most serious charge towards the EU handling of the Darfur/Chad crisis is that the mission was never coupled to broader political process. Absence of agreed-upon political objectives, connecting means to ends in a realistic manner, invited an unwarranted belief in the viability of 'muddling along'.⁷³ This was uneasily coupled with internationalist ideals of legality and collective security as a sound basis for security policy. The EU ended up in an unbalanced position in which it appeared to be more focused on the means than on the ends, in terms of actually bringing peace and stability to central Africa. The EU was culpable of continuing its constructive engagement approach long after it had proved inadequate in resolving the questions at hand. As the international agenda shifted towards coercive measures, the EU got stuck in a sanctions regime that was as inflexible as it was ineffective. The EU displayed an unwarranted belief in the merits of economic rewards and diplomatic dialogue. The weakness of this approach became evident in high-pressure situations, when the EU institutions found it difficult to arrive at common policies.

The classic distinctions between internal-external and soft-hard security policies have been willingly blurred by the EU. This has consequences for the attempts of the Union at achieving more coherence and consistency in policy-making and law-making in the European security field. The notion of coherence refers to the level of internal cohesion, that is, the level of institutional coordination within the EU. As such, the principle carries a procedural obligation for the institutions to cooperate with each other. Achieving more coherence and consistency in policy-making is a particular challenge. The bottom line remains that the willingness of the member states to act as a Union is often missing. The unwillingness of individual member states to participate in 'their own' mission in Chad is sad proof of this. Over the Darfur/Chad crisis the EU displayed a curious mix of desire to lead and inability to do so – a defensive inclination characteristic of small powers.

In dealing with the Darfur question, the EU applied constructive ambiguity both in terms of means and ends. It was clear throughout that the EU was uncomfortable in dealing with an agenda that evolved independent of the EU policy process. The EU acted as if it were hoping that the crisis would resolve itself by its own accord, resulting in the Union getting stuck in reactive decision-making and repeatedly failing to prepare for escalation. In this sense, the EU states got locked in by their own deferral, by their unwillingness to commit to specific objectives. If anything, the Darfur crisis illustrated that the EU decision-making procedures were inadequate to deal with in an international crisis of this scale. Through its slow pace, the EU landed itself in the situation of being the reactive counterpart to unfolding events. Collective decision-making prevented forward-looking decisions from being taken, and the lack of a military culture and habitual leaks prevented many issues from even being discussed. These two factors led to a *modus operandi* which allowed for dissent to translate into inaction.

The outcome of the Darfur crisis has much to do with the mode of decision-making in the CFSP. The EU relied on consensus rather than majority decisions in addressing the situation, which encouraged lowest common denominator declarations 'calling for' this and 'urging' that. The problem was that the penchant for issuing statements throughout the crisis created expectations of a unified European response. The EU seemed to be caught off-guard by each escalation of the Darfur crisis. The under-defined seniority between national and EU policy positions encouraged selective compliance. This invited an approach that barred the EU from making an effective contribution to the actual crisis

management. Whether this was a result of the EU's pattern of behaviour or a result of its approach is hard to say. The crisis demanded military and institutional capabilities that the EU was simply not able to agree to apply. The reason why the members found it difficult to arrive at common policies even when their relative positions were not very far apart, owes much to practical questions such as funding.

The lessons from the field seem to validate viewing the EU as a small power. Just as the strategic behaviour of small powers is characterized by dependence the EU was unable to make up its mind to act forcibly over Darfur. Instead the Union sought a supporting role to the African union, even if the AU was clearly not up to the task. The EU's problems in applying its foreign and security policy in a determined manner has much to do with a general weariness of great-power politics. Many felt that an intervention would put the EU into the murky waters of American and Chinese geopolitics and further French strategic objectives. This point is of particular relevance in that the Chad operation exemplifies how the EU operates in the same strategic space as its member states. The EU carried out an operation in a country where France is militarily involved as a national actor. The status quo bias of the EU is apparent in that when the EU finally did intervene it was not to change the situation on the ground, only to monitor it and prevent it from declining further. Over Darfur/Chad the EU also displayed the defensive traits of a small power. This is in no small part the reason why the member states failed to offer the required capabilities (e.g., helicopters) when the mission in Chad was finally agreed upon. Although there is a clear demand in Europe for more active engagement the EU prefers to stay on the margins focusing on dialogue, declarations and foreign aid.

6

A Question of Political Will

'Le meilleur des mondes possibles', the best of all possible worlds. The phrase used by philosopher Gottfried Leibniz in his attempt to resolve the 'problem of evil' comes to mind when confronted with the tepidness of the EU operational capacity and the self-congratulatory manner the EU refers to it.¹ In 1993, Christopher Hill published an influential article on what he called Europe's 'capability-expectations gap'. In the article, he analysed the international role of the European Community (EC) and identified a gap between what it had been talked up to do and what it was actually able to deliver. Hill saw the capability-expectations gap as having three primary components, namely, the ability to agree, resource availability and the instruments at the EC's disposal.²

In more recent assessments, Hill has stressed that the capability-expectations gap was intended not as a static concept, but rather as a yardstick by which the process of change in European Union (EU) foreign policy can be monitored.³ The handling of the Darfur crisis spotlights a more fundamental challenge, namely Europe's capacity to make assertive collective decisions, and to stick to them in conflicts. The explanation presented here is that the EU today possesses the necessary capabilities and institutions, but still finds itself unable to deliver the foreign policies expected of it because of a lack of decision-making procedures capable of overcoming dissent. The 'consensus-expectations gap', in other words, is a gap between what the member states are expected to agree on and what they are actually able to deliver.

The outline of this chapter is straightforward: A discussion of capability development and implementation leads into an update on the size of the gap between capabilities and expectations in the CSDP. Focus is then shifted to the question of policy formation and consensus. In the third and final section of the chapter discusses effects of the consensus-expectations

gap. 'Consensus' is introduced as a conceptual lens through which to select and interpret information. Although it would be senseless to claim that all aspects of EU foreign policy-making can be understood from the vantage point of the consensus-expectations gap, it is surprising how many can be. By identifying the single factor that is most responsible for the limited output of the EU foreign and security policy, and is intended to help find a way out of the intellectual *cul-de-sac* where theorists and practitioners alternate between hailing a superpower in the making and lambasting the inherent futility of the EU's efforts.

Capability development and implementation

The CSDP was also intended to be a European capacity for crisis management operations. From the British perspective, the most important function of the CSDP was as a 'capability generator' for NATO and a response to American concerns over European free-riding in the Alliance. As a result the EU has sprouted a colourful array of capability initiatives. First was the 1999 Helsinki Headline Goal intended to generate a collective 60,000 strong Rapid Reaction Force. The RRF was intended for collective engagement in the vein of the NATO 'flag castle' AMF force of the Cold War. This was followed up with the November 2001 Capabilities Improvement Conference, which itself led to the creation of the European Capabilities Action Plan of December 2001, meant to counter the most significant shortfalls in meeting the Helsinki targets. This initiative failed and in December 2003 member states agreed on a Capability Development Mechanism intended to create a greater degree of automatism in the capability generation.

This was a pretext to the Headline Goal 2010, which was to be supported by a new institutional fixture, the European Defence Agency (EDA) to meet its modified capability objectives. The EDA was an important player in drafting the 2006 'Long-Term Vision' that was intended to make sure that the EU was actually producing the capabilities that it would need. It is fair to say that the actual capabilities have not mirrored the high rate of activity on the institutional and declaratory side. Some progress has been made. The case can be made that the EU has been successful in shaping national defence reform processes and also encouraged the development of certain new capabilities. This is especially the case in terms of force-projection. Anand Menon has argued that the CSDP has played a part in shifting the attitude of key member states – such as Germany – towards participation in military operations.⁴

Capability shortfalls impact operational capacity. The EDA Long-Term Vision (LTV) report outlined the sort of capabilities which Europe's armed forces would need for possible Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) military operations in the future. The broad endorsement of the LTV by European Defence Ministers in October 2006 provided a solid foundation for CSDP capability development activities to be taken forward and set the baseline for an unique enterprise: to create a comprehensive and auditable overview of military capability trends and requirements, from 2010 to 2025 and beyond, across all envisaged CSDP missions. As a part of this process the Battle Group of the 2010 Headline Goal replaced the Rapid Reaction force of the Helsinki Headline Goal as a smaller, cheaper and more achievable alternative.

A recent study concludes that the flurry of initiatives has failed to deliver the real-world results that were expected.⁵ The fact of the matter is that the EU states not only have failed to meet their own targets, they have repeatedly scaled the targets down and then failed to meet those as well. The *locus classicus* of this state of affairs is the armoured cars which has been in short supply for all major EU missions so far.⁶ The most widely cited of such, the chronic shortages of airlift capacity, continues to limit operational capacity. It has been seen repeatedly that even when engaging the EU missions see a row of bottlenecks where capabilities of crucial importance to the missions are restraining the EU. The total number of troops deployed today in CSDP operations, around 6,000, constitutes a paltry 0.3% of European military manpower. The failure to reform outdated militaries means that much of the annual 200 billion € that EU governments spend on defence is simply wasted.

Although they have committed to the light and mobile Petersberg ethos European armed forces still operate over 9,000 main battle tanks and some 2,500 combat aircraft. And despite the 27 member states having almost 1.86 million active service personnel on their books in 2010, only roughly a third of these forces can actually be deployed outside European territory because of either legal restrictions or inadequate training. Paradoxically, a gradual move to improve this situation through the professionalization of national armed forces has proved excessively costly, since the switch to all-volunteer forces increase the proportion of defence spending made up by personnel costs. The fragmentation of the European defence market further entrench inefficiencies. Several small national defence industries producing similar hardware for several small national militaries is a recipe for duplication and waste.

This state of affairs is attested to by Nick Witney, the former head of the European Defence Agency (EDA):

Javier Solana has often been reduced to phoning Defence Ministers in person to secure a single transport plane or field surgeon. In Aceh, the operation was initially financed on the personal credit cards of mission personnel along with a loan from the entertainment allowance of the British ambassador in Jakarta. Duplication within the defence industry (5 ground-to-air missile programmes, 3 combat aircraft programmes, 6 attack submarine programmes, and more than 20 armoured vehicle programmes) has led to a massive waste of resources and inflated prices.⁷

The capability shortfall has three sides to it. One, most European states are simply not spending enough on defence. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reported that in 2005 Europe was the only region in the world where military spending fell by some 1.7 per cent.⁸ Military expenditure in Europe totalled 413 billion in 2008, an increase of 1.4 per cent in real terms since 2007. Eastern Europe, notably Russia, saw an 11 per cent increase while the EU states increased by 0.6 per cent. In a longer perspective 1999–2009 Eastern Europe (Russia) increased its military spending by 174 per cent and Central and Eastern Europe by 4.5 per cent.⁹ Also, there are large gaps between member states: France and Great Britain together account for nearly half of total EU defence spending; they, along with Cyprus, Bulgaria and Greece, are the only member states to meet NATO minimum requirement of spending above 2 per cent of GDP on defence. Not only are funds scarce, the cash is often spent in a manner opposed to the overall strategy.

Some see the dwindling of European capabilities as the strongest argument for the CSDP. The Europeans states are showing that they are not able to take care of their individual or collective security through the current arrangement. Also the pooling efforts of the CSDP are unsuccessful if they are held to the yardstick of what was intended, but if compared to the NATO attempts or, indeed the likely missions that the EU might deploy CSDP forces, the initiative's grades improve. Sven Biscop argues that 'the only way to achieve the quantum leap that is necessary to realise defence transformation is through pooling which, by reducing intra-European duplications, can produce more deployable capabilities within the current combined defence budget'.¹⁰ Yet the EU members clearly possess sufficient resources for the sort of crisis management that the CSDP is charged with. The progress outlined in

Chapter 3 and the empirical examples from the previous chapter make a strong case that that capabilities and operational capacity are no longer the primary factors constraining the EU as a foreign policy actor.

The capability–expectations gap

The European Union was born out of an understanding that ‘the great decisions of our day will be made by speeches and majority decisions, not by blood and iron’, to reverse Otto von Bismarck’s famous quip. The EU is built on consensus governance and opposition to great-power politics.¹¹ It is therefore far from self-evident that a common foreign and security policy is necessarily a good idea for the Union. Christopher Hill takes a view that the capability–expectations gap is perilous because ‘it could lead to debates over false possibilities both within the EU and between the Union and external supplicants’, and it also would ‘be likely to produce a disproportionate degree of disillusion and resentment when hopes were inevitably dashed’.¹² There have been plenty of ill omens trailing the initiative, most notoriously when the EU failed to prevent, and later to stop, the Yugoslav civil wars of the mid-1990s, an experience the EU has at least to some extent repeated in the handling of the Darfur crisis addressed in the previous chapter.

For decades, foreign policy integration under the European Political Cooperation (EPC) seemed of somewhat greater consequence in academic writings than in real-world affairs. Early European foreign policy studies fell, broadly speaking, into a theory-building branch, a heterogeneous tradition with few agreed fundamentals, and a branch seeking insights from case studies and empirical analyses. Both traditions justified their approach with reference to the uniqueness of the object of study, that is, the multipurpose, multidimensional, semi-supranational, semi-intergovernmental character of the EC. What the two schools did agree on was that the constraints placed on the EC differ from those faced by sovereign states, which rendered state-centric analytical tools surplus to requirements. While such *sui generis* perspectives help explain why the EC – and later the EU – fell short of fielding anywhere near the sum total clout of the member states’ weight in terms of foreign policies, they also tend to invalidate comparative analysis. In the 1990s, the debate got stuck on the questions of whether ‘power presence’ can be bestowed on an entity that lacks a self-contained decision-making system and the practical capabilities to effect policy and whether there is such a thing as ‘partial presence’.¹³

In the original article, Christopher Hill took a pragmatic approach, choosing to conceptualize the patterns of activity. Leapfrogging questions of theory, Hill directed the reader's attention to a gap between what the EC had been talked up to do and what it was ultimately able to deliver in terms of foreign policies, thereby sketching 'a more realistic picture of what the Community ... does in the world'. He saw the capability-expectations gap as having three primary components, namely, the ability to agree, resource allocation and the instruments at the collective's disposal. Hill argued that if the gap is to be closed, the notion of a European foreign policy must be grounded in demonstrated behaviour rather than in potential and aspirations. For this, the EU require credible capabilities. It is not sufficient to simply amass the power tools; the political unit must also possess the institutions to mobilize them and the decision-making mechanisms to command them. In proving that these capabilities are present actions speak more than words.¹⁴

In the fast-moving world of foreign policy scholarship, Hill's concept has retained remarkable salience. It remains a dominant perspective for monitoring the progress not only of the EPC, but also of its successor, the Common Foreign and Security Policy CFSP of which the CSDP is the centrepiece. By 2010, the capability-expectations gap had narrowed considerably. Without capabilities and frameworks in place, the lack of agreement on foreign policy goals and the means by which they are to be attained could remain clouded in ambiguity. It is a greater problem that that EU members share sufficient foreign policy interests, traditions, goals and outlooks to automatically generate substantive common policies. This, of course, will not come as a surprise to anyone who has monitored European attempts to pursue collective foreign policies over the past 50 years. The first president (1958–67) of the Commission of the European Economic Community (EEC), Walter Hallstein expressed an opinion held by many even today: 'Don't waste time talking about defence. In the first place we don't understand it. In the second place we'll all disagree.'¹⁵ There has been apprehension that political integration would be more arduous than economic integration that the project so far has excelled in. This has not translated into any irreversible 'grand bargain' over foreign policy integration that is similar, for example, to that of the monetary union.¹⁶

The more charitable view embraced by the majority of CSDP scholars is that the EU is gradually assuming a role in world affairs. The Union has assembled by most yardsticks impressive power resources, comprising a broad spectre of economic, diplomatic and military capabilities. When viewed as a whole, the EU outstrips the US in terms

of size of economy, population and foreign trade. Despite these developments, the EU's impact on world affairs is clearly limited. Since the goal of framing a CFSP gained momentum in the late 1990s, the Union has proven largely unable to coordinate member state resources and translate this into actual influence beyond the group of countries seeking EU membership. The common strategies are unfocused and the military operations were of such limited merit that they would barely have been noticed had they not been the first military missions for the EU.¹⁷

The EU *modus operandi* would likely have been successful had it been allowed to remain 'voluntary' in the sense that all activities could be seen as unexpected bonuses. That is why the question of 'expectations' is so important. This half of the capability-expectations gap refers to the hopes that EU members themselves have raised as well as the incentives inherent in the international system. This was due, as seen, to the difficulties of moving from a general agreement that the EU should play a role in world affairs to the specifics of defining policy goals, the means by which they are to be attained and the degree of commitment this will require on behalf of the member states. The 2003 European Security Strategy and all subsequent core documents reflects a quest for language sufficiently vague to contain inherently divergent positions, rather than any greater vision of the purpose of European power. Subsequently, the goals of EU foreign policy have been left vague.¹⁸

Common foreign policy in theory and in practice

The Union's lack of a defined 'self' is in itself a primary obstacle, in that it makes self-interested behaviour difficult. The EU defines itself by values that are taken to be universal and at the same time characteristic of Europe. The 2001 Laeken Declaration stresses that the EU is a community of values.¹⁹ These values are a blend of proto-liberal and internationalist ideals. They are spelt out in detail in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which states: 'The peoples of Europe, in creating an ever closer union among them, are resolved to sharing a peaceful future based on common values', which are listed as 'human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity' (defined in the subsequent 53 articles) as well as 'the principles of democracy and the rule of law', which, balanced with individualism and 'free movement of persons, services, goods and capital, and the freedom of establishment', are the building blocks in 'creating an area of freedom, security and

justice'.²⁰ Since the EU makes it clear that these values are held to be universal, they provide a yardstick of equal relevance for both internal and external policies.²¹ The apparent hope is to carve something akin to a *raison d'état* out of these values – or perhaps more accurately, that the role usually played by the national interest is, in the EU, played by values.

This point is perhaps better captured in Max Weber's distinction between instrumental rationality (*Zweckrationalität*) and intrinsic rationality (*Wertrationalität*). The distinction is between means/ends rationality and value rationality, both of which encourage certain behavioural patterns.²² According to Weber, under value rationality, an action is undertaken for what one might call reasons intrinsic to the actor, 'involving a conscious belief in the absolute value of some ethical, religious, aesthetic or other form of behaviour, entirely for its own sake and independently of prospects of external success'.²³ The concern is with making a statement, of setting an example. Such intrinsic rationality – the will to engage in foreign policy activities that are not means/ends oriented, but rather a statement of values – is a trait that distinguishes the EU from other foreign policy actors. The EU will engage in 'constructive engagement' and 'critical dialogue', even when these are not the most rational ways to achieve a given objective.

Throughout the late 1990s and, what Timothy Garton Ash calls, the 'nameless decade' that followed, much emphasis was placed on the process of pooling military, economic and diplomatic capabilities and the assembling of institutional frameworks.²⁴ The 2003 Iraq crisis made it plain that no similar progress had been made towards crafting a European consensus on foreign policy means and ends. In Chapter 1 there is a list of ten roles played by the EU: *a system of governance; a community of values; a security community; a great power bargain; a trade bloc; a normative power; a civilian power; a pacifier, a humanitarian and a power in a traditional sense*. After having taken on many of the great questions of the day, the ESS/RI-ESS is something of a letdown when it is proposed that the means to tackle these problems will be 'preventive engagement' and 'effective multilateralism'. As discussed in Chapter 4, neither version of the European Security Strategy offers even the roughest guideline as to how economic and military tools might be applied in order to exert influence. The danger inherent in failing to link capabilities to objectives becomes clear in cases where the EU is forced to respond to international events as seen in the previous chapter. And herein lies a basic discrepancy between the expectations raised and the behavioural

patterns. As a result, the EU can be said to be a global power only if that term is instilled with counter-intuitive meaning. This is not to suggest any ill will among the member states, only that the belief in their ability to concur exceeds what the Union is practicably able to deliver. The chief reason for this is that the CFSP is governed by the twin precepts of intergovernmentalism and consensus.

The lack of political will

Pointing to 'political will' as a crucial variable in international politics is by no means a new discovery.²⁵ It is a frequently invoked explanation for the failures of the EU to strengthen its foreign and security policy and to effectively tackle internally agreed-upon goals or challenges that have been forced upon it by external developments. As a result, most commentators agree that finding a way to generate a more stable 'permissive consensus' is the obvious solution to the EU's difficulties in finding its feet on the international stage. For instance, in a speech in July 2008, High Representative (HR) Javier Solana, argued that a 'strong EU foreign policy is above all a question of mustering sufficient political will to act' and that 'we must respond to the great question of our day uniting behind an EU capable of delivering results'.²⁶

The reason why question of will takes on such proportions is that the EU is made up by states that are sovereign. Similar security problems will be handled differently by different actors depending on a range of factors such as the organization and competences of the army and police, the political culture, the degree of politicization, the militancy of the unions, the strengths of groupings and the constitutional powers of the executive. In the absence of a mechanism to curb sovereignty the integrative blend of bureaucratic politics, interpenetration of elites, horse-trading, incrementalism and constructive ambiguity has given EU foreign policy its distinct flair. As Anthony Forster and William Wallace have pointed out, Europe has moved towards 'the beginnings of integrated west European defence. The policy networks are in place, constituting a powerful interest in maintaining momentum. The symbols of sovereignty, however, hamper movement; the ambivalence of the political leaders and publics about the desirability of the declared objectives slows it further.'²⁷

'Political will' refers to the cohesion among political leaders when they are pursuing and implementing a policy. Although political will is a crucial variable, it is not the *only* variable. Political will operates

on several levels. The most obvious is that the system allows many opportunities for dissenting states to obstruct, defuse or overturn the policies that they themselves have agreed to in principle.²⁸ Member States frequently agree that EU foreign policy action towards a specific challenge is required, only to find that agreement on ends does not translate into an agreement on means. As seen in the previous chapters specific policies are often obstructed because the member states have opposing views on the causes of the problem and by which means it is best addressed as well as what organizational setting is most appropriate.²⁹ A general political intention to tackle a problem can be thwarted by the institutional setup, the decision-making system and the implementation mechanisms. In all these cases, a 'lack of political will' can be seen as at the heart of the EU's ineffectiveness. Also when the EU members do share a determination to act, it is by no means certain that the EU will dispose of the necessary instruments to translate words into deeds.

The shortfall in resolve is a genuine problem and a more persuasive explanation for the shortcomings of the EU as an international actor than most scholars care to admit. There can be little question that a genuine difference in interests and preferences exists among the member states and that the institutional set-up, instruments available and influence that can be exerted are painfully limited. But the matter does not end there. As so often is the case in EU foreign policy-making, the general explanation conceals an agonizingly complex reality. To start at the most basic level: there are several kinds of political will and there are several kinds of lack thereof. The component can be broken down into a great many possible dimensions, of which five are of particular relevance in the present context:

A lack of common political will. The first, most obvious perspective is that there is not any absence of political will but, rather too many opposing *political wills*. In their attitude towards foreign policy, the member states of the EU demonstrate a shortfall in 'common' will to generate the structured preferences that are prerequisite to collective action. Most member states claim to be ready to support assertive external action by and through the EU, but this political will is not trained at the same objectives. Different states focus on different aspects of international politics or for different courses of action. In some countries, for example, there is a political ambition to promote EU presence in Africa, while in other member states there is a political will to support EU presence along its eastern borders, in the Middle East, in the

Hindu Kush or in the High North. Some countries will not accept autonomous military intervention by the EU without the support or mandate of the United Nations, while a great many other countries are ill-disposed to accept the use of military forces even if the EU action is given a UN mandate. Under this heading comes poor strategy and a mistaken view of power resources in a given situation, what David Baldwin calls 'the paradox of unrealised power'.³⁰

A lack of will to coordinate. The capacity for collective action is contingent on organizational capacity. While organizational capacity depends on other capabilities being present it is also necessary in order to ensure that rules, resources and competences are applied in an effective manner. March and Olsen have argued that other capabilities can lose their relevance in coordination and control if an actor lacks the necessary organizational skills.³¹ In an EU foreign and security policy context these coordination difficulties are both hierarchical within agencies and horizontal among agencies. The Council, the Commission, member states and a myriad of other agencies (see Figure 1.1) are involved in CSDP/ESDP implementation and is one reason why operations so often end up in variations on the theme as seen in Chad. Catriona Gourlay has argued that none of the actors have a strategic overview of the instruments at the EU's disposal that is necessary for these instruments to be applied in an effective manner.³² The lack of communication between Brussels and operational command is an oft-cited reason why missions fail. Coordination difficulties is of course a lesson that often bedevil international operations, but in the EU case they run deeper because the lack of political will deprives the missions of the authority to provide firm mandates and the necessary control and coordination to succeed.

A lack of will to bear the costs. An arguably greater problem than the attitude among the member states towards EU foreign policy as such is the willingness to pocket the costs involved in Europe playing a role on the global stage. Vice President Dick Cheney once remarked that a great power cannot be run on a small power budget.³³ Nor can a small power be run on the budget of a small state. Although internationalism plays important ideological role in the foreign policies of most EU members, this is rarely reflected in funding allocation. This is, in part, a reflection of a habitual ineffectiveness found in international bodies such as the UN, but probably of equal importance is that such efforts rarely translate into political capital that can be translated into domestic political gain. The EU chose to construct its military dimension at a time when

the willingness to make sacrifices on behalf of the nation state is at a historic low in most if not all EU member states and the EU's subsequent ability to mobilize the resources of the members is even more limited. While all EU members would welcome having the force of 27 states when pursuing their own foreign policy objectives, they loath the thought of having their own objectives defined by 26 foreign states. Such 'politics of distrust' where states (rightly or wrongly) ascribe other motives to fellow members than those stated remains a persistent obstacle to common policies. Among the majority of the member states that have joined the ranks of the Union since the 1980s there is a strong expectation that they should be the recipients of subsidies, not the providers of them. This challenge is present in all EU policy fields, but none more so than in foreign policy.

A lack of popular will. The previously mentioned dimensions of 'shortfall in political will' is also reflected in the public opinion in the member states. Even when political leaders are convinced that the EU should be strengthened as an international actor, that Europe should take the lead and that Europeans have to accept costs and risks, they do not uphold these positions in the EU because they believe they do not have public support. Each government must take heed of its own unique domestic setting, and there is always – as the saying goes – an election coming up somewhere in Europe. The EU foreign policy agenda has yet to connect with the European street. The objectives are difficult to set apart from those of NATO and the UN and the lofty idealism that is a staple in diplomatic speechmaking fails to capture the imagination of the Europeans. To the general public it matters little if their soldiers carry UN, NATO or EU badges under their national flags. The relationship between public opinion and EU foreign policy has its share of paradoxes.³⁴ While a substantial majority (36%) of respondents in a Eurobarometer 2009 survey put 'a security and defence policy that enables the EU to face up to international crises' at the top of their priorities for the European parliament, many feel that 'European Union has grown too rapidly' and that 'at the current time the EU is short of ideas and projects'.³⁵

A lack of will to strengthen the EU as a power. In this case, the shortfall is not related to any specific foreign policy question, but rather the limited willingness to play an active role or to be influential in the international system. This is as noted in EU policy documents illustrated by the coquette labelling of the EU as a 'global actor' rather than as a great power. This is a result of a general disinclination found in member states to allow the EU to play a more active role in general.

This can stem from several different motivations: a rejection of any initiative that could weaken other actors that occupy the policy space that the EU is moving into such as the UN, the OSCE or NATO. A second is, according to Barry Posen, a concern that strengthening the EU could be seen as 'balancing' against the US and thereby unsettle the carefully tuned security arrangement with the US.³⁶ It might be added that the Europeans are concerned that by being too effective they might inadvertently make a case for American withdrawal. The EU is currently able to occasionally play the role of a power without having to bear the risks or the financial costs. A third motivation is an eagerness to avoid any further loss of autonomy in national foreign policy in general or with regard to a specific area of foreign policy. In short, the deficit in political will refers in this case to the determination not to strengthen the EU or not to strengthen EU foreign policy at the expense of other actors. Although further segmentation is possible in each of the four dimensions discussed above cover the key aspects of the phenomenon. In sum, the shortfall in political will, which is arguably the major obstacle to a more ambitious European foreign policy, is a mix of the four.

Consensus policy-making

'Consensus' is the element given least attention in Professor Hill's analysis of the capability-expectations gap. He appears to simply take as a given the incompatibility of collective leadership and effective foreign policy-making.³⁷ In a political context, the term is usually understood as 'collective leadership'. Consensus decision-making, that is, the leadership exercised through general agreement, would seem an attractive idea at first blush.³⁸ This form of governance not only seeks the agreement of most participants, but also tries to moderate the objections of the minority in order to reach the decision that is satisfactory to all the parties involved. By this virtue, consensus decision-making is more concerned with process than are other forms of decision-making.³⁹ Consensus is usually understood as the general agreement as well as the process of arriving at such an accord. Compromise is the essence of collective leadership. Genuine collective leadership shapes not only how decisions are made, but also the actual outcomes. For consensus decision-making to work, common agreement must be emphasized over differences and substantive decisions reached.

Consensus decision-making emphasizes dialogue in which all participants are invited to provide input. This invites a protracted process, susceptible to disruption. Owing to the unfiltered input, consensus policy-making tends to blur the lines of accountability. A further concern is the so-called 'Abilene paradox', which occurs when a group of actors collectively decide on a course of action that runs counter to the preferences of each of the members. The EU foreign policy seems to display an inverted version of what Jack Snyder calls 'myths of Empire'. Snyder explains why some states plunge into breakneck expansion policy. He finds the answer in the interest groups in public, private and academic sectors that will reap the benefits of escalation. Through horse-trading is political support exchanged for promises of foreign policy activism.⁴⁰ In the EU these groups do not drive the Union into breakneck expansion, but towards token engagement. Consensus tends to give organizations a status quo bias, since the more politicized the issue, the less likely it is that the collective will be able to move beyond what has already been agreed upon. These traits run counter to the established hierarchies, decision-making procedures and executive powers usually favoured in foreign policy actors. This explains why the historic Hanseatic League is one of relatively few examples of consensus as an actual form of government. In Scandinavian languages 'Polish Parliament' is a byword for general disorder. This reflects on the Polish seventeenth- and eighteenth-century tradition of bestowing members of parliament with an absolute veto (Latin *liberum veto*). John Stuart Mill faulted consensus governance for its lack of accountability.⁴¹ For this reason, executives seldom go further than adopting consensus as the preferred *modus operandi*, but not in terms of formal organization. Most executives have a majority voting procedure and/or a leader empowered to overcome deadlock.

Consensus politics resonates with overall liberal values such as democracy, inclusiveness, egalitarianism and minority rights. For this reason, it has often been embraced by executives, especially in cabinet governments. Consensus governance is more prevalent in the realm of foreign policy, where the need for unity is often perceived as being greater than in domestic politics. Under the Westminster system, all cabinet decisions are consensual, collective and inclusive and are rarely voted upon in cabinet meetings. Arthur Seldon has examined consensus politics in post-war Britain and his analysis clearly has a bearing on a number of other European states, which he defines as the 'overlap between the economic, foreign and social policies of both Labour and Conservative governments'.⁴² To Richard Heffernan, consensus politics

symbolizes a broad agreement on many issues between parties, and 'an unstated, invariably harmonious agreement at that'.⁴³

Those who study international politics in societal terms emphasize a holistic approach in group-dynamic normative win-win games. Robert Wright has observed that communities tend to become increasingly non-zero-sum oriented as they become more interdependent, complex and specialized.⁴⁴ This non-zero-sum mindset has to some degree permeated EU foreign policy cooperation – but not to the degree expected, or indeed required.⁴⁵ A possible explanation is provided by Robert Putnam in his 'bowling alone' theses where he argues that the more heterogenic a community gets the more the 'social capital' declines.⁴⁶ Vulgar versions of this thesis was often peddled under the discussions of EU eastern enlargement, but has as of yet not been made subject of any detailed empirical study in an EU context. The result is a pattern where the EU member states frequently fail to deliver on the expectations they themselves have created.

Consequences of consensus-expectations gap

The reason why the CFSP is governed by unanimity can be captured in a single word: *sovereignty*. While most member states would like to carry the weight of 27 states when pursuing their own foreign policy goals, the thought of having foreign policy objectives defined by 26 other states is generally less appealing. This explains why EU foreign and security policies were initially singled out in a separate 'pillar' that is uneasily tacked on to the European Communities.⁴⁷ In the former Pillar II, the EU has embraced strict consensus; that is, in principle, each of the 27 members has an absolute veto over any policy.⁴⁸ It remains to be seen whether the abolishment of the pillar structure will encourage the sort of issue inter-linkage and horse-trading that eases consensus building within Pillar I. French President Nicolas Sarkozy puts the problem in plain terms: 'The unanimity rule, which is supposed to protect the vital interests of each EU member state, has over the years become the source of enduring obstacles.... Only majority voting can end the delays of a decision-making process that is incompatible with the kind of quick reactions needed in the area of security policy.'⁴⁹ For this reason, since the 1992 TEU, there has been a stream of attempts to dilute the inefficiencies associated with the unanimity rule and make the EU a more effective foreign policy actor.

The 1992 TEU allows limited Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) for decisions pertaining to implementation of CFSP policies, but such use

of QMV must be authorized by a unanimous vote – which clearly goes some way towards defeating the purpose. The Lisbon Treaty retains the rule of unanimity.⁵⁰ At the same time, the draft treaty states that the Foreign Affairs Council shall primarily make decisions using QMV.⁵¹ For reference, it might be instructive to look at the experience gained from the attempt to revise voting procedures in the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty. Here, the members agreed that QMV could indeed be applied once a ‘common strategy’ had been unanimously agreed.⁵² Disappointingly, precious few such ‘common strategies’ have been agreed upon since then.⁵³ In the foreseeable future, any hopes of QMV as a *modus operandi* for the CFSP would seem unlikely. One remark can stand for many. Fraser Cameron cites a British diplomat who stated that the farthest London would go in terms of accepting QMV in implementing a specific EU joint action was that it ‘might allow voting on the colour of the Land Rovers for the mission!’⁵⁴ The Treaty of Lisbon does little to change this state of affairs.

‘Constructive abstention’ is another attempt to amend the consensus rule. This allows for states to declare reservations and then stand aside without actually blocking the decision.⁵⁵ A dissenting member state is not obliged to apply the decision, but it must refrain from any action that might conflict with the Union’s action based on that decision. While constructive abstention would seem a promising way to facilitate policy-making, it does not apply to decisions with military and defence implications.⁵⁶ There are several ongoing debates regarding alternative benchmarks of consensus – for example ‘unanimity minus one’ (or two, or three) to prevent individual deserters from derailing policies or to introduce ‘rough consensus’ – that is, no general imperative for ‘how much is adequate’. Perhaps, the question of consensus could be left, for example, to the judgement of the High Representative who, in the Lisbon Treaty, is granted a stronger formal role as an interlocker between the Commission and the Council. There have also been discussions regarding whether the ‘emergency brake’ can be replaced by a delaying mechanism that, for example, could allow a government to invoke a 12-month ‘time-out’ if it believed that its vital national interest was under threat. It is, however, unlikely that any of these suggestions is about to be adopted. It is unacceptable for any state to run the risk of compromising national interest when the potential gains are altruistic and hard to articulate.

The consensus mechanism gives the CFSP a distinct flavour in terms of the quality and quantity of EU foreign policies. Consensus helps to explain the ‘voluntary’ approach whereby the EU allows itself to

cherry-pick among issues on the international agenda, selecting those that favour consensus. There is nothing to oblige EU leaders to take up a subject if it looks as though consensus will be difficult to attain. The resulting inconsistencies give the EU foreign policy agenda its distinctly haphazard appearance. The EU will address an urgent humanitarian crisis such as the one in Darfur with bland declarations, while committing armed forces to situations where there actually is not much need for coercion. The trend is that the lower the level of commitment, the higher the likelihood of achieving consensus. Generally, EU foreign policies are less defined by what tools are most likely to meet a specific objective and more defined by what tools can be agreed upon.

Although decision-making by consensus is slow to adopt coercive policies, the EU members have generated a cumulative body of common foreign and security policies in terms of common positions and joint actions. For all its shortcomings, the CFSP has brought forth a new dimension in foreign policy-making in Europe. This is due not least to the decision-making mechanisms that have proven fertile ground for 'bureaucratic politics', where the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Council and Commission bureaucracies play essential roles in formulating EU foreign and security policy. In an interview, one Council official stated: 'We are charged with identifying the issue areas where there is an overlap in terms of means and ends among the member states.' She continued, 'because consensus is so difficult to attain EU foreign policy has become supply rather than demand driven'.⁵⁷ Through a blend of incrementalism and pragmatism, the CFSP staff has played an important, if not widely acknowledged, role in setting the EU security agenda. Their efforts are a primary reason why the EU foreign policies deliver more than the lowest common denominator.

In May 2000, frustrated by these trends, then German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer introduced the idea that an avant-garde group of willing and able states should press on with foreign policy integration. Such closer cooperation would allow like-minded states to work together in a sustained, strategic manner towards common objectives. One high-profile initiative in this vein was the April 2003 'chocolate-makers summit', during which Germany, France, Belgium and Luxembourg proposed a European military command separate from that of NATO. Britain, under John Major, had been positive towards 'variable geometry', as this would allow Britain to opt out of integration. His successor Tony Blair, however, grew increasingly opposed to the idea of a Europe composed of concentric circles – not least for fear that Britain might find itself outside the core. Much the same process played out

over afore mentioned attempts at capability generation in a group of six outside the EU structures.

This directs attention to a question that was discussed in Chapter 3 but warrants closer scrutiny, namely 'permanent structured cooperation (PSCoP)'.⁵⁸ Recognizing that some member states are more powerful than others, the proposal suggests that member states that possess the military capabilities and commitment be allowed to carry out missions in the name of the EU. While there has been some movement towards facilitating subsets of EU states acting, *inter alia*, through the battle group concept, there is no agreement on whether this should apply to policy-making. Although there has always been considerable variable geometry in the EU, it is unlikely that any of the great powers would allow themselves to be shut out of a weightier EU on the world stage. Article 28 E in the amendment to the 2007 Lisbon Treaty states that 'those member states whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments to one another in this area with a view to the most demanding missions shall establish permanently structured cooperation within the Union framework'.⁵⁹ In the following sentence, it is added that such permanent structured cooperation will have to be approved by the Council (Article 31). In the tortuous negotiations that followed, Britain succeeded in stressing capabilities rather than political will as the determinant of participation in EU operations. Thus Council approval would be necessary for structured cooperation to be initiated – which sinks also this initiative into the consensus–expectations gap.

The CFSP matters are rarely voted upon. Actual threats of veto are rare. The consensus rule owes its impact not to frequent use, but rather to what it represents. That is left to 'sounding out' and 'anticipated reaction'. The prejudice against actual voting in CFSP affairs has the obvious advantage of avoiding drawing attention to fissures, which could, over time, lead to the emergence of semi-permanent power blocs within the EU. On the other hand, the low-yield decision-making mechanism has encouraged the forming of informal directorates, notably the 'EU-3', which in the early 2000s many expected would become central in the EU foreign policy-making process.⁶⁰ Although this arrangement failed to deliver on its initial promise, a single member state or even a coalition of smaller member states will find it very difficult to hold out if the EU-3 are in agreement. Indeed, an argument can be made that the consensus–expectations gap is primarily between Berlin, Paris and London. Should the three choose to act in concert, they could play a similar role in the EU to that played in NATO by the United States.⁶¹ But for that to happen, France and Britain would probably need to venture

into the sort of grand bargain that Germany and France reached over the euro with obvious elements being the CAP and the British budget 'rebate'.

Even governments with a strong mandate have often remarkably little foreign policy leeway. For instance, despite the Blair government's eagerness to lead in Europe, both the monetary union and the Constitutional Treaty were red-line issues with the electorate. A similar situation can be seen in France, where the establishment places similar constraints on issues of sovereignty, while the German Chancellor must, for historical reasons, display an extreme amount of caution in all issues that involve military measures. In cases where the government is heterogeneous (as is the case with Germany's Grand Coalition) or always on the verge of collapse (the Italian scenario), autonomy may well mean an even greater difficulty in breaking out of domestically imposed constraints – that is, giving less scope to conduct common EU policies.

The United States is an oft-forgotten factor in the consensus-expectations gap. The partiality of EU foreign policies is partly a result of the services provided, as well as the constraints imposed, by the Union's leading ally. United States security guarantees to Europe are far from unconditional. The acceptance of US strategic primacy is part of the price paid for this alliance. Opposition from the US to the EU transforming into a military alliance has successfully kept the EU members from adopting a collective defence article or behaving as a bloc within NATO. The EU has not, as one might have expected, provided a platform for the European states to engage Washington on anything resembling an equal footing. American attitudes toward EU foreign and security policy initiatives have varied from support to indifference to outright opposition – sometimes all under the same presidency. The United States primarily manages its relations with Europe through sets of bilateralisms with various degrees of closeness.

Overburdened and underfinanced

The EU foreign and security policy was always destined to suffer the burden of high expectations. This is partly a natural consequence of the successes in other fields of European integration, but even more so a direct result of expectations that grew out of the manner in which EU foreign and security policy has been crafted. In Europe we see a pattern where even when a government has a strong mandate, its scope of foreign policy leeway can be narrow – for instance the Blair government's unwillingness to dissent on US core policies or the special patronage

of France towards francophone states in Africa or indeed Germany tendency of shielding Russia from EU critique. In 2000, after monitoring the various attempts at modifying the consensus rule, Simon Nuttall concluded that the benefits in terms of improved consistency and efficiency had been 'marginal'.⁶² Since then, the list of attempts at common policies that have been blocked, neutered or derailed has grown longer.

The consensus-expectations gap is apparent in the EU approach to virtually all the great foreign policy questions of the day, from the Darfur crisis to the building of democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan, the curbing of Iranian nuclear aspirations, Turkish accession and the handling of Russia. A senior EU diplomat summarized the CSDP's predicament by saying that 'it is overburdened, under driven and over there', indicating that the CSDP had been rushed into action without sufficient preparations. The question remains, how tangible a force should the EU be? Should the CFSP be based on hard power or the invisible hand of interdependence? In the latter case, the promise of membership will likely continue to be the EU's most potent policy tool, complemented by small-scale pre- and post-crisis management operations. As the title of a paper by EU Director General Robert Cooper had it, *Speak Softly and Carry a Big Carrot*.⁶³ The result is the current state of affairs where the CSDP is seen as 'the best of all possible worlds'. Voltaire satirized this optimism in his novel *Candide*, in which features the eternally optimistic character Dr. Pangloss. Trying to resolve the problem of too little political will by putting a positive spin on it has failed to deliver results. In the absence of defined policy objectives, European leaders have lapsed into incrementalism, constructive ambiguity, bureaucratic politics and declaration-chasing as modes of foreign policy-making.

Convincing the member states to prioritize more EU foreign policy is made all the more difficult, because the EU operates in the same policy space as its members. Most of the EU members are small states while six can be called small powers. As other powers are taking a step up under multipolarity, Britain and France are taking a step down. The dream that the EU should somehow become a great power and reverse this trend has, at least for the time being, proved unattainable. Christopher Patten has labelled the current EU foreign policy approach 'a recipe for weakness and mediocrity'.⁶⁴ That is over stating the problem. The same can be said about the attempt by his successor, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, to brand the EU's modus operandi as 'smart power'.⁶⁵ That is clearly a euphemism. Looking at the nine potential foreign policy functions mentioned above, the EU is clearly not a great power; nor is it an

effective humanitarian intervener (as the case studies in the previous chapter illustrate in a sobering manner). The case is also illustrated by the failure to effectively apply diplomatic or economic leverage in the Darfur crisis. However, the Union has come some way towards becoming a regional pacifier (keeping the peace in the Balkans), a civilian power (the EU is the world's largest aid donor), and a trade bloc (the euro is the world's second currency). If expectations were to be brought down to the level of actual EU consensus – that is, if the 'great power' aspiration were done away with – the EU would still have a foreign policy dimension to that dare speak its name. Europe can be a driving force only if it learns to speak with one voice and to defend common European interests. Yet, as *The Economist's* Charlemagne rightly pointed out, to speak with one voice and in defence of agreed European interests is not the end station. It is the beginning. It is no guarantee of Europe prevailing. Rising powers such as China, Russia, India and Brazil are overall less positive to dialogue and political integration and curbing of sovereignty than the Europeans are: 'Europeans need to be less starry-eyed about what they can achieve through dialogue and political integration.'⁶⁶

7

The Making of a Small Power

If you fly across the Atlantic on a clear day, you can look down and see the same phenomenon but on two different scales. From the medium-sized Norway to the slightly smaller and more powerful Britain to the vast snows of Canada and then the smaller but mightier United States of America. Size and power, although connected, cannot be equated nor can power and prosperity, or prestige prosperity, or prestige or autonomy. As the founder of the German geopolitical school and father of the term 'geopolitics', Rudolf Kjellén has noted – power potential is not the determinant of which actors develop a *will to greater power* – what he calls 'vilja till mera makt'.¹ Kjellén focus on the intervening variables that make some actors punch above their weight and why other actors fail to achieve their potential, which is arguably the case with the EU. It is argued that EU displayed the behavioural patterns of a small power in the period 2003–2010.

What is the purpose of European power? The question has been subject of intense exploration by scholars eager to determine what sort of strategic power the EU is or – more frequently – what sort of power it should be. The EU is a tricky object to pin down; despite a stated ambition to become a great power, it persistently fails to display the traits usually associated with the most powerful actors in the international system. The varying agendas, traditions and capabilities of the member states offer few common denominators for a shared approach to the management of hard power. Given this, the most obvious choice for the EU would perhaps be to opt for Swiss-style abstention. This was the de facto European approach until the end of the Cold War, and it remains to date the favoured position of a number of EU members. A larger group of states believe that Europeans share sufficient interests, values and threats to justify an aggregate Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) as a

key component. The foreign policy dimension is expected to make the EU 'share in the responsibility for global security'.²

This chapter disputes the notion that the European Union is unfit to develop a strategic presence for cultural or structural reasons or that it must change in order to facilitate the development of such a presence. Instead, it posits that an EU strategic presence has already emerged and its behavioural patterns are not those of a great power, but rather those of a small power. The argument falls into three main parts. The first section elucidates the concepts of great and small powers and the EU as a foreign policy actor, laying out the framework underpinning the analysis. The following section outlines some distinctive trait of the EU as a strategic actor in reference to the Union's history, its power resources, its geopolitical setting and the attitudes of its leaders. The concluding section will revisit some of the characteristics of the EU as a power and examine how they overlap with the small power equivalents.

Powers great and small

Robert Cox has said of small powers that it 'is a role in search of an actor'.³ This is not altogether persuasive. Surely there is a difference between Luxemburg and Sweden in terms of power? While Luxemburg owes its existence only to the rules of the international system, Sweden is its own keeper. Bélanger and Mace have explained that, since small powers are difficult to define, 'we are forced to deduce that states accorded the diplomatic and scientific status of small power are those demonstrating the will and capacity to conform to the behavioral model associated with this category'.⁴ A small power, in its most stripped down version, is an actor that is neither a great power nor a small state. 'Small power' is therefore, as discussed in Chapter 1, a relative term. To find the small power, one must identify the two extremes.

Most of the small-state studies that make up the backbone of the small-power research tradition were carried out in the heyday of non-alignment by scholars such as David Vital,⁵ Robert Rothstein,⁶ Maurice East⁷ and Robert Keohane.⁸ This is one of the fields of international relations research that Norwegian scholars can be said to have made a significant contribution over time.⁹ The weakening of the non-alignment movement during the 1970s coincided with a gradual decline in small-state studies, culminating in Peter Baehr's critical appraisal of the research tradition in which he questioned smallness as a useful framework for analysis.¹⁰ The value of small powers as an 'ideal type' in a Weberian sense is debatable.

Small powers are contingent on the presence of great powers. Writing in 1905, Rudolf Kjellén offers his thoughts on this question:

The great power position is in itself hard to delineate. As unfettered by formal legal requirements as the international system itself, this privilege is built into public international law, rooted in the existing circumstances. This has just like every original aristocracy come into being as a result of a latent historical necessity beyond all written rules and rational calculus. We can only acknowledge that the term Great Power is used in common language as referring to an unusual political force, a might laid open in will to power and tangible influence far beyond its own doors. Whatever definition – one thing is certain: it is the great powers that now hold the keys to the world situation in hand. On them the fate and position of Small Powers depend in a hitherto unacknowledged degree.¹¹

The small-power category was first taken into serious account with David Mitrany's study on world government (*pax oecumenica*) in 1933.¹² Mitrany argued that the international community was comprised of only two tiers of state powers: great and small. This study chooses a more nuanced categorization developed by Robert Keohane where he distinguishes between different kinds of powers by examining whether their leaders have a decisive impact on the international system. Keohane sees three types of powers: 'system-determining', that is, those that can influence the international system through unilateral or multilateral action; 'system-affecting', that is, those that cannot influence the international system on their own but that can do so together with other states; and 'system-ineffectual', that is, those that adjust to the international system and cannot change it.¹³ Dewitt and Kirton note that this refers to: 'an international system in which objective capability, asserted position, and recognized status combined to produce three classes of states'.¹⁴ In this book the three are referred to as 'great powers', 'small powers' and 'small states'.

This approach to 'power presence' certainly has its merits. It identifies states which are capable of exerting influence in international affairs in specific instances, and differentiates them from all the rest. It also provides a necessary nuance to the old 'great powers versus the rest' dichotomy. Through this definition, great powers can be understood as those actors which exercise international influence regardless of circumstance. Small powers are those capable of exercising real influence only in specific instances. In recent years a new generation of scholars

has found the small power concept useful as an alternative vantage point from which to view international politics.

The most pressing question facing small-power studies is whether there is any tangible difference between small powers and the two other categories that make each group distinctive. The evidence is clearly no more than suggestive. The small-power research tradition is still at a very early stage and much empirical work remains to be done before any persuasive generalizations can be put forth on this score. This book carries with it a central proposition, namely that small powers are something different than great powers or small states in terms of behaviour. In doing so it follows Robert Rothstein's definition of a small power as:

A small power is a state which recognises that it cannot obtain security primarily by the use of its own capabilities, and that it cannot obtain security primarily by the use of its own capabilities, and that it must rely fundamentally on the aid of other states, institutions, processes, or developments to do so; the small power's belief in its inability to rely on its own means must also be recognised by the other states involved in international politics.¹⁵

It is necessary to distinguish between small states and small powers. As Peter Baehr points out, one of the main findings of small-state studies has been 'to bring the relativity of the notion of independence into focus'.¹⁶ As discussed in Chapter 1, small powers unlike small states are system-affecting. Their capacity to 'achieve intended effects', to choose their future makes small powers an entirely different from small states that are non-entities in power terms. It is worth re-emphasizing that small power behaviour in the international system is tempered by the twin precepts of dependence and threat.¹⁷ That is not to entail that small powers are always affected by the actions of more powerful actors nor that their role in great power politics remains static.¹⁸ For the most part, the necessary qualifications about exactly which group a small power fits within a given historical context will be subject to discussion.

In sum, any discussion of EU as a power should take into account that the term takes on different meanings to different scholars. What most approaches share is a concern with how the EU is able to yield influence in international affairs in ways that control, directly and indirectly, the foreign policies and even domestic political arrangements of other powers. The manner in which the EU exercises power in a manner more similar to that of a small power than that of a great power. Making this move requires a willingness to see the EU, structurally constituted

and behaviourally produced through institutional politics that are not themselves entirely under the control of the EU as a power. But it is important to recognize how European power, even when distributed through global institutions, represents an exercise of power. The EU is not exempt from the production of intended outcomes. To better appreciate how power is embedded in being a power, though, requires a willingness to see not only the different divisions of power, but also how powers interact with each other within and beyond Europe.

Identity and strategy: The European example

Recalling the discussion on presence in Chapter 1, the European Union clearly meets the preconditions to gain strategic identity in terms of having extensive interests and obligations and the ability to coerce, to induce or to resist attempts at such. Power presence cannot and should not be viewed separately from actual capabilities, even though it is common to do so. Capabilities need not be used or even mentioned – but they must be credible. Potential power and demonstrated power are – after all – not the same thing. Also, in the presence of capabilities, other factors shape strategic behaviour. Jack Nagel notes that ‘presence’ ‘refers to an individual, group, organization or other collectivity. In social power relations the state of a social entity – the behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, or policies of an actor are of utmost importance’.¹⁹

Actors do not start with a *tabula rasa* when they are faced with a challenge or an opportunity to act, but rather draw on pre-existing patterns, derived from situational factors that help determine what is seen as appropriate behaviour. Some of the most helpful contributions to date have contrived European strategic identity as the area of overlap between national strategic presence and the supranational/institutional element as previously discussed.²⁰ As Christopher Hill and William Wallace have asserted

Effective foreign policy rests upon a shared sense of [identity and understanding of] place in the world, its friends and enemies, its interests and aspirations. These underlying assumptions are embedded in national history and myth, changing slowly over time as political leaders reinterpret them and external and internal developments reshape them. Debates about foreign policy take place within the constraints this conventional wisdom about national interests sets upon acceptable choices, the symbols and reference points they provide enabling ministers to related current decisions to familiar ideas.²¹

Building on these thoughts, the approach chosen here is by seeking the roots of EU's power presence at the crossroads of history, capabilities and geopolitics, as well as in the values of Europe as a whole. In the choice of variables, some readers will note a deference to Stein Rokkan's 'law, economy, culture, force-model'.²² Such an approach would clearly be of value in a detailed study of EU strategic culture from the vantage point advocated here, but it is a task for a different study, focusing on this question exclusively. The following analysis is not an attempt at a complete outline of all the factors shaping the EU approach to strategy, but rather an indicator of how EU strategic culture – and thereby power presence – might be explained. Keeping in mind that the application and validation of power presence will always be an art rather than a science, let us have a look at four factors that are likely to have impacted European strategic presence.

History: The thorny legacy of hard power

Ernest Renan famously pointed out that getting history wrong is an indispensable part of being a nation.²³ Although certain traits can run through the history of regions, most historical memories reflect the individual experiences of European nations and are too tightly woven into the fabric of the individual nation-state to serve as the basis for a common European strategic identity. So, if one were to view Europe as a whole, what would be the defining historical experiences? Among shared pan-European historical memories, Christianity, the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution are all surely important. The role of war in the unmaking and making of modern Europe must also be taken into account.²⁴ In Europe, the system-determining powers of the nineteenth century ended up as dependencies in the twentieth century through consecutive feats of self-mutilation. It is therefore to be expected that a desire to prevent a repetition of the past has influenced the view of power politics and the legitimacy of the use of force. The destructiveness of the world wars has helped drive and legitimize European integration. The integration project is also the manifestation of an EU security bargain delegitimizing coercive foreign policy behaviour in the region.

The experience of the Second World War convinced most states in Europe to opt for alliance over self-reliance in their security policies.²⁵ While the Cold War brought foreign dominance to EU members on both sides of the Iron Curtain, the US primacy in Western Europe was by invitation.²⁶ For five decades the US has guarded the status quo in

Europe, effectively underwriting the European order. During the Cold War, the drawbacks of dependence were outweighed by the American commitment to the defence of its allies. The need for an EU strategic presence arose in the tension of three interconnected trends. First, changes in the strategic environment raised questions as to how long the US could be relied upon as a guarantor of the European security order. Second, experiences such as the 1999 Kosovo war and the 2003 Iraq crisis deflated the intellectually fashionable belief that 'soft power' would somehow replace hard power in post-Cold War world affairs. Third, once it was decided that the economic communities were to become a political union, security policy was an obvious field with great potential for integration. The EU was always the most likely venue for a self-sustained European security order.

The historical experience of Europe has had a significant impact on its strategic presence, notably in the deep-seated scepticism towards reintroducing realpolitik into intra-European politics. The EU shares strategic space with 27 nation-states – in addition to the past and present regional hegemony, the United States and Russia. There are obvious reasons why the EU chooses seduction over coercion. American guarantees help make the altruistic foreign policy approach of the EU possible. Europeans are not unwilling to intervene militarily as long as the humanitarian rewards are high, the costs in blood and treasure are low – and 27 states are able to agree that this will be the case. The experiences of the world wars have left a lasting dread of uncontrolled escalation that leads, on the one hand, to a deep reluctance to consider the use of force to achieve non-altruistic policy objectives and, on the other, to an emphasis on exit strategies. It is in this context that one must understand why the EU seemingly makes its own use of force dependent on a United Nations (UN) mandate. The EU preference for treating CSDP forces as a trans-border police force rather than as the servant of *raison d'état* must also be understood as a byproduct of Europe's history.

Capabilities: What means, what ends?

Although capabilities do not determine behaviour, they do limit it – especially when they are absent. The EU goal in terms of capabilities is a 'capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military force' for crisis-management.²⁷ As seen in the previous chapter there is a gap between what the EU had been talked up to do and what it was able to deliver in terms of its resources, the instruments at its disposal

but above all in the ability to agree. The EU has gained an increasingly central place in European security, not least because the member states, unable or unwilling to maintain a full spectrum defence, look for collective arrangements.²⁸ Nevertheless, the military capabilities that the EU can call up on short notice are feeble due to unbridled free-riding, making them unsuited for deterring or compelling other actors.

Although the EU has made some headway towards assembling institutional frameworks to govern the CSDP, the Union still lacks an integrated command structure. In real terms, this means that military operations have to be carried out through framework nations. A more detrimental shortcoming is the flawed decision-making procedure governing the initiative. The EU is a weak federation with a fragmented centre. This significantly impacts its ability to make strategic decisions under pressure. The Council's unanimity requirement for foreign policy-making is an inherently conservative factor in EU strategic behaviour. The lack of an effective policy-making procedure curbs the EU's ability to mobilize economic or armed force for political purposes. When time constraints prevent carefully crafted ambiguities and consensus building, European unity tends to crumble under the conflicting short-term interests of the member states. As the list of operations illustrate (see Figure 5.1), the EU is more apt in dealing with trivial issues low on the international agenda than the great questions of the day.²⁹ The cumbersome formal procedures destine the EU to rely largely on ad hoc foreign policy-making and the agenda-setting of the EU mandarins, which helps explain the apparent lack of focus in EU security policy.

Despite declaring the capabilities 'operational' on several occasions, in 2010 the EU has a limited but nevertheless operational capacity for autonomous action in terms of crisis management because of persistent shortfalls in core areas.³⁰ This has limited the geographical and mission scope of EU operations to primarily monitoring instability in the European periphery, supplemented by small-scale operations farther afield. If the EU formations were to become fully operational, their 'light and mobile' focus could clearly make them a force to be reckoned with. Such a force could shift the transatlantic power burden-sharing equation and allow for a more proactive EU foreign policy approach. The ability to issue credible threats can open the possibility of deterring or coercing where the EU now is wired to rely primarily on positive incentives and persuasion. This, of course, would depend on the EU states being able to agree on measures. By 2010 the previously-discussed capability-expectations gap has been replaced by a narrower

consensus–expectations gap. The capabilities and frameworks are in place but remain underused as a result of a decision-making mechanism that relies on a 27-state consensus. Since the decision-making mode trades efficiency for legitimacy, the EU's capacity to respond effectively in times of crisis is limited and will remain so in the foreseeable future.³¹

Geopolitics: Failing to pull together

Christopher Hill has rightly pointed out that 'students of the European Union have for too long neglected geopolitics, either because they could not see its relevance to a "civilian power" or because they were uneasy with that kind of discourse for normative reasons'.³² Despite favourable factors such as size of economy, population et cetera, it remains clear that a number of constant variables will curb its strategic legroom. One such factor is global geopolitics.³³ The most important geopolitical function of the EU is its very existence, which has helped take the sting out of the power rivalry among Germany, France and Britain. Although the EU is not a vehicle for the territorial defence of its members, this does not mean that the Union is entirely free from territoriality. The natural barriers of the EU are the Atlantic to the west and the Mediterranean in the south, while no similar barriers exist in the east.

In strategic terms, the EU has an exposed eastern flank. In the absence of hostile neighbours in the east, the EU has enjoyed a degree of success in furthering stability along its borders through positive incentives, notably the prospect of EU membership. Yet the current unwillingness or inability of the EU to agree, when enlargement is no longer an option, has strategic implications. To indicate rewards such as membership and then fail to deliver is risky strategic behaviour, especially when the EU pretends that this is a bureaucratic question and not a strategic one. A similar situation is also arising in the east with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO's) failure to extend its frontline defences to the new members, which has encouraged fringe states to actively seek further enlargement in order to avoid becoming buffer states.³⁴ The overlap between Russian and EU spheres of influence along the length of the EU's outer borders carries an inherent potential for conflict. The EU non-policy towards Turkey and Russia is indicative of a more important point: the EU persistently fails to interact strategically with greater powers. The great powers recognize the EU as a small power and do not take it into counsel. It also illustrates the dangers of over-promising and

under-delivering in terms of strategy. The EU runs the risk of alienating not only Turkey, but also Russia.

More than any other region, Africa has been singled out as the 'natural theatre' for the exercise of EU hard power.³⁵ The strategic importance of Africa is far from self-evident. A more likely reasoning is geopolitical: Africa is one of the few regions where the EU can practise using hard power without trespassing on the interest spheres of more powerful actors, although it must be noted, the rise of China as a power in Africa is rapidly closing this window of opportunity. A third region of strategic significance to the EU is North America. American primacy in Europe is the main constraining factor for the EU as a strategic actor. Although strategic self-reliance, as we have seen, is a relative term, the EU is more dependent than most. The territorial integrity of most EU states is underwritten by American security guarantees through NATO, an organization based on individual, not collective, memberships, and where the EU does not act as a bloc.

The past decade has witnessed a historically novel situation in which the EU is assembling a security framework that apparently duplicates the US-sponsored security architecture in Europe, while continuing to rely on the US for defence guarantees and strategic leadership. A series of hard-fought compromises aimed at bringing together the EU and US security architectures have for the time being concluded that NATO is to remain the primary security organization in Europe and that the US is to retain primacy in NATO.³⁶ The EU persistently fails to interact strategically with the US, but rather waits for Washington to set the agenda. Since NATO and the EU draw essentially on the same resources, participation in ventures such as the International Stabilisation Force in Afghanistan will significantly limit the EU's capacity for conducting military operations of its own. The threats facing Europe are latent, and deciding whether or not to address them is voluntary as opposed to the imperatives of the Cold War. American security guarantees coupled with an absence of clear territorial threats translates into an overall sense of security that is bound to have an impact on the EU's strategic presence, leaving greater room for the importance of values.

Values: Doctrinal idealism

Colin S. Gray describes Europe as 'thoroughly debellized' which manifests itself in an 'aversion to military solutions [that] is not simply an opinion of the moment' but something latent even 'cultural'.³⁷ The elite perception is often cast in terms of the EU being the supranational

successor to the nation-state – a linear perspective where not only the nation-state but also the security concerns of the nation-state are seen to be passé.³⁸ ‘Multilateralism’ and ‘Europeanization’ have a central place in the EU founding myth. Multilateralism is presupposed to bring about outcomes that are ‘fair’ and ‘just’, which is assumed to be the opposite of power politics and unilateralism.³⁹ Europeanization is seen as making states so interdependent that armed coercion is no longer a possibility. According to this narrative, the EU, not the US, is given the credit for securing peace in the region. The underlying point is that the historical mission of the Union is to deliver Europe from *realpolitik*, not be the vehicle for it. The federalist undercurrent also helps explain the high esteem reserved for the UN in EU lore.⁴⁰ In the core assumption that the international system is experiencing essentially the same transformation that most human societies have undergone, from violent anarchy to a law-governed society, the EU’s strategic approach can be dubbed ‘doctrinal idealism’.

Henry Kissinger has observed, that ‘No serious realist should claim that power is its own justification. No idealist should imply that power is irrelevant to the spread of ideals’.⁴¹ The EU is not a federation, but a grouping of states. In the absence of any defined *raison d’état*, the stability, coherence and endurance of the EU is to an uncommon degree rooted in shared cultural and ideological experiences as well as values. For the EU as an actor, values take up much the same space usually occupied by the national interest in state actors. Various scholars have suggested that at times national governments use international cooperation to gain influence in the domestic political arena and to overcome internal opposition to their preferred policies. Mathias König-Archibugi has argued that this practice represents the latest embodiment of a longstanding *raison d’état* and has provided theoretical foundations for its systematic study.⁴² While the link between public opinion and strategy is tenuous, the prevalent beliefs held by the strategic elite are unquestionably of key importance. Many of Europe’s political leaders attended universities in the late 1960s and early 1970s, turbulent decades in European history. Frustration over the Vietnam War and the Prague Spring was mixed with the impact of economic stagnation and decreased attentiveness to European concerns by the increasingly bilateral US–Soviet relationship.⁴³

‘What threatens us’, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber wrote of Europe in 1968 ‘is not a torrent of riches. The war is being fought against us not with dollars, oil, tons of steel or even modern machines, but with creative imagination and a talent for organization.’⁴⁴ *The American*

Challenge 'Le Défi Américain', sold more than a million copies.⁴⁵ The book captured the mood in Europe at the time – the feeling of being overrun by America. A widespread sense of powerlessness and disillusionment gave impetus to a host of counter-cultures spanning a broad array of reformist causes, from ecology movements to New Age religion, multiculturalism, internationalism and peace movements. These movements were united in the belief that international affairs could be, or already had been, fundamentally changed by new ideas and new assumptions. This spawned a rejection of national interests and national identity among the intellectual elite. Although practices such as peace marches may seem naïve today, many at the time believed that they were in fact changing the world.⁴⁶ These years were formative for the deeply politicized generation that made up much of the European political elite during the formative years of the CFSP/CSDP nexus. As a result, the EU as a whole has been profoundly influenced by liberal internationalism.

Values are essential to understanding the EU approach to strategy, where the *raison d'être* of the CSDP is often framed in idealist terms. Abstracts such as Europeanization – with its disputed definition, uncertain effects and unclear instructions on how it is encouraged or indeed reversed – are too wobbly to be put to strategic use as was illustrated in the cases discussed in the previous chapter. Driven by notions from the same vein as Johan Galtung's 'transcend' method of conflict resolution, the EU has set about making itself into a category of 'different kind of power'.⁴⁷ The EU is instead furthering liberal democracy, that is, the blend of rule of law, human rights, protection of minorities and the merits of the market economy.⁴⁸ The strength of belief in the rightness of these values is reflected in the enthusiasm with which the EU imposes them on others, notably prospective members and third world countries.⁴⁹ The EU leaders simply assume that all EU members have the same interest. This assumption may well be high-minded, but also somewhat naïve. The result is that the EU's attempts at formulating strategic beliefs rarely rise above platitudes and stating the obvious. The 'values' driving European integration are, on the whole, unsuited for calculating power politics. Acquiring hard power capabilities has not weakened EU's self-image as a non- military power.

The EU as a power

If European integration scholars have sometimes failed to take sufficient note of the small powers, there is no such shortfall regarding the

contemporary debate about the existence, nature and consequences of EU foreign policy.⁵⁰ The drive towards European integration during the 1990s, the 2003 European Security Strategy, and the EU military operations around the globe have caused scholars and pundits to debate whether the European Union is a 'global actor', which for all intents and purposes is a byword for a great power. The term refers to management of hard power. Wolfgang Wessels has defined a 'global actor' as 'a state that is endowed with the traditional attributes of a large power, or even a Super Power'.⁵¹ In most European languages states that matter are usually referred to as 'powers'.⁵²

The attempts at placing the EU in the established power spectrum as we have seen often rely on varied, even counter-intuitive, understandings of power. Why use a concept that fits the object of study so unbecomingly? The answer is simple. In order to understand the EU's role in the international system the concept of power is inescapable. Over the past decades European leaders have returned to the question of whether the EU should strive to become a power in the international system. Johan Galtung was among the first academicians to see the superpower potential of the integration project.⁵³ He was by no means alone. As Harold Macmillan, the Prime Minister who brought Britain into the EEC stated in 1979:

Because the countries of Europe, none of them anything but second-rate powers by themselves, can, if they get together, be a power in the world, an economic power, a power in foreign policy, a power in defence equal to either of the superpowers. We are in the position of the Greek city states: they fought one another and they fell victim to Alexander the Great and then to the Romans. Europe united could still, by not haggling about the size of lorries but by having a single foreign policy, a single defence policy and a single economic policy, be equal to the great superpowers.⁵⁴

In 2000 both Jacques Chirac in his speech to the German Bundestag and Tony Blair addressing the Polish Stock Exchange argued that the EU had both the resources and cause to establish itself as a great power on the international level. The expansion east and south where ten new members were given membership was seen by a number of EU-leaders as a part of a strategy to 'create a superpower on the European continent that stands equal to the United States'.⁵⁵ Commission President Romano Prodi put the rise of the EU in the context of an assumed decline of the nation state. 'Are we all clear that we want to build something that can

aspire to be a world power? In other words, not just a trading bloc but a political entity. Do we realise that our nation states, taken individually, would find it far more difficult to assert their existence and their identity on the world stage?⁵⁶ More recently, in his opening address as president of Europe's Constitutional Convention in 2002, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, a former president of France, proclaimed: 'If we succeed, in 25 or 50 years Europe's role in the world will have changed. It will be respected and listened to, not only as the economic power it already is, but as a political power which will talk on equal terms to the greatest powers on our planet'.⁵⁷

The bold statements testify not only to an aspiration held by many – but also the intertwined nature of power and presence. This scale of the EU's ambition is emphasized by the fact that the term 'global' is referred to no fewer than 22 times in the ESS and twice in the opening line of the 2010 Headline Goal.⁵⁸ The problem with seeing the EU as a global power is that it is only true if it is twinned with a *sui generis* perspective. It is a 'special' kind of power. The EU is not a strong, centralized federation like the United States, it is a weak federation with a fragmented centre. This logic was captured by Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen, speaking in London in 2002: 'The EU must not develop into a military super-power but must become a great power that will not take up arms at any occasion in order to defend its own interests'.⁵⁹ While a perspective that underlines the uniqueness of the EU helps explain why the EU has fallen short of fielding anywhere near the sum total of the member states' weight in terms of foreign policies, it also tends to invalidate comparative analysis – which renders success and failure matters of prejudice.

Prosperity and power, as noted at the head of the chapter, cannot be equated. In 1776 Adam Smith noted that 'defence is more important than opulence'. The EU is clearly not a great power today, but is it on the way to becoming one? There are few signs that this is the case. The common foreign policy is an academic-bureaucratic creature, not a politico-military one. Although some European actors may strive to become great powers; many wish to avoid doing so. The choice, however, is a constraining one. Because of the extent of the interests, powers (states that matter) tend to take on system-wide tasks. With its looming presence in the system, the EU is finding that it has global interests to mind. It has tried to mind them by relying on traditional modes of integration, but has come up short. Similarly the internationalist credo that has served the EU well in internal integration seems increasingly out of date in an international system where other global actors are pursuing national interest-driven policies.

The EU's proven ability and willingness to use its resources to influence the actions of others, is limited. To many, the decision to designate the EU as global, that is 'great' power, rests on its inherent potential. The aggregate power of the EU members could be used to develop and sustain its capacity for influence, even supremacy over other states and regions. The EU could easily claim a sphere of interest along its borders. The question of direct control over others corresponds to the concept of displayed power, but the concept leaves the questions whether power status is contingent on intention, coercion or potential. It is not coincidental that discussion over the EU as a great power revolves around its potential. After all, although the EU global share of material resources has changed somewhat during the past decade, what has changed, is the headlong rush towards gaining an international presence, what Anne Deighton has called the 'militarisation of the European Union'.⁶⁰

The backdrop to this argument is how to interpret the success of European integration and how it differs from previous European orders, including the ordering mechanisms it has internalized. The foresight of the EU 'founding fathers,' in this way, was to recognize that a European order built on the balance of power is unsustainable, and that it was preferable to establish global institutions that could further European interests and spread European values. What generated consent for what became the European Union was not only agreement over the purpose of European power, but also the construction of multilateral institutions that conferred legitimacy, constrained the power of the member states, and de-nationalized the decision-making process. Because these regional institutions had some autonomy from the member states and were partly controlled by the members, no single state could be said to possess them, even though they reflected national interests. At the same time this system is guaranteed by an external power. One should have no illusions about this. The American presence allows the EU to sideline the most divisive questions. This is clearly a mixed blessing. The EU can never be a great power as long as it does not take the responsibility for its own territorial security but attempting to do so could undo the entire project.⁶¹

How does this lopsided European Union constitute a power? Among the things that set the EU apart as a power, is the willingness of the member states to work bindingly with others through multilateral institutions as for instance illustrated in the Doha trade negotiations.⁶² The absence of overt conflict is not indicative of an absence of power; institutions can mobilize bias to serve EU purposes and eliminate points of potential opposition to serve Union concerns. Emerging powers led on

by China often claim that the international institutions were designed by Western powers, and that they operate and respond accordingly.⁶³ There is much to be said about this, among other things that it is true. Global institutions create an asymmetrical distribution of benefits, where the European Union has been a key beneficiary. It is partly for this reason that Mark Leonard claims that the nature of European integration increasingly has revolved around global institutions that create the sort of supranational regulatory policy space where the EU excels.⁶⁴ In sum, the EU exercises power, but it frequently is indirect and mediated.

The EU's *raison d'être* as a power is in its relationship to its internal and external subjects. The EU is expected to safeguard the national interests of its members and make the world a better place. Emphasis is on the latter. It is not uncommon to hear the EU being urged to accept the responsibilities and burdens of great powers in helping to bring progress to others.⁶⁵ This role is to be performed not only by EU. A multiplicity of actors and processes are partially responsible for attempting to bring the rule of law, liberal democracy and human rights, what has been called the 'Trinity' of liberal democracy to the non-Western world. Eurobarometer surveys collected over time seems to confirm a willingness among Europeans to use supranational organizations to perform this civilizing mission, anticipating that they will be better able to bring into being new kinds of actors in world politics.⁶⁶ Displayed power, in this way, is also a means to produce a particular EU identity – that of a responsible and benevolent power.

Less than the sum of its parts

The EU's foreign and security dimension has undergone radical change from 2003 to 2010. The EU's presence in international affairs has changed in emphasis and intensity. For the first time in six decades the centre of gravity of the European security order is now shifting towards Europe. While NATO has been zapped of some of its former strength, the EU has grown in stature. The glue that holds it together is a large, complex and dynamic bargain. The 'l'Europe des Patries' versus 'Vaterland Europa' debate over whether the national or supranational part of the EU should be given priority ended in the Lisbon treaty stalemate that preserved the balance between unity and diversity. The Europeans continue to maintain national and transatlantic identities alongside the EU presence. The creeping American withdrawal from Europe, the demands for more, not less EU security policy, and NATO's transformation challenge all

point in the same direction. It is still early days for the EU. A sustainable power- and burden-sharing equilibrium needs to be established among the members. Also, the members have not found decision mechanisms that generate stable, coherent and reliable foreign- and security-policy output. Anyone that witnessed how the EU addressed the Darfur crisis would think twice before trusting the EU with their national interests. The period 2003–2010 strengthened the perspective that the European Union has become more autonomous in defining its own strategic objectives. The 2008 follow-on to the European Security Strategy shows a will to – or an attempt to – rival American leadership in defining the ends to which the EU policies are to be directed. There are clear signs that the EU is quietly hedging against the United States. By spreading risk to insure against negative outcomes, the EU acts strategically and it acts as a small power.

The EU is a small power – because it is hard to unite supranational and national interests. The lack of a national interest to inform policy is arguably the greatest problem facing the EU, especially since the sort of liberal internationalism that guides the CFSP/CSDP nexus seems to be losing its lustre. The member states' ability to act in a coordinated manner appears to have diminished since 2003. The three leading European powers have not taken the plunge and submitted their foreign policies to integration. In London the notion of 'the special relationship' with the US lives on, even after the experiences in Iraq. Paris might have realized in theory that sharing leadership is the better way ahead, but the tendency to jealously guard sovereignty persists. The German role as selfless bridge-builder and paymaster has also come under pressure. Rather than being a means to make gains in the international system, national sovereignty continues to be an end in itself. Sovereignty requires continued distance between foreign ministries at the precise time when the EU states would have gained from collectively presenting a unified position.

This is seemingly paradoxical. The EU members set off on a quest to become a power. At the same time as taking steps towards constructing a collective presence, most member states remained loyal to policies and structures that seemed to lead explicitly in the opposite direction (inter alia in the willingness to compromise the EU position discussed in Chapter 3, the lack of strategic grounding in Chapter 4, the patchy operational record in Chapter 5 and the consensus–expectations gap in Chapter 6). This study shows that this disjuncture is best understood in terms of the national-versus-supranational tensions that reduced the room for Europe to define and pursue independent

political objectives. A combination of the consensus–expectations gap and politically imposed inertia meant that successive leaders were in part unable and in part unwilling to formulate and implement policies independent of those of the member states. Member-state constraints on the autonomy of the EU leaders thus played a significant part in the mismatch of EU ambition and its actual influence on the international system.

As far as being an effective small power is concerned, the EU's challenge is to become more resilient to stress as well as more effective in pursuing policies of its own devising – especially when there are few time pressures or great-power interests involved. Like all actors, the EU learns from practice, and the CFSP/CSDP evolves with each new strategic experience. Yet when it comes to providing positive foreign policies, the EU continues to deliver considerably less than the aggregate might of its member states. The power and reach of the Union in 2010 still falls far short of its potential. The decision-making modus of the EU disposes it towards dependence on American agenda-setting, observing compliance with international rules and norms even if it undermines the mission, a dogged status quo orientation, a great reluctance to use armed force, and strong support for international institutions. These insights not only help explain why the EU acts as a small power, they also say something about what can be expected from Europe in the future.

It is in this gap between the partial and the temporary, between transient and permanent presence, that many of the answers lie to the question of the EU's distinctive nature as a power. In the introductory chapter, various definitions of power and presence were discussed. The reason why the EU is not a great power has everything to do with shortcomings in having 'a clear identity and a self-contained decision-making system' as well as in its 'practical capabilities to effect policy'.⁶⁷ But none of these criteria are absolutes. In a strict sense, 'permanent presence' is an attribute reserved for great powers alone. There can be little doubt that the EU clearly has made progress towards achieving a greater degree of presence in terms of a sense of self and the practical capabilities to carry out policies. Since the CSDP was initiated in 1998, the EU has made pointed efforts at structuring the economic, diplomatic and military assets of the member states in such a way that they can be mobilized in an EU context. Under the Lisbon Treaty, the member states are focusing on employing the capabilities available as effectively as possible. Nevertheless, since the treaty does very little to bridge the consensus–expectations gap which means that the policy

output is little more than a trickle. This will, for the time being, preclude EU from having meaningful common positions on the matters of great power politics.

So how does the EU measure up to the power yardstick of 'production of intended effects'? Efforts have been made at bridging the consensus-expectations gap, that is, the gap between what the Union believes it should be able to agree, and what it is actually able to deliver. There has been some progress in improving military capabilities and institutional frameworks but less in the ability to reach compromises. Economic constraints have played an important role in convincing the EU member states of the need for effective cooperation, while imposing very real restrictions on what the EU is actually able to deliver. The Union remains prone to promising more than it delivers and delivering other things than it promised. The 'spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity' of the 1992 Treaty on the European Union often proved elusive during the period in question. Consensus is often hard to arrive at, even in cases where the various national positions are not far apart.

Although several of the new CFSP/CSDP agencies remain underfunded and understaffed, the EU possesses institutional frameworks through which policies can be implemented. Progress has also been made in terms of 'identity', to align foreign-policy interests, traditions, goals and in a way that generates common policies. The 2008 RI-ESS was a step in the wrong direction. The most persistent shortfall is in the area of a self-contained decision-making system. Despite initiatives under slogans such as 'directoire', 'constructive abstention', 'qualified majority voting' and 'permanent structured cooperation', the consensus decision-making mechanism has proved persistently unworkable. The EU foreign and security policy lacks direction. The lesson is that the EU becomes a power when means and ends have been agreed. This study has shown that the capability of the Union to behave as an international actor depends to a large extent on the clarity of its goals and the subjective and objective conditions of their implementation.

However, the EU is still influential in issues within these confines – especially with regard to issues low on the international agenda (where political stakes tend to be smaller). The limited ability to project hard power in terms of both hardware and policy-making procedures predisposes the EU to being a power that places less value on economic and military strength and more value on such soft-power tools as negotiation, diplomacy and commercial ties, on international law over the use

of force, on seduction over coercion, on multilateralism over unilateral measures. Unspectacular, to be sure, but if interests are served and objectives are met, then surely it is worthwhile. It is reasonable to argue that the degree of power presence add both to the challenges and possibilities facing the Union. In the turbulence that will likely follow as the great powers find their places in a multipolar system, small powers are more mobile and also more vulnerable than greater powers.

8

The EU under Multipolarity

In 1898, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Queen Victoria's 'lady of the snows', declared that just 'as the 19th century was the century of the United States, so shall the 20th century belong to Canada'.¹ Geopolitical patterns have not become any easier to predict since then. In times of systemic transition, foreign policy makers have faced the daunting task of assessing and responding to new and familiar threats and possibilities. It is clear that those who claimed to be able to see into the future at the height of unipolarity were wrong. Consider that in 1945 and again in 1989, the international system went from multipolarity to bipolarity to unipolarity. Few would argue that subsequent strategic shifts could have been predicted based solely on an analysis of relative power distributions or the dynamics of domestic politics at the time.

In 2010 it would seem that unipolarity was a transient phase and that we are seeing the contours of a new multipolarity. The financial crisis has increased the pace of this transition. The basics in American 'Europapolitik' is one of the trends of continuity from President Bush the Younger to Obama. American withdrawal has not been matched by a corresponding rise of the EU, because of the 'semi-failure' of European political integration described in the previous chapters. I use the term 'semi' here because the EU has succeeded in fusing 27 nation states into a union that effectively limits the use of hard power among its members. However, the external policies of the EU have failed to live up to the expectations raised. Europeans have failed to integrate their foreign policy outlooks, aspirations and capacities. And for this reason Europe enters multipolarity internally consolidated and externally fragmented.

The overall aim of this chapter is to apply insights from scholarly literature about multipolarity, and about behavioural patterns seen under such systems in the past. This chapter challenges the widely

held assumption that the EU will remain in a tightly coupled Western bloc. Instead it posits a counter-intuitive hypotheses, that, as a small power, the EU can be expected to lessen its commitments to the US. The argument is structured into three parts, beginning with the 'American empire' debate as a window onto the transition from unipolarity to multipolarity. The second section deals with three alternative perspectives on multipolarity, intermultipolarity (multipolarity with the multilateralism of unipolarity), non-polarity (multilateralism without distinct poles), and finally, a return of history (multipolarity without multilateralism). The concluding section turns attention to polarity and the potential role of the European Union in a multipolar system.

The rise and fall of the American Empire

While most agree that it is difficult to over-emphasize the importance of the American role in shaping and conditioning security in Europe before 1989, many analysts tend to overlook America's impact on EU security policy cooperation after the Cold War. This would perhaps seem reasonable, considering the manner in which the EU has constructed its security policy presence. From the launch of the CFSP, European foreign policy cooperation has been marked by meticulous incrementalism and persistent ambiguity. The US not developing firm institutional bindings with the EU, choosing instead to manage its security relations with Europe primarily through NATO has added to the uncertainty. Although this book is primarily about the EU it is also about the end of the post-Cold War, an interim period that has everything to do with the US and its place in the international system. What this new age will be called has yet to be determined, however, and a new term is sought that will summarize the complexities of the present times. The changed position of the US in the international system is the most obvious point of reference for the transition from post-Cold War to after the post-Cold War.

Comparing the US with empires of old is not a new phenomenon. Like many other countries, the US has displayed imperialist tendencies at various times, especially towards the end of the nineteenth century. Later, some internationalists took up the empire theme as a positive alternative to the isolationism they felt characterized US foreign policy in the interwar years. Geir Lundestad has employed the term in his analysis of relations between the US and Western Europe (1945–52).² But empire was not applied in a literal sense; it was without nostalgia that Jack Snyder in *Myths of Empire* noted that the term empire

has become outdated as a political yardstick.³ Is perhaps hegemony a more appropriate term for describing America's power and reach? In *Two Hegemonies* Patrick O'Brian and Armand Clesse invited 18 scholars to consider this question. While empire is about overwhelming power, hegemony is, according to one of the contributors, S. Ryan Johansson, about leadership.⁴

There are three reasons why, in a relatively short time, a good-natured academic debate where empire had been used with explicit and implicit inverted commas became deeply contentious. One was the neoconservative turn in American foreign policy during the first term of the presidency of George Bush the Younger. A second reason was the terrorist attack on America on 11 September 2001, and the strategic decisions that the attack triggered. Thirdly, 'empire' was found to be user-friendly in an increasingly politicized academic discourse. It worked well for the neoconservatives who used the term not as an analogy but as political aspiration. At the opposite end of the political scale, left-wing intellectuals saw the mask being torn off the old foe. The American empire just as Lenin, Schumpeter and Galtung had predicted.⁵

This is not to say that the idea of an American empire was taken out of thin air. No-one who visits Washington can overlook the imperial ambition of those who built the capital. The Houses of Congress, the Supreme Court and other buildings have been built in neoclassical style. It is not just the architecture. Political symbols and terminology are saturated with classical references. In this sense, it is not at all curious that some took to calling the city 'Rome on the Potomac'. It must be said, as Andrew Bacevich has pointed out in his book *The Imperial Tense*, the concept was never popular among the general public.⁶ To many, empire is the very symbol of pomp and privilege, arrogance and hubris: the opposite of the values with which Americans like to associate themselves. The essence of the traditionalist perspective is captured by the title of Patrick Buchanan's book, *A Republic, Not an Empire*.⁷

What is important here is whether the term helps us better understand the role of the US in the global order. Michael Cox argues there are a number of benefits to be derived from applying the concept of empire in a US context.⁸ He points out that no two empires are identical – that they have varied in shape and content throughout history. Furthermore, empires do not necessarily have to physically control the territories of others – some require tributes from their territories rather than exercising direct control. What is important is that the empire sets the rules for those who live within its sphere of power and that it punishes and rewards accordingly. It is also the norm that the language and culture

of the imperial power are imposed on the subordinate territories. In *Colossus*, Niall Ferguson demonstrated how the US meets all these criteria, and more.⁹

A quick Amazon search yields shelves of literature on the 'American empire' written in the period from 2001 to 2004. This ideational tradition spans comes from intellectuals such as Michael Ignatieff to economists such as Deepak Lal, from conspiracy theorists such as Mathias Bröckers, to military leaders such as Anthony Zinni, and from sociologists such as Emmanuel Todd, and a great many historians.¹⁰ Interestingly, most of the authors accepted with few apparent qualms the metamorphosis of the US from liberal democracy to empire-builder. President Bush the Younger adopted a doctrine where the existence of liberal institutions was not seen as sufficient. A liberal world order was seen possible only if the US was willing and able to maintain it. In the words of Samuel Huntington,

A world without US primacy will be a world with more violence and disorder and less democracy and economic growth than a world where the United States continues to have more influence than any other country in shaping global affairs. The sustained international primacy of the United States is central to the welfare and security of Americans and to the future of freedom, democracy, open economies, and international order in the world.¹¹

It says something about the intellectual climate in the US at the turn of the millennium that a view that would have been met with near-universal condemnation only two decades earlier came close to being accepted as fact. It was, of course, the relative strength of the US vis-à-vis the rest of the world that made some see empires in broad daylight. It is the closest that a state has come to attaining global hegemony. America's mobilizing capacity, cultural vigour and technological innovation were daunting. In the 1990s the military, political and economic primacy of the US seemed matchless.¹² Although the primacy of the US remains an indisputable fact, the gap has narrowed. The US \$11 trillion economy has allowed for technological progress and a defence budget greater than the sum total of the next 25 states on the list of defence spenders. There can be no question regarding America's capabilities, just as there can be no question that the international system has not seen a similar imbalance in power since the Treaty of Westphalia marked the beginning of the age of the nation-state. But it was the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan that provided fuel for the empire debate: America's military might unleashed is an awe-inspiring sight.

What the Iraq war changed

In 2010 the mood has changed. The situation in Iraq offers few happy prospects. Also, in Afghanistan many of the initial successes have been rolled back. The US economy is struggling. The production base and capital accumulations are shifting away from the transatlantic region and this same trend, combined with increased consumption, is driving the challengers faster, higher and stronger. Russia has made a surprising comeback and is, alongside China and (to a lesser extent) India, now willing to challenge the US in ways that would have been difficult to imagine only ten years ago. In addition, the US is going through a process of reducing its global footprint. The closing of the Keflavik base, the down-scaling of the missile shield (NMT) and the pending withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Germany are only part of a broad shift that in the coming decade will reduce US military presence in Europe. A similar process is also underway in East Asia.

As the leading great power in the international system the US shares many of the concerns of past empires. It was in reference to the burdens of leadership that Benson K. Whitney, the US Ambassador to Norway, said: 'If the United States is an empire, then we are the worst empire ever'.¹³ American leadership was not based on fear or coercion. It was – as Geir Lundestad has argued – per invitation. European leaders wanted the US to exert leadership.¹⁴ But there are also signs of change here. Seen through American eyes, German Marshall Fund's 2009 survey of transatlantic trends makes disheartening reading. Only 49 per cent of the respondents in the European Union and Turkey believed it is desirable that the US exert strong leadership in world affairs.¹⁵ This is, of course, not to suggest that great-power status is bestowed by public endorsement only, that the legitimacy that is an essential element of the exercise of power is under pressure.

With the advent of many of the tell-tale signs of an empire on the wane, much of the talk about 'American empire' has fallen silent. In a seminal article in *Survival*, David P. Calleo posited that the core of the empire debate was America's unique position in the international system, combined an assumption that the US would be able to maintain this position over time.¹⁶ The idea of American empire was in reality the idea of a lasting unipolar world order, a 'New American Century', as one neoconservative think tank called it. This concept has since lost ground. The contours of a future multipolar world are becoming apparent. Analysts who used to talk about the unipolar order are now talking about what Charles Krauthammer called the 'unipolar moment'.¹⁷

The War against Terror more than any other event testifies to the end of unipolarity. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have by 2010 cost the US some \$1000 billion dollars. The wars were in no small measure the reason why the US in the first decade of the 2000s sunk ever deeper into debt. Beginning in 2010 the US paid more to its foreign creditors, above all China, than it took in from its overseas investments. Perhaps more importantly, the failure to bring the 'savage wars of peace' to an end has made the US look weak. While the US may well be able to defeat any conceivable coalition of challengers, it no longer seems matchless: the Iraq war has dispelled that notion. Most analysts agree that President Obama has taken over the leadership of a country that is less strong vis-à-vis the other great powers. Although it is difficult to pin down the most appropriate quantitative measure for this transition, it seems evident that a shift is taking place.

The yardsticks by which analysts measure hegemonic power change in accordance with what they believe to be the most important factors – economic, institutional, ideological or military – but their conclusions are similar. The production capacity and technological superiority that were the bases of Western dominance are more evenly distributed among the powers today. As Fareed Zakaria points out in *The Post-American World*, 'The tallest buildings, biggest dams, largest-selling movies, and most advanced cell phones are all being built outside the United States'.¹⁸ In 2009, the People's Republic of China holds about 13 per cent of US government bonds and notes in public hands. The trends towards greater equability among the greatest powers in military spending levels and in terms of the institutional superstructure of the post-Cold War order.

The movement towards formal supranational regimes in the 1990s, has in the 2000s been replaced by a shift towards informal bilateralism as symbolized by the rise of the G-20 over the UN Security council. Further, the distinct Western blend of free market economy, rule of law, human rights and democracy – the four cornerstones of modern states – have lost some of their powers of attraction with the advent of 'authoritarian capitalism', notably in Russia and China. Several of the fastest growing economies have embraced free market capitalism without liberal democracy. Democracy's troubles are summed up in 'Freedom in the World 2010', the yearly report published by Freedom House. The conclusion is that the world is in a 'freedom recession',¹⁹ For the fourth consecutive year, more countries saw declines in political and civic rights than advances, the longest such period of deterioration in the 40-year history of this report.

Regardless of whether the US is labelled great power, hegemon, or empire, its ability to remain the predominant power in the system hinges on the ability to manage its finances. Niall Ferguson argued that the reason for the decline is as interest payments on foreign debt eat into the budget, the money has to be found somewhere – and defence expenditure is an obvious target.²⁰ According to the US Congressional Budget Office, a significant decline in the relative share of national security in the federal budget is already factored into the equation. In the Pentagon's present plan, defence spending is set to fall from above 4 per cent now to 3.2 per cent of GDP in 2015 and to 2.6 per cent of GDP by 2028. Robert D. Kaplan believes that the 2008 financial crisis will result in the US being unable to maintain a technological advantage over other powers, foreseeing 'a more gradual siphoning of money away from vital programs over the next decade, even as China, India, and other countries enlarge their navies and other forces' which he concludes 'will not necessarily lead to a security dilemma for the U.S., but it will certainly lead to a multipolar world and the end of American dominance'.²¹

America's decline is not without precedents. By the interwar years, interest payments were consuming 44 per cent of the British Empire's budget, making it intensely difficult to rearm in the face of a new German threat. The debate about the 'relative decline' of the US is not new. Immanuel Wallerstein was among the first to notice that America's relative advantage was decreasing and that the main challenge lay in genuine divergence of interests between the US and the challenges. He concluded that that the end of the Cold War did not signal the end of economic, ideological, political and military rivalry among the great powers but rather that it would mean increased instability and unpredictability in international affairs as the US loses its power to define the rules of the geopolitical game:

The year 1980 marks the midpoint in a global process: the steady erosion of the hegemonic position of the United States in the world economy. The political keystone of this hegemony has been a strong alliance with Western Europe and Japan. Until 1967 the United States dominated the world military arena and political economy... Americans have spent the past 30 years getting used to the benefits of a hegemonic position, and they will have to spend the next 30 getting used to life without them.²²

International affairs are not driven by discourse, but by material capacity. Arnold J. Toynbee observed, 'Growth takes place whenever a

challenge evokes a successful response that, in turn, evokes a further and different challenge. We have not found any intrinsic reason why this process should not repeat itself indefinitely.²³ The re-surfacing of great-power politics is if anything a resounding affirmation of balance of power as the 'iron law' of history. The debate about the future of the American empire is also a debate about the sources of international order. It is worth noting that Britain took to calling itself an empire at a time when it was actually on the decline, a point succinctly captured by Reinhold Niebuhr:

One of the most pathetic aspects of human history is that every civilization expresses itself most pretentiously, compounds its partial and universal values most convincingly, and claims immortality for its finite existence at the very moment when the decay that leads to death has already begun.²⁴

Power and polarity

The concept of polarity has been a basic element of political thinking throughout history. The Peloponnesian War and the struggle between Rome and Carthage are both examples of bipolar great-power rivalry and were perceived as such by contemporaries. Polarity, quite simply, refers to the distribution of power among the actors in the international system. Unipolarity has one dominant power centre and bipolarity has two. Multipolarity in international politics describes a distribution of power in which more than two powers have comparable amounts of military, cultural, and economic influence. A multipolar system is distinguished from other international systems by the absence of supra-national organizing principles. M. A. Kaplan estimates the number of actors needed to maintain such a system as 'at least five, and preferably more'.²⁵ In the emerging multipolar order, nation states will remain the basic units. Power is, as discussed in Chapter 1, relational. The structure of the system refers to the distribution of the capabilities among the actors and that structure helps determine the nature of the system.²⁶

During the Cold War the term 'superpower' was used to designate the Soviet Union and the US. With the shift towards multipolarity this category is losing its only remaining member, as the US steps down and the emerging powers step up into the great-power category. It would appear that the age of the superpower is at an end and a new age of the great-power politics is about to begin. The likely candidates for places at the high table are obvious. The United States, China, India, Japan, Russia,

and the European Union make up just over half the world's people and account for 75 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) and 80 per cent of global defence spending.²⁷ This does not mean that the rise of one or the other is inevitable; one or more of these may prove unable or unwilling of acting as a great power. The EU is the most obvious non-contender, but the ageing population of Japan and the economic asymmetries of Russia may well relegate these powers. Some see Brazil and Germany as potential runners-up.²⁸

The distinctive nature of the EU as a power cannot be understood unless taking context into account, namely unipolarity. Michael Handel argues that there are two types of international system: the 'competitive' and the 'hegemonic'.²⁹ In a competitive system, a small power can be expected to benefit from enhanced room for political manoeuvre as a result of the rivalry among the other powers, whereas the hegemonic pattern dictates that a small power will be limited by existing within the sphere of influence of a great power.³⁰ In such a system the small power would have to display a great degree of attentiveness to the policies of the great-power and avoid having its policies run counter to those of the hegemon.³¹ That is why a tightly coupled, competitive bipolar system proved to be remarkably stable. During the Cold War the superpowers' elevated status was at the expense of the small powers that were expected to align their policies close to that of their respective bloc leader. Considering the vulnerability of small powers in an international system governed by anarchy Hedley Bull nevertheless underlined that the twin precepts of deterrence and the balance of power bring about a stability that tend to serve the survival interest of small actors.³²

Opinions differ regarding the inherent stability of multipolarity. Classical realist theorists, such as Hans Morgenthau and E. H. Carr, hold that multipolar systems are more stable than are bipolar ones; powers can enhance their positions through alliances and limited wars that do not directly challenge others. In bipolar systems, classical realists argue, this is not possible. Neorealists, on the other hand, focus on security and invert the formula: powers in a multipolar system must focus their fears on any number of other powers and, misjudging the intentions of other powers, unnecessarily compromise their security. The chance of conflict grows with the number of conflict nodes. In this view, multipolarity is expected to be unstable because of its complexity. Powers cannot be sure of the intentions of others. They are tempted to 'pass the buck' if they believe they can get away with it. This may produce opportunities for revisionist powers, allowing them to take on at least some of their opponents one by one.

Assuming that the great powers will act as great powers of the past, an active multipolar system is likely to develop. Such a system will be flexible and prone to alliance shifts, making it different from the bipolar and unipolar orders, when the structure as a whole was rigid. In the multipolar system of the future the military balance of power will herald a greater number of unknowns, making unlikely the sort of stable deterrence-based structure seen under bipolarity. Whether a balance of power will provide the future multipolar system with instability or flexible stability remains to be seen. At present, it seems unlikely that ideology will play a key role in shaping the strategic environment since 'authoritarian capitalism' offers little common ground in opposition to liberal democracy. This could change rapidly. New, strident ideologies tend to accompany the rise of revisionist powers.

What most scholars seem to agree, is that the relative power of opposing coalitions depends greatly on how the powers concerned define their national interests. These are difficult to ascertain in advance and are subject to rapid shifts. Failure to react and miscalculation represent greater challenges in multipolar system than under bipolarity, where the calculation of relative strengths, are manageable. For these reasons a multipolar world will have to overcome problems of coordination. L. F. Richardson's classic balance-of-power model illustrates the array of corollaries, among them the relationships between the number of actors and the stability of the system.³³ Discussing this model, Karl W. Deutsch and J. David Singer reached the conclusion that 'in the long run ... multipolar systems operating under the balance of power policies are shown to be self-destructing' owing mainly to an 'accelerated rise of interaction opportunities' and the resulting 'accelerated diminution in the allocation of attention'.³⁴

For this reason multipolar systems, with their ever-shifting balance of power, are most often portrayed as turbulent in scholarly literature. Resource scarcity is likely to be a key factor in driving instability because inequalities among the members carry such severe penalties. According to Charles Doran the movement of powers on the vertical axis of the global power hierarchy combines in a multipolar environment with manoeuvring for allies on the horizontal axis of balance-of-power politics.³⁵ As a result, according to William Thompson, crises are expected to be more common under multipolarity than under unipolarity and bipolarity.³⁶ Building on this rationale Robert Powell concludes that conflict resolution can be expected to have a low rate of success, and war more prevalent.³⁷ Yet there may be other systemic conditions that can fuse with multipolar power distributions and

reduce the prospects for war.³⁸ Alexander Wendt argues that the concept of self-help as defined by realists originates from the interaction of the units in the system, and not from anarchy. If the working of multipolarity is defined by process, and not by structure the chances of a multipolar peace increase greatly.³⁹ That is why the question of whether multipolarity will provide more or less stability in the international system than bipolarity is a flashpoint in contemporary international relations debate.

Interpolarity, non-polarity or a return of history?

Many, perhaps most, policymakers object to the power calculus of mainstream international relations theory as described above. World orders do not spring up organically; they are created by how the major powers cast their relationships and by the incentives provided by the international system and by how these incentives are interpreted. Most politics find a place between what Hans Morgenthau described as 'the two extremes of over-rating the influence of ethics upon international politics or under-estimating it by denying that statesmen and diplomats are moved by anything but considerations of material power'.⁴⁰ There has been a great many attempts to explain the nature of modern multipolarity. Below is a brief discussion of the three most dominant ones. Two of the scenarios are competitive, one is hegemonic; two are linear, one is cyclical; and two are continuity scenarios – one scenario predicts rupture.

Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis still has many followers, not least in Europe. Although some of the determinism has been dispensed with along with the actual slogan, many still believe that we are witnessing a universalization and evolution of liberal democracy, where globalization redefines the nature of power and of international affairs. A distinctly European vision of a *cooperative* multipolar system is what Giovanni Grevi has dubbed 'interpolarity', which he defines as 'multipolarity in the age of interdependence'.⁴¹ This concept keeps the notion of a new world order in the making, but reintroduces powers at the centre of the system. Grevi argues that the defining feature of the contemporary international landscape is the intensification of economic globalization, expanding institutions, and shared problems of interdependence. Compared to past orders, the contemporary liberal-centred international order provides a set of constraints and opportunities – of pushes and pulls – that reduce the likelihood of severe conflict. Grevi accepts that multipolarity captures many dimensions of the emerging international environment; he claims that the relative power jockeying

of competing actors is outdated and that 'deep' interdependence is the actual contemporary context. The intertwined nature of economy, energy and environment is seen to place vital restraints on power relations.⁴² Like the Soviet 'socialism in one country' doctrine, Grevi's analysis accepts that European integration may be limited to Europe – coupled with a notion of power bloc polarity and a linear assumption that interdependence fosters peace.

Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane provide much of the foundation for this logic in *Power and Interdependence*, in which they question the traditional assumption that military power alone ensures strength and emphasize the importance of economy and 'complex interdependence' as motivators towards, and reasons for, power interaction.⁴³ This perspective has since been taken a step further. Robert Keohane has developed a theory in which institutions are seen to promote cooperation by managing communication inefficiencies and the risks inherent in the international system. Through provision of mechanisms that provide warning of defection and pre-defined sanctions of violations can help reduce the security dilemma to an acceptable level.⁴⁴ In conditions of complex interdependence, partners, societies and economies are closely connected through norms, rules, processes and institutions.⁴⁵ The 'complex interdependence' perspective concedes the realist dictum that national security and military concerns trump all other foreign policy agendas, but assert that the vast majority of international relations do not concern the survival goals of powers. Regime theory is often seen as a necessary supplement to this. Regimes are defined as 'sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms and decision making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations'.⁴⁶

The view of multipolarity that has gained prevalence in the US is what Richard Haass calls 'nonpolarity'. In short, he argues that in a radical break with the past, the global system has now embarked on a quasi-anarchic journey that involves more than state-oriented actors, instead branching out to players such as NGO's, large corporations, terrorists and energy providers. Any open challenge by a single emerging power or coalition of powers 'is unlikely to arise anytime soon'.⁴⁷ Haass concludes that classic great-power rivalry is unlikely to arise also in the medium term, depending on the behaviour of the US, which has not stimulated such a response but could do so if managed recklessly. The point made is that the US has not, even under President Bush the Younger, acted in a manner that has led other powers to conclude that America constitutes a threat to their vital national interests. What Grevi places as

the main variable, Haas views as an added constraint: since most of the other major powers are dependent on a stable international system for their economic welfare and political stability, they can be expected to play the role of system upholders and act when rules are broken. This is expected to curb the emergence of great-power rivalry. Haas concedes that a nonpolar system is likely to increase the vulnerabilities of the United States. He lists rogue states, terrorist groups, energy blackmail, and pressures on the role and strength of the US dollar. In essence, a non-polar world is seen as a continuation of unipolarity. Haas is joined in this prediction by Fareed Zakaria, who concurs that if managed properly, American primacy could last for generations.⁴⁸ In *The Post-American World*, Zakaria predicts an international system in which the US will no longer orchestrate the global economy, dominate geopolitics, or define cultures. On the contrary, he sees the 'rise of the rest' as the great story of our time. Drawing on examples from history, Zakaria argues that the US should seek to maintain its dominant position through acquiescence. The Obama administration has clearly internalized this logic, that the best way to preserve American leadership is through agenda-setting and coalition-building as the way to exert influence.⁴⁹

To others, the current turbulence is a harbinger not of history's end, but its resumption. To them, the future threatens to resemble its problematic past. *The Coming Anarchy*, as written by Robert D. Kaplan was first published as an article in *The Atlantic Monthly* in February 1994 and is considered to be one of the fundamental positions on the post-Cold War era, and is often cast as the antecedent to the 'end of history' thesis.⁵⁰ Kaplan argued that the West would soon come to miss the Cold War since stable bipolarity is the closest the world can get to perpetual peace. Without the predictability offered by bipolarity the world is, according to Kaplan, open to a new age of conflict tensions such as scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism, and disease will tear at the 'social fabric' of the international system: the norms, treaties and the institutions. The fact that the world is modernizing does not necessarily mean that it is Westernizing. Kaplan questioned both the idealistic assumptions of liberal internationalism and the desirability of supranational governance. In a later book Kaplan outlines a dark future for the West since the forces of anarchy will grow to outstrip the Western supply of idealism.⁵¹ Paradoxically, efforts such as the bans on landmines, cluster bombs and nuclear disarmament may destabilize the system because they reduce deterrence. By doing so they offer more, as Lord Birkenhead's told the students of Glasgow University in 1923, 'glittering prizes to those who have stout hearts and sharp swords'.⁵²

The most frequently cited vision of a competitive multipolar system is provided by Robert Kagan in *The Return of History*. In the book Kagan argues that America's ability to maintain the international order is declining.⁵³ He points out that after the Cold War, the US pursued 'an expansive, even aggressive global policy,' and that 'in shaping a world to suit their values, they have compelled others to bend to their will' in ways that was bound to create a backlash. The logic is that all great powers are arrogant – it just so happens that, for a while, the US was the only one around. For this reason rising powers will balance against America. Interestingly Kagan, like Grevi, projects a European experience onto the international system. In Kagan's argument, the twenty-first century international system will resemble the mid-nineteenth-century Europe. That would mean a period of bare-knuckle national interest politics with a minimum of postmodern padding. This is the scenario that the US National Intelligence Council has labelled 'multipolarity without multilateralism'.⁵⁴ In this perspective great-power geopolitical rivalries will deepen in the same patterns as ideological rifts between autocracies and democracies. Rising powers will seek to improve their relative positions and establish hegemony along their borders. As the emerging powers grow in strength, the area they define as their national interest will expand, causing friction with other powers. Because their envisioned spheres of influence will overlap, the relationship between the great powers is likely to be confrontational. This is a classic balance-of-power argument. It draws on the classical realist view of history and a neorealist emphasis of structure. Since Kagan spends little time going over the theoretical underpinnings of his argument, and since this author finds this argument more persuasive, the next section will revisit some of the basics.

From unipolarity to multipolarity

When tectonic plates grind against one another, they do not always glide smoothly; sometimes they slip. The first decade of the 2000s has been a moment of tectonic slippage, a brief but powerful acceleration in the deep-seated movement of power away from the West towards 'the rest'. A change of polarity reflects a change in the distribution of capabilities among the great powers in a system. During this process the ascending and descending powers may come to perceive each other as hostile and clash. Similarly, a failure to uphold the rules of the system by the system-determining power(s) can create instability.⁵⁵ The argument most frequently encountered in the literature promotes the idea that the

hierarchy of power upholds the international order. Daniel Geller correctly points out that the rules of the system are a reflection of the interest of the dominant power(s).⁵⁶ But these power relations among actors are not static. Changes in security, knowledge, production and finance lead to a shifting and erosion of the foundations of the order. A growing discrepancy between changing power distributions and the hierarchy of prestige will create disequilibria which, unless redressed, increase the likelihood of conflict. Shifts in power relations favour challenging rather than incumbent powers and help provide the necessary conditions for war. Great-power wars could be as frequent in the twenty-first century as they were in the twentieth. Colin S. Gray argues that these future wars will not require any manifestation of insanity by political leaders, not even an aberration from normal statecraft. Wars may come about merely because of what Thucydides recognized as – fear, honour and interest.⁵⁷

E. H. Carr was among the first to observe that polarity transition tends to be turbulent, in part because revisionist powers often display a volatile mix of victimhood and aggressiveness, but also because the system-determining powers will be tempted to stop enforcing the rules of the system. The former will see the system as having been weighted against them; the latter will be disappointed that the system allows challengers to rise.⁵⁸ Powers that favour the status quo, most often those who participated in drawing up ‘the rules of the game’, subsequently stand to benefit from these rules; revisionist powers, tend to be dissatisfied with their place in the system and wish to change the rules by which relations among nations work. E. H. Carr describes the breakdown of international order as follows: rules are challenged by those who see the status quo as favouring established powers; the leading powers grow less willing to make sacrifices to maintain a system that is allowing other powers to rise.⁵⁹ In the present context, that could mean China and Russia in future may attempt to make similar claims to the sort of exceptionalism the US has granted itself during the post-Cold War era. From this perspective, it is to be expected that the taxpayers of the leading power will lose enthusiasm for policing the international order, and for the accompanying military expenses. In other words, it is a dual process whereby the emerging powers rise to the level of the leading power(s), and the upholders of the system show a diminished commitment.

The key distinction is, then, between defensive status quo powers that seek system-preservation, and revisionist powers, more willing to accept the costs of confrontation. Robert Gilpin splits this complex into three components: the distribution of power, the hierarchy of prestige and the rules and privileges that govern (or at least influence) the interaction amongst powers.⁶⁰ This leads to three ‘tests’ of status quo

or revisionist intent. Do the leaders of the power comply with the rules of the system in words and actions? How do the leaders speak and act with regard to power distributions regionally and globally? And how do the leaders speak and act with regard to the hierarchy of prestige regionally and globally? In order to make its mark as a revisionist power an actor must, according to Gilpin, fail to comply with international rules, openly question the legitimacy of the status quo and challenge the established hierarchy regionally and globally.⁶¹

According to Randall Schweller, 'Revisionist states value what they covet more than what they currently possess'. War is more likely when a former dominant power finds its power relative to a challenger slipping as the result of the challenger's rise. Robert Gilpin presents this as 'hegemonic [in]stability'; George Modelski thinks of it in terms of 'long cycles'; and A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler use the term 'power transition'. What they have in common is a belief in a mechanism whereby a shift away from primacy and towards parity encourages conflict.⁶² The presence of a large number of small and middle-sized powers that are effectively unable to defend themselves add impetus to a violent transition.⁶³ The stability of the international order rests on the willingness of the leading power to sustain it and for smaller powers to accept the order as legitimate. This is facilitated by the fact that smaller powers are granted 'voice options' to influence the predominant power's behaviour, as argued by G. John Ikenberry.⁶⁴

To bandwagon or to counterbalance? This is, from a realist perspective, the pregnant question in transatlantic relations. Since powers can never know other powers' motives with certainty, alliances are seen as temporary 'marriages of convenience' and arenas in which powers aim to maximize their power vis-à-vis alliance partners.⁶⁵ Realists tend to stress the impermanence of cooperation: powers are concerned that other actors will gain more from cooperating than they do themselves, and institutions cannot defuse such concerns. According to Kenneth Waltz, powers confronted with superior power can counterbalance it either through internally building up resources to reduce the relative gap in capabilities, or through external means, such as cooperation with other actors to reduce the gap in capabilities relative to the stronger power. Great and medium-sized powers are best equipped to provide a counterbalance to the leading powers, on the assumption that failure to check the rise of one power will invite future conflict.⁶⁶ In reference to the anarchical condition of the international system Kenneth Waltz postulates:

A self-help system is one in which those who do not help themselves, or who do so less effectively than others, will fail to prosper, will lay

themselves open to dangers, will suffer. Fear of such unwanted consequences stimulates power to behave in ways that tend toward the creation of balances of power.⁶⁷

Being in the most powerful coalition does not necessarily mean that powers will stay true to the current most powerful actor. According to Jack Snyder, they are just as likely to join a weaker coalition, which (when they join together to challenge the leading power) would give them claim to a greater share of the coalition's dividend.⁶⁸ Who dares wins. That is why small powers are often seen to grow in importance in times of systemic shifts, both as actors in their own right and as the famous canary in the coal mine. The shifting allegiances of small powers can tip the scales of the balance of power. In reality the situation is less clear cut, as we will return to in the following section. Unipolarity is seen as inherently transient because 'eventually power will check power'.⁶⁹ This does not mean that balancing is inevitable. A predominant power may stem it. Whether or not balancing takes place also depends on the decisions of governments; the price of unsuccessful bids can, as Waltz reminds us, be grave: invasion, loss of autonomy and dismemberment.⁷⁰ This rings especially true for small powers.

The other absolute option for a lesser power confronted with a superior power is to bandwagon.⁷¹ This entails not so much capitulating as rather a choice to be part of a dominant power bloc.⁷² Bandwagoning captures an aspiration to maintain one's power status and keep the potential open for sharing in the gains of the leading power. On the whole, weak actors are expected to bandwagon. In Stephen Walt's study of alliance behaviour, balancing and bandwagoning are the two primary responses of one power towards another that threatens it. He finds that the weaker the power, the more likely it is to bandwagon.⁷³ Typically, powers that choose to oppose or counterbalance powerful powers in the international system are aspiring great powers flanked, by small powers. Great powers may also choose to bandwagon with leading powers in a gamble that their own positions will benefit from it, or because of the difficulties involved in mustering a viable balancing coalition. Bandwagoning is appealing simply because balancing means challenging someone more powerful, with all that it implies.

What will multipolarity hold for Europe?

So what can be expected from the EU under multipolarity? In order to answer that question we need to first look at how small powers

behave under such circumstances. There is a widely held assumption that small powers are of particular interest in times of systematic shifts since they are prone to opportunist behaviour, nimbly changing allegiances, thereby tipping the balances of power. Robert Rothstein arrives at a different conclusion.⁷⁴ Studying alliances, small powers and the international system from 1815 to 1939 he finds on the contrary that 'small powers made every effort to loosen their commitments not tighten them'.⁷⁵ In dealing with two greater powers – the established power and the rising power – small powers can be expected to take a passive stance, sending positive feedback towards both powers. Small powers are prone to hedging.⁷⁶ Why? In *Nations in alliance* George Liska explains this seeming paradox by noting that small power seeks a 'special relationship' to an allied great power out of preference for 'status of the unequal but distinct partner'. The alternative 'being absorbed in an apparently equalizing multilateral mass' is unattractive.⁷⁷ Why are 'special relationships' in shorter supply in times of systemic change? In the answer to this question lies what might be dubbed 'the tragedy of small power politics'.

Small powers tend to welcome systemic shifts because they are opportunistic and assume that the great powers will be too busy to control the small powers and the increase in power centres will increase their relative bargaining position in inter-alliance or intra-alliance politics. It was this tendency Lord Castlereagh observed when he wrote 'there is not a power however feeble... that is not pushing some acquisition under the plea of security... They seem to have no dread of a kick from the lion when his toils are removed, and are foolish enough to suppose that the great powers are to be in readiness to protect them in the enjoyment of these petty spoils'.⁷⁸ Rothstein notes that a multipolar system will increase the tendency of small powers to concentrate on local issues to the detriment of global perspectives. In some cases small powers seek together, attempting to pool their resources in an attempt to balance against threat or form a bloc that is big enough to opt out. The fate of the non-alignment movement of the Cold War era might be seen as one historical parallel to this. So with the worth of their allegiance diminished and the risks associated with standing alone increased, the most appealing option for small powers will be to attempt to opt out of great-power politics through hedging. The small powers hope that rules of the international system will prevent regional conflicts that could jeopardize the territorial integrity of the former. History shows that this is often a false promise. When this proves not to be the case the result is often a headlong dash into a tight and asymmetric alliance with a

great power.⁷⁹ Although such an arrangement satisfy security concerns, it will often eat into the small power's sovereignty, as the great powers may exploit the weak bargaining position of the small power to extract relative gains. Great powers are also prone to ignoring the effects of their actions upon the interests of smaller powers. Either way the small power is expected to provide wholehearted economic, diplomatic and (in many cases) military support. In such a scenario, it is to be expected that the great power would to some extent penetrate the domestic political system and the military apparatus of the small power. In sum, in turbulent times small powers tend to trade political autonomy for military security.

The reason for this is simple. As the system changes, so do the rules of the game. In periods of systemic change, alliances move from being defensive ad hoc arrangements and become essential instruments of war. In this context neither 'the advice nor military support [a]re considered significant enough to warrant any concessions to it on behalf of the great powers'.⁸⁰ As a result the small powers are soon 'shocked out of their reverie the increasing tensions and hostilities of a new political world'.⁸¹ In most cases small powers are not able to opt out of great-power politics and play for advantage on the margins. The acute security dilemma that arises with 'multipolarity without multilateralism' scenario tends to draw small powers into one or the other of competing blocs. The stability that came with bipolarity sustained a great many small states and small powers that might in other cases have been of questionable durability. The current trend of fragmentation where the number of statelets increases may yet be reversed.

The current international system contains a large number of states that cannot realistically defend themselves. Small powers, after all, are the building blocks of empire. Historically, the small powers that have been able to opt out of the great power politics were those that had both a strong army *and* a favourable geographical position.⁸² The EU, of course, has neither. In the plainest terms, the strategic options faced by the EU states – individually and collectively vis-à-vis its bloc leader, the US fall into three broad categories: defect, cooperate and hedge. The two absolute strategies are either to defect (weak or no commitment to alliance ventures) or to cooperate (strong commitment and support for alliance ventures). Each alternative comes with potentially positive and prospective negative consequences. For the EU vis-à-vis the US the principal 'cons' are abandonment and entrapment, and the principal 'pros' are the reduction in the risk of being abandoned or entrapped by the US. Neither of the absolute strategies is open to the EU. The EU will not defect from the American camp, as indeed voices on both sides of

the Atlantic have been suggesting, and pursue a strategy of self-reliance or new alliances.⁸³ To balance or to bandwagon is exactly the sort of strategic decisions the absence of a workable decision-making mechanism precludes the EU from making. The course of action that has been chosen in response to the end of unipolarity is a classical small-power response: The EU is hedging its bets.

How long hedging will remain a viable option is a different matter. The European integration in the EU has simply not moved fast enough for Europe to hope to form a separate pole under multipolarity or to 'opt out' through armed neutrality. Multipolarity will likely transform the nature of all major relationships – especially those of alliance – as a intricate global system of alliances and counter-alliances are forged to reflect the changed circumstances. The EU is no longer in a position where security cooperation is a low-stake addition to NATO, the supplier of territorial security. Rather, the EU is an annex to a slipping hegemon, which not all its members are necessarily committed to propping up. For the US the period since 2003 has seen a shift from multilateralism to bilateralism in a trend similar to that seen in international trade.⁸⁴ In this context perhaps the newfound American enthusiasm for the CSDP is better understood as an attempt to shift away some security burden taken on in a different context. Some hope that greater responsibility will infuse the EU with a stronger sense of power. As one EU Commission official lamented amidst the Darfur crisis, 'maybe the only way we will have a genuine European Union is if there is a war'.⁸⁵

The official is surely not the first to have hoped for a clear and present danger to focus the mind of the European Union – in the spirit of William Butler Yeats' poem quoted at the beginning of this inquest. Such hopes are foolhardy. Being a small power the EU is defensive, it does not have revisionist intent. Instead the EU is displaying classical small-power behaviour – under an assumption that it will offer greater rewards for opportunist behaviour it is distancing itself from all poles. The EU states are clearly individually and collectively guilty of hedging as described in Chapter 4. Collectively the EU plays as hesitant and often as reluctant a role as possible in the global American support system, but does not seek to offer its services to emerging powers. The EU seeks to contribute as little as possible to American geopolitics while clinging to the security guarantees of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. If power corrupts so, apparently, does a lack of it.

This strategy has left NATO intact but the expectation of support which underlies it is progressively being weakened. Regardless of whether the EU is seen as a small power or as an alliance of small powers it will be

of little military utility against great powers – it is highly unlikely that the EU could agree a *casus foederis* that would commit its members to openly challenge a great power. And since the use of force against other small powers and small states will raise the spectre of great-power intervention, the sort of arrangement the EU represents will find it increasingly difficult to manage hard power as the power gaps lessen in the multipolar system. If the small power perspective holds true the more likely prospect is that the EU will go through a period of hedging, followed by en masse bandwagoning with America as international conflicts grow in intensity. The worst-case scenario is that the EU turns into a microcosm of the whole system's instability, its member states being drawn towards different poles. Without the US as an offshore balancer the EU could disintegrate into a 27-state buffet for the great powers.

The shrinking gap between the US and the rest may not be such a great concern for America who will still be the most powerful state for many years to come. The US remains militarily stronger, only that it will no longer be able to win wars with ease. This will raise the bar for conflict-seeking behaviour. The decline of American power will first be felt among its security-consuming dependants. This shrinking advantage links with the European under-financing of their armies and weak commitment to alliance ventures. If the lesson from the Kosovo war was that the US should not again fight 'war by committee', the lesson from the Afghan campaign is, according to one US battlefield colonel, was that for the most part the Europeans 'are not good at war fighting, not good at peace keeping, not much good at all'.⁸⁶ In failing to provide the diplomatic and military backing that the US sees as a fair price for underwriting their individual and collective security, the EU has managed to carve out a limited but nevertheless real degree of autonomy within the broad confines of American security guarantees. The impetus for change in the transatlantic relationship will therefore, if this analysis holds true, likely not come from the EU but from the US. How long the EU will be able to hedge its bets remains to be seen.

Conclusion: The Purpose of European Power

In 1928 the world's great powers, including Britain, France, Germany, Japan and the US, signed a treaty where they agreed to outlaw war. The Kellogg–Briand pact, named after the American and French ministers behind the initiative was intended to deliver perpetual peace. It did not. Instead it has been standing as the high-water mark of the Idealist movement of the interwar years. There are apparent similarities to post-Cold War intellectual climate – the ceaseless summiteering, the disarmament efforts, the many treaties without enforcement mechanisms and the romantic ideas of the benign influence of mass public opinion on international politics and the most obvious one, the widely held belief that great-power conflict is a thing of the past – all echo a similar sense of opportunity to change the way international relations operate. When sorting through the remains of the period the EU security policy represents a particular challenge: will the plant that was sown under much milder conditions survive in the changed climate under multipolarity?

This study has traced the early days of the European Union as a power. It has shown that those who have condemned the EU's foreign policy as an empty vessel are wrong, just as those who had expected a great power to emerge have been disappointed. The Union's presence is often incoherent, yet it is nevertheless distinctly that of a small power. The main reason for this is that the member states have found it difficult to move from a general agreement that the EU should play a greater role in world affairs to actually agreeing on specific policies. While most member states like the idea of having the weight of 27 states when pursuing a national agenda, they balk at the thought of allowing their own national interest to be defined by 26 external parties. The EU is a multi-purpose, multidimensional, semi-supranational, semi-intergovernmental actor. It

has come into being because of its being compatible with other strategic identities. Its members such as Germany, France and Britain will continue to be nation states; small powers that inhabit the international system alongside the EU.

A sense of two-mindedness pervades EU foreign policy. The members broadly favour a greater role for the EU in regional and global politics, yet have proven surprisingly timid in terms of agreeing on common policies. This was especially the case when it seemed that European cooperation might clash with national interests. We have seen how EU decision-making is shaped by an amalgamation of history, geopolitics, capabilities and doctrine that precludes it from taking a seat among the great powers in a multipolar international system. The relationship between the great powers and the EU is essentially a mismatch, in political discourse and practice, in manners of communication and in respect of means and ends. This is part and parcel of the Union's status as a small power. The EU found it difficult to adjust to the rough and tumble of an international system in transition where bilateralism has gained in currency over multilateralism as power has over ideals.

Chapter 1 outlined the primary actors in the making of the European Union's foreign and security policies. Studying the workings of the decision-making processes from up close if anything re-emphasizes the impression of the unpredictable cluster patterns of European level politics. It is above all the unclear seniority within and among the post-Lisbon 'Troika' of new Council President, the consolidated High Representative and the empowered European parliament, that will give the CFSP/CSDP its distinctive flair. In addition comes the rotating EU Presidency and informal directorates, notably the 'EU-3' (Germany, France and Britain). In the short term, Lisbon will likely create as many problems as it resolves. It may take another decade to translate the changes into workable compromises. This will happen in close coordination with the kaleidoscopic relations among the member states and groupings among these. If there is one lesson to be drawn from the period 2003–2009 it is that the national interest is alive and well in Europe.

European Union's foreign policy from the time the CSDP was declared operational in 2003 to the Lisbon Treaty coming into force in 2010 could perhaps best be summarized under the heading 'consensus–expectations gap'. The limited ability of the Europeans to speak with a single voice in foreign-policy matters has become an established tradition. One should have no illusions about this: While member-state decision-makers do take the Union seriously in matters of trade and economy, they have

some way to go when it comes to recognizing the EU as their own manifestation on the international stage. Policies concerning the EU are frequently driven and shaped by discrete decisions pertaining to other foreign-policy principles, strategic ambitions, military doctrines and diplomatic initiatives. Adhockery and inconsistency come at a price as the EU tries to adapt the principles that served it well during the post-Cold-War years to the turbulence of the after the post-Cold-War period. The limited autonomy granted to the EU by its member states weakens the EU as a strategic actor by encouraging reactive policy-making. Despite the efforts of the Lisbon Treaty, EU foreign policy remains highly compartmentalized.

The EU's institutional structures are fully operational. This is illustrated by the previously discussed pre-and post-conflict missions, spanning from the Caucasus to Central Africa, from the Hindu Kush to Kosovo. Its military operations to date have all been limited operations in areas of little relevance for great power politics and where the chances of uncontrolled escalation have been, if not entirely absent, then remote. But rather than simply labelling the EU approach 'lowest common denominator', it would be more accurate to say that by choosing to sidestep the arduous task of defining and combining 27 national interests the EU has chosen to focus on certain shared ideals and elevated them into strategy. The increasing rate of operations indicates that EU power identity is getting more defined, if we accept David Vital's claim that the capacity to pursue a policy of its own devising is one indicator of the strategic strength of a small power.¹

Complaints of the lack of solidarity in the manner in which member-state governments treat the common foreign policy are all too often valid. The failure to act in Darfur, the inability to muster the resources necessary to match their foreign-policy ambitions and the strategic dependence the United States all tell a similar tale. European foreign relations have nevertheless become more intimate. The decision-makers interviewed have almost to a man expressed hopes that the EU would 'get its act together' to fill the regional power vacuum that is opening in Europe as America turns its attention elsewhere. It would also be wrong to conclude that the mixed outcomes of the missions examined in this study were a testimony to European weakness. One must not forget that the EU has engaged with some tasks that would probably otherwise have gone unaddressed, just as it has steered clear of other tasks that could easily have translated into costly adventures. These were the skills that have helped small powers to endure as great powers rise and fall.

What the new era will be called has yet to be agreed. Wordsmiths are jockeying to find a new term, another 'Cold War' to sum up the spirit of the age and the power relations among its main players. It now seems that unipolarity as a global political order was a transitional phase, one that by 2010 is eroding fast. Behind the news headlines we see the contours of something bigger, namely, that the Western project has lost some of its mobilizing potential. The transatlantic West has been zapped of the ideological power it enjoyed during the 1990s, owing, in part, to the resurgence of illiberal democracy and authoritarian capitalism. Efforts to spread Western values across the globe no longer go unopposed by the emerging powers. Policies of states that matter are guided by national interests, not by global community values as they were defined by Western elites during the 1990s.

Unipolarity helped provide conditions for a period of harmony and integration in Europe. The security and stability that came with American primacy allowed for the 1990s to be a period of idealistic politics. The post-Cold War optimism was embodied in the many international treaties that were signed aimed at regulating the international system and limiting the sovereignty of individual states and non-state actors to destabilize the system. This is now drawing to a close, and Europe finds that it failed to make sufficient progress when integration was easy. Rational and well-meaning ideas of peace and cooperation among states have yet again come under pressure by the chaos and insecurity in the international system. The Europe that enters the new era is one characterized by close ties internally but which has limited capacity for external action. The outstanding question is whether the EU structure built under American security guarantees will prove resilient in the turbulence of multipolarity.

The European Union's difficulties in adjusting to the events of the first decade of the 2000s were far from exceptional. Most actors struggled to find their feet, first in the Pax Americana that rose out of the rubble of the Soviet collapse and again when it became clear that the post-Cold-War period was an interlude, not an era: Just as it seemed that the post-Cold-War order had settled, the landscape changed yet again. The unipolar order is in the process of being replaced by a new multipolarity. The revised transatlantic bargain is still hazy but some traits are discernible. NATO remains the pivot in European security. The continued need to ensure military interoperability will be sufficient to ensure its survival, although its political role is set to diminish in the face of weaker American commitment. Whether this will translate into a more distinct EU presence is far from certain. America appears

to have lost faith. When US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton addressed L'Ecole Militaire in Paris on 'the Future of European Security' on 29 January 2010, she did so without once referring to the EU's military dimension.² A week later President Obama cancelled the biannual EU-US summit, citing the flimsiest of excuses. Power, like beauty, exists primarily in the eye of the beholder.

The European Union as a small power

So how does the EU strategic presence measure up to the characteristics of small-power strategic behaviour? Looking at the traits that characterize small-power behaviour in Chapter 1, all of the points resonate with the way the EU has conducted its foreign policy since 2003. Having been forged in the tension of intra-European sovereignty, interdependence and transatlantic reliance, the strategic behaviour of the EU is above all characterized by dependence. The EU's multilateralist mantra and pro-UN sentiments fit well with Robert Keohane's definition of a small power as an actor whose leaders consider that it cannot influence the international system on its own but that it may do so together with other actors. The EU is dependent on the US for strategic leadership, but is increasingly weary of getting entangled in American geopolitics. The EU has taken a defensive status quo orientation aimed at maintaining friendly relations with all great powers, avoiding balancing and bandwagoning against any of the established or emerging poles. As a strategic actor the EU is inclined towards cooperative damage-limitation strategies, as illustrated by the eagerness to limit strategic possibilities by self-imposed rules of restraint. This can, of course, also be seen as hedging vis-à-vis the United States the emerging great powers.

The EU shares the same predicament as a small power in that the amount of resources available for allocation is relatively small. If the test of a great power is the test of strength for war, then the EU surely is no great power. On the contrary, the Union displays the variable geometry characteristic of a small power. The EU is as economically strong as it is diplomatically and militarily weak. It has not been bestowed with a nuclear deterrent or a seat at the UN Security Council. The former great powers among its members have not handed over their great-power heirlooms to the joint venture. Had the Europeans been serious about making the EU into a great power then surely that would have been the place to start? The limited ability to project hard power, be it armed intervention, diplomatic action and economic pressure, predisposes the EU to a power identity that places

more value on inducement such as dialogue and commercial rewards. The Europeans frequently invoke moral and normative positions to justify policies and seek to reduce foreign-policy costs through multilateralism. The EUFOR operation in Chad illustrates this point: the EU handed over responsibility to the United Nations at the earliest time possible.

Were we to accept that the EU has developed behavioural patterns resembling those of a small power, the next question will have to be: What are the implications for the EU's presence in the international system? While the factors listed above certainly restrict the EU, this does not mean that the Union is powerless. The EU enlargements have shown that the Union has few qualms about imposing its values on small states and that it can mobilize its economic power to measurable strategic effect, but its clout beyond these states has been marginal. In its apparent lack of what Rudolf Kjellén called 'will to greater power', the Union is continuously furthering its common values, primarily internally but also externally, without the threat or use of force. The EU strategic approach is to mitigate instability on the European periphery by integrating small states and making them part of a greater whole. Europe absorbs problems and conflicts instead of directly confronting them. The EU as a power is most apparent when dealing bilaterally with small states in its vicinity.

Why has the EU developed the strategic presence of a small power? The obvious answer to this question lies in the way that EU foreign-policy decisions are made. It is perhaps to be expected that a Union based on equal membership that is made up of small powers and small states would be influenced by their strategic outlook. The ease with which four neutral states have joined the CFSP/CSDP is a testimony to the small-power nature of the EU. A second answer is revealed in the case of Germany. Europe's largest power is, for reasons of history, unwilling to make a separate bid for great-power status.³ Finally, there is what Robert Rothstein calls 'the temptations of appearing insignificant'.⁴ Europe's culture of strategic dependence predisposes it to let others expend blood and treasure in upholding the international system. The geopolitical setting with a lack of threats and US guarantees, the historical memories of the dangers of power politics, the capability-expectations gap and doctrinal idealism all help to explain why the EU falls short of the system-determining potential of a great power. The placement of states in a system accounts for a good deal of their behaviour.

The challenge for the EU is that the CFSP/CSDP has proclaimed itself to be much more than that. After all, the 2010 Headline Goal states:

‘The European Union is a global actor, ready to share in the responsibility for global security.’⁵ This is clearly misleading. The EU may dabble in issues on the international agenda, but cannot, in its present shape, purport to be an upholder of the international order. That cannot be achieved without embracing the great-power potential inherent in the 27-state bloc. One must not forget that Europe is declining in terms of global share of population and world economy. Behind the talk of globalization, Europe is slipping. In the medium term, Britain and France are likely to be relegated to the second-power division by the rise of new great powers such as China and India. The EU is the most realistic alternative for a European resurgence. Seen collectively, Europe has the tools – the capabilities, the technology, the finances and population – of a great power, but lacks the consensus to go down that path. In this situation the obvious alternative would be for the EU to play the hand it has got in the most effective manner possible.

In one of his acerbic reflections during the early 1870s, Otto von Bismarck suggested that there is no such thing as Europe, ‘Wer von Europa spricht, hat unrecht’ – whoever speaks of Europe, is wrong.⁶ A united Europe may not have come to pass, but the continent is not as disunited as Bismarck had predicted. It is also less powerful than the European federation envisioned by Winston Churchill, yet a mere ten years ago, at the height of the post-Cold War interlude, it actually looked a rather successful mid-level player in international affairs. At present, however, it looks beleaguered: an inconsistent small power. It would be tempting to blame European leaders for lack of vision, or perhaps a European polity slowly dissolving into its various national and regional components. But that would miss a more interesting point made by Paul Kennedy, namely that almost all medium powers are having a problem figuring out who they are, what their priorities should be and how to move on.⁷

Europe’s masterly inactivity

The rise of the EU as a small power has deep sources that have little to do with any widely shared ambition or indeed any fundamental sense of shared purpose. It is the result of counteracting checks and balances. It has been driven by the decline of the unipolar order. The CFSP/CSDP nexus has failed to live up to its potential. One, seldom discussed reason is that European security is over-institutionalized. There are too many agencies that all compete for the same scarce policy resources. The OSCE, WEU and NATO eat into the *raison d’être* of EU security policy. For this

reason even small-power status may be more than the Europeans are able to sustain as each of the members feels the gravitational pulls of the new poles of the system. It would appear that the EU is falling into the classic trap of a small power by over-estimating the possible gains of a systemic shift and failing to prepare for the increased importance of hard power. This does not mean that the EU will necessarily be an ineffective player under multipolarity. Chances are that the Union will endure, even if its political wing remains weak. The European partners share the same basic interests and belief systems – easily overlooked, to be sure, until confronted with powers that do not share them.

The EU will most likely continue to play an important role in European affairs. What this work has shown is that the EU's failure to optimize its international influence is directly linked to the way decisions are made. The events examined do not show that the Union has been unable to formulate policies or that its strategies have been untenable; only that when member states had other priorities, the obstructionist position tended to prevail. The EU's *modus operandi* of latent rather than willed ambiguity has served to lessen its ability to shape outcomes. Naturally, one cannot draw a line through a series of dots over a seven-year period and project it into the future. After all, the experiences in Afghanistan and other places might have made many Europeans question the wisdom of facing multipolarity handcuffed to the United States. Such concerns are clearly present, as reflected in the 2008 Report on the Implementation of the ESS and in hedging behaviour.

In terms of delivering an actual basis for EU security policy, the first decade of the 2000 has represented a trek back to *status quo ante*. The scales have tipped in favour of those who see EU security policy as primarily a tool to deepen European integration. The scattered peacekeepers and the somewhat naïve belief in multilateralism in times of crisis are clearly not designed to strike fear in the hearts of revisionist powers. The EU's response to multipolarity so far could perhaps be dubbed 'masterly inactivity', in the sense that the EU seeks the moral high ground, aloof from power politics. The term is borrowed from a British policy of the mid-1800s where time to describe a 'wait and see' attitude by leaders in response to political incidents, or 'trusting to the helping influences of time'. Masterly inactivity indicates a capable non-involvement attitude. The EU is clearly able to do more in international affairs, its members are just not able to agree to do so in the present context. The masterly inactivity of the EU is closely coupled with the prevalence of the inter-polarity perspective in Europe. It is widely assumed that

the international system will remain pacific and cooperative and that there is therefore scant need to seek out allies or to obstruct the path of challengers.

In a recent 'power audit' of US–EU relations Jeremy Shapiro and Nick Witney argue that the relationship gives the EU a 'sense of power without the weight of responsibility'. They argue that the EU is no longer dependent on American protection, and that the geopolitical interests of the transatlantic partners are no longer the same.⁸ The US has understood this, and is working to replace its briefly held global dominance with a network of bilateralisms aimed ensuring that it holds on to its primacy even if the underlying power base may have been weakened. The ECFR report argues that the culture of subordination is not serving the EU well. Instead the authors advocate a go-it-alone strategy in a loose alliance with the US. This is unlikely. The Europeans will not sever the ties to the United States, because they are not, in the words of William Butler Yeats, 'fighting mad' and see little need to unsettle a broadly favourable status quo. While certainly no one wishes for 'war in our time' in Europe it would be a sin of omission to point out that a clear and present danger would force the members to make the choices that voluntary internationalism allows them to avoid.

Although the most extreme rupture scenarios have proven wrong – as they often do – it would be equally risky to assume unaffected continuity. Indeed, here lies a potential of convergence in the confederalist and federalist perspectives – it is obvious that the achievement of a greater role for Europe in international affairs will require the support of member states, and it is also likely that the voices calling for the EU to engage with the emerging powers collectively as a bloc will grow in intensity. Not least since traditional bilateralism vis-a-vis the United States has proved to be a recipe for marginalization. The price paid by the leaders of Europe with their domestic electorates over the war in Afghanistan will make European leaders think twice before going to war again in far-away lands at the request of the United States. There can be little question that the CFSP is needed – and that it works best when it is firmly supported by the member states. Member-state support for European security policies will be essential as the EU seeks to navigate multipolarity. It is hard to predict what will happen when Europe wakes up to the fact that the post-Cold War interlude is over, and with it the careless years when matters of vital interest were far and few between and international relations was primarily an arena for idealism. Whether a new element of scarcity in international affairs will harden the EU's foreign-policy presence, or whether it will weaken it remains to be seen.

The EU as a small power was plain to see at the December 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, where the US negotiated bilaterally with Brazil, China, Russia, India and South Africa. The EU was left on the corridor alongside the other small powers. It had to sign up to what the great powers were able to agree. Although it is somewhat disheartening to discover that the pooled power of 27 states amounts to that of a small power, this does not mean that the EU is stuck with a small-power strategic presence. It is fair to assume that, owing to its high visibility, the CFSP will be closely linked to the overall popular support for European integration in the future. Even with a scaled-down level of ambition, the EU will have to continue to respond to an international agenda that it does not control. The consensus-expectations gap is set to continue preventing the EU from engaging in great-power politics. The implication of this approach was summed up by Raymond Aron in 1976: 'Yesterday, Europe only just avoided perishing from imperial follies and frenzied ideologies, she could perish tomorrow through historical abdication.'⁹

The member states may get used to playing the collective role of a small power, but will the dynamics of a multipolar system allow it to remain so? The last word has not been spoken on this question. A Union in search of legitimacy on the one hand and more perilous international system on the other could, in the future, prove a potent match. It is thus too early to judge whether the shift to multipolarity will damage or bring new impetus to the EU security dimension. There is no direct link between our intentions and the outcomes that our actions produce. The law of unintended consequences is often harsh towards those who favour hard power. Perhaps the EU's small-power presence should be lauded and not lamented. Considering the high stakes of great-power politics, a small-power identity may insulate the EU against costly foreign-policy adventures.

It is customary for academicians to express hope that their research can be used to improve policy. This author harbours no such ambition. The search for conclusions meant deliver a certain future by claiming that it has already come to pass has done much to undermine International Relations as an academic discipline, which is properly conducted, not as a practical activity but as an intellectual one. History is not driven by academic tracts. International relations are ruled by bleaker, more limited reality than that of domestic affairs. The current international climate display three critical factors that could, if unchecked, pose a threat to international stability: the existence of powerful and resentful states

situated on the margins of the international order; an intense and sustained disruption to the workings of the global economy; and finally, apparent reluctance on behalf of the emerging powers to pick up the slack left by a weakened US as upholders of the international order. On this score the EU as much at fault as China or Russia. It is in a state of imbalance that the EU has embarked on its own path to multipolarity. It has the interests of a great power but the mentality and capacity of a small power. Europe's security obligations are disproportional to its ability to live up to them. A worrisome gap to be sure. The EU already feels the pulls from forces beyond its control – identity, history, capability, geopolitics and values – the undertows of passion and interests that lurk just beneath the surface of civilization. Perhaps poetry rather than academic parlance is a better way to capture this vortex. We started this inquest with a line from William Butler Yeats, and it would perhaps be fitting to sign off with a final presage from the same poet:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre;
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.¹⁰

Notes

Introduction and basic arguments

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2. Emerson, M. (1998). *Redrawing the Map of Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, p. 5.
3. Personal communication with senior British diplomat to the EU in Brussels, 17 January 2008.
4. The choice of 2003 as the year the post-Cold War came to an end is by no means cast in stone. Alternatives could have been 2001 (11 September) or 2007, the year that public opinion turned against the war in Afghanistan.
5. Rose, G. (1998). Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy. *World Politics*, 51, 144–172.
6. Lobell, S. E., Ripsman, N. M. & Taliaferro, J. W. (2009). *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
7. See Cooper, R. (1996). *The Postmodern State and the World Order*. London: Demos, p. 47.
8. Haas, E. (1958). *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social and Economic Forces 1950–57*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, p. 490.
9. For a guide to the key literature, see Bulmer 2007.
10. As cited in Goetz, K. H. & Hix, S. (Eds). (2001). *Europeanised Politics: European Integration and National Political Systems*. London: Frank Cass.
11. For more see Giorgi, L., Homeyer, I. v. & Parsons, W. (2006). *Democracy in the European Union Towards the Emergence of a Public Sphere*. Routledge Advances in European Politics, 39. London: Routledge.
12. For instance, Greece and Turkey's lapses into dictatorship had few consequences for their memberships in NATO during the Cold War.
13. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.
14. See The Process of Integration among States. In K. W. Deutsch (1957). *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
15. Buzan, B. (Ed.) (1991). *Peoples, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations*. Hemel Hempstead, England: Harvester Wheatsheaf Books, p. 190; Wæver, O., Buzan, B., Morten, K. & Lemaître, P. (1993). *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*. London: Pinter, p. 9. The final chapter returns to this topic.
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18. As discussed in Chapter 6.

19. See Tilly, R. H., Welfens, P. J. J. & Heise, M. (2007). *50 Years of EU Economic Dynamics: Integration, Financial Markets, and Innovations*. Berlin: Springer.
20. Wade, R. H. (2009). US Undermines Multilateral Governance to Its Cost. *Financial Times*, 10 December.
21. More on this in Chapter 4.
22. Manners, I. (2002). Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms? *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40, 235–258.
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24. Laïdi, Z. (2008). *EU Foreign Policy in a Globalized World: Normative Power and Social Preferences*. Routledge/GARNET series, 1. London: Routledge.
25. Dûchene, F. (1973) Die Rolle Europas im Weltsystem: von regionalen zur planetarischen interdependenz. In Kohnstamm, M. & Hager, W. (eds), *Zivilmacht Europe: Supermacht oder Partner*. Frankfurt: 19–26.
26. Smith, K. E. (2004). *The Making of EU Foreign Policy*. London, Palgrave, 10–11.
27. Dyson, K. H. F. (2006). *Enlarging the Euro area: External Empowerment and Domestic Transformation in East Central Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
28. Solana, J. (2005, November). Speech at Pembroke College, Cambridge, England; Speech given at the meeting of EU Ambassadors in Brussels 22 September 2003.
29. Collier, P. (2007). *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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32. Winand, P. (1993). *Eisenhower, Kennedy and the United States of Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
33. For an assessment of the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, see Allen, D. & Smith, M. (1990). Western Europe's Presence in the Contemporary International Arena. *Review of International Affairs*, 16 (1), 19–37; Bretherton, C. & Vogler, J. (2006). *The European Union as a Global Actor*. London: Routledge, pp. 16–79; Eliassen, K. (Ed.) (1998). *Foreign and Security Policy in the European Union*. London: Sage; Ginsberg, R. H. (1999). Conceptualising the European Union as an International Actor: Narrowing the Theoretical Capability–Expectations Gap. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 37, 429–454; Hill, C. (1993). The Capability–Expectations Gap, or Conceptualising Europe's International Role. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31 (3), 305–328; Peterson, J. & Sjursen, H. (Eds) (1998). *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe? Competing Visions of the CFSP*. London: Routledge; Piening, C. (1997). *Global Europe: The EU in World Affairs*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner; and Rummel, R. (Ed.) (1990). *The Evolution of an International Actor: Western Europe's New Assertiveness*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. 31–55.
34. For more on bureaucratic politics, see Allison, G. T. (1971). *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Boston: Little, Brown.
35. Toje, A. (2008a). *America, the EU and Strategic Culture: Renegotiating the Transatlantic Bargain*. Contemporary Security Studies. London: Routledge.

1 The anatomy of EU security

1. Deighton, A. (2000). 'Militarising the European Union' Research Notes No. 15, Centre d'études des politique étrangères et de sécurité (CÉPÉS).
2. Solana, J. (2003, November). Speech given at the meeting of EU Ambassadors in Brussels, 22 November 2003.
3. The 'test of strength for war' argument (Taylor, A. J. P. 1971. *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848–1918*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, p. xxiv) is a variation on the neorealist view of security as the master variable, since security is the interest that guarantees all other.
4. WEU Petersberg Declaration, Bonn, 19 June 1992, Para. II-4
5. A complete list of CSDP missions is available at 222.fornet.info/CFSPforum.html
6. Smith, M. E. (2004). *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, pp. 22–42.
7. European Council (1992). Treaty on European Union (TEU), SN 100/92, Maastricht European Council, Official Journal, C325, 1 November. Retrieved 21 September 2008 from http://europa.eu/eur-lex/en/treaties/dat/EU_treaty.html. The European Economic Community (EEC), created by the 1957 Treaty of Rome, was transformed into the European Community by the 1986 Single European Act. Later, the EC became 'Pillar I' of the three-pillar European Union established by the 1992 Maastricht Treaty on European Union; the other two pillars were the CFSP and Justice and Home Affairs. The ambiguity that would become emblematic of the CFSP was apparent from the outset, when the CFSP section to the TEU (EU 1992) was not included in l'acquis but, at the same time, a reference to it was worked into the Preamble (Article II) of the treaty. This is further underlined by the EU, as such, not possessing a legal personality, which means that third-country ambassadors dealing with the EU are formally accredited to the EC.
8. It should be noted that under the EPC, the term 'troika' referred to an arrangement whereby the foreign ministers of the past, present and future presidencies cooperated to ensure procedural and substantive consistency.
9. As discussed in Chapter 3.
10. See Wallace H., Wallace W. & Pollack, M. (2005). *Policy-Making in the European Union*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, chapters 1–3.
11. Smith, M. (1996). The European Union and a Changing Europe: Establishing the Boundaries of Order. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 43 (1), 8–9; Moravcsik, A. (2003). Striking a New Transatlantic Bargain. *Foreign Affairs*, 82 (3), 74–89.
12. Personal communication with an EU diplomat at the Justus Lipsius building in Brussels, 15 January 2008.
13. Nuttall, S. J. (2000). *European Foreign Policy*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press; p. 272.
14. As examined in greater detail in Chapter 5.
15. Wolf, D. K. (1999). The New Raison d'État as a Problem for Democracy in World Society. *European Journal of International Relations*, 5 (3), 333–363; Koenig-Archibugi, M. (2004). International Governance as New Raison d'État? The Case of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy. *European Journal of International Relations*, 10, 147–188. More on this question in Chapters 4 and 7.

15. See European Council (2001, December 14–15). Laeken Declaration on the Future of the Union. Retrieved 5 April 2008 from <http://european-convention.eu.int/pdf/LKNEN.pdf>
16. Article 1, 24 of the Lisbon Treaty, inserting new Articles 10A and 10B TEU.
17. Article 1, 25 of the Lisbon Treaty.
18. Title V. Article 1, 23 of the Lisbon Treaty.
19. Article 1, 27 of the Lisbon Treaty, amending Article 11 TEU.
20. The principles and objectives for EU's external action which would be inserted into the TEU under the Lisbon Treaty (Under Article 1, 24) are the same as those already contained separately in the existing TEU and TEC.
21. Article 2, 36 of the Lisbon Treaty, amending Article 20 TEC/TFEU.
22. Article 1, 35 of the Lisbon Treaty, amending Article 16 TEU.
23. Article 1, 35 of the Lisbon Treaty, amending Article 16 TEU.
24. Article 28a, paragraph 7 of the Lisbon Treaty.
25. Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed at Lisbon, 13 December 2007.
26. Missiroli, A. (2008). The Impact of the Lisbon Treaty on ESDP, Briefing paper for the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Security and Defence.
27. *The Guardian*, London, 26th November 1998.
28. Article I-7 of the of the Lisbon Treaty. The new provision does not by itself make the Union's legal capacity the same as that of a state. Under the Lisbon Treaty, it will remain the case that the EU will be able to conclude international agreements only within the scope of the powers conferred on it by the member states. See Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty (2008), The Stationery Office/Tso, pp. 30–32, concerning the legal personality of the European Union.
29. Under Articles 24 and 38 of the TEU.
30. European Council (1997). Treaty of Amsterdam, SN 150/97. Amsterdam European Council. Retrieved 13 April 2009 from www.eurotreaties.com/amsterdamtreaty.pdf. Chapter V, Article 5a TEC, states 'if a member of the Council declares that, for important and stated reasons of national policy, it intends to oppose the granting of an authorization by qualified majority, a vote shall not be taken'.
31. Article III-293.
32. See Lisbon Treaty Article 2, 167 and 168.
33. Europas Selbstverzweigung schockt die USA. Source: *Welt Online* am 21 November 2009.
34. Personal communication, senior Commission foreign affairs official, Brussels, 22 November 2009. Novel by Albert Cohen.
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36. Russell, B. (1946). *Power: A New Social Analysis*. London: Allen & Unwin, p. 35. Gelb (2009), p. 7.
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41. Carr, E. H. (2001). *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (Introduction by Michael Cox). Basingstoke, London: Palgrave.
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- Mansfield, E. D. (1993). Concentration, Polarity, and the Distribution of Power, *International Studies Quarterly*, 37 (1), 105.
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44. Vital, D. (1967). *The Inequality of States: A Study of Small Power in International Relations*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, p. 3.
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47. Nagel, J. H. (1975). *The Descriptive Analysis of Power*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, p. 29.
48. Hill, C. (1993). The Capability–Expectations Gap, or Conceptualising Europe's International Role. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31 (3).
49. Barnett, M. & Duvall, R. (2005), Power in international politics 39–76.
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51. Wolfke, K. (1961). Great and Small Powers in International Law from 1814 to 1920: From the pre-history of the United Nations. *Prace Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego*, nr. 72, p. 5. Nederst i skjemaet.
52. Organski, A. F. K. (1958). *World Politics*. New York: Knopf, p. 93.
53. [Author's italics], Rothstein, R. L. (1968). *Alliances and Small Powers*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 15. Rothstein qualifies his work as applying 'only to Small Powers which are within an area of Great Power confrontation or which fear that that confrontation will affect their interests significantly' (p. 8).
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58. Rothstein, R. L. (1968). *Alliances and Small Powers*, p. 21.
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84. Vital, D. (1967). *The Inequality of States*, p. 4.
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and Security in Modern Europe. PhD Thesis, Princeton University, 1991; Ingebritsen, C. (2006). *Small States in International Relations. New Directions in Scandinavian Studies*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

2 The European Union as a historical phenomenon

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5. Schmitt, C. (1996). *Roman Catholicism and Political Form* (G. L. Ulmen, Trans.). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press (original work published 1923).
6. Notably, Gratian's *Concordance of Differing Canons*, first published in 1140, which prohibited the use of crossbows as well as bows and arrows in intra-Christian warfare (29th Canon). The *bellum iustum* (Latin, 'just war') concept was coined by St Augustine in his treatise *The City of God*, from the year 412.
7. Pagden, A. (2002). Europe: Conceptualising a Continent. In A. Pagden (ed.), *The Idea Of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
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9. Duroselle, J.-B. (1957). Europe as a Historical Concept. In G. Haines (ed.), *European Integration*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, p. 13.
10. Sully de Béthune, M. (1831). *The Memoirs of the Duke of Sully: Prime Minister to Henry the Great* (Charlotte Lennox, ed.). Philadelphia: E. Gerard & J. Maxwell, pp. 150–160 (original work published 1638). This is often cited as one of the first grand plans and the predecessor of the European Union.
11. Hay, D. (1968). *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea*, p. 111.
12. Fritzemeyer, W. (1931) *Christenheit und Europa*, pp 1–17.
13. Bodin, J. (1992). *On Sovereignty*. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, pp. 208–209. The concept is known from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans (chap. 13) as well as from the works of St Augustine, Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes.
14. In Jean Bodin's sense, sovereignty impacts both the internal affairs of the state (such as its exercise of full political power) as well as its external affairs (such as its conduct of war and international relations).

15. The treaties of Tordesillas (1494) and Augsburg (1555) clearly also deserve mention in this context.
16. Treaty of Münster, Article 17, Sections 4–6, and Treaty of Osnabrück, Sections 4–6.
17. Leopold von Ranke goes so far as to compare the Treaty of Westphalia to the constitution (Grundgesetz) of a general European republic, of which all signatories were a part.
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4 The European Security Strategy revisited

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16. Personal communication, Justus Lipsius building, Brussels, 7 June 2009.
17. The ESS is then apparently meant to operate in a manner similar to the EU treaties that each comes in addition to the previous treaties.
18. The report was the result of a series of workshops arranged by the European Union Institute of Security Studies (EU-ISS) hosted in several European countries over the year 2008.
19. Author's interviews with senior national and EU officials, London, Paris, Berlin and Brussels, May–Dec. 2008. It would therefore appear that the ESS has suffered the same fate as the EU 'common strategies' which after some initial progress regarding Russia (1999/414/CFSP), the Ukraine (1999/887/CFSP) and the Mediterranean region (2000/458/CFSP) was shelved due to the many conflicts spurred by the drafting process.

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28. Interview adviser to HR-CFSP, Javier Solana, Paris, 27 May 2009.
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33. Ibid. Javier Solana (2003). ESS, p. 9.
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44. Javier Solana (2003). ESS, p. 14.
45. Javier Solana (2003). ESS, pp. 5–6.
46. European Council (2008). RI-ESS, p. 18 and Javier Solana (2003). ESS, p. 6. Note: The ESS sees terrorism as a challenge to be addressed primarily by police and justice rather than the military measures.

47. The new list of priorities resembles the key external security issues identified in the Global Europe agenda, set out by the British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary in October 2007 apparently continuing Britain's central role in EU strategy formulation.
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6 A question of political will

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7 The making of a small power

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