

CFSP WATCH 2004 – Poland by Dr. Rafal Trzaskowski and Olaf Osica

1. What are the priorities for your government in CFSP in 2004? What are the key issues for your country in 2004 (after EU enlargement, after the Iraq conflict)?

The most important priorities of Poland's foreign policy, as established at the beginning of 2004, were as follows: successful conclusion of the EU accession process, strengthening of transatlantic cooperation, continuing the positive engagement in the stabilisation process in Iraq. When it comes to CFSP, the government declared that it would above all focus on: taking active part in the creation of a robust Eastern Policy of the EU and active participation in developing European Security and Defence Policy and EU crisis reaction capabilities. Poland has also set for itself other CFSP policy goals, which among others included: active participation in fighting terrorism, assisting in the process of stabilisations in the Balkans and strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue.¹

2. National Perceptions and Positions with regard to CFSP/ESDP Issues in 2004

Please describe key positions and perceptions in your country with regard to EU foreign policy, taking into account:

- The perceived success and/or failure of CFSP/ESDP (e.g. taking into account current developments like the Iraq conflict);

Neither CFSP nor CESDP has ever enjoyed the respect of Polish public opinion and the political elite. Before the admission to EU, Poland's successive governments saw no particular benefits of EU common positions and actions in relation to Polish eastern neighbourhood (i.e. Belarus, Ukraine, Kaliningrad-Russia). The source of CFSP impotence was seen in the intra-European competition among main members who tended to set their national interests over Community ones (e.g. policy towards Russia) or attempted to hijack EU foreign policy for the sake of their own policies (e.g. Iraq). However, this approach has undergone a somewhat positive evolution. The role played by the European Parliament, the Commission and High-Representative along with Polish politicians in solving the presidential crisis in Ukraine was met with satisfaction, and gave a confidence boost to CFSP.

CESDP in turn for long time – since 1999 – has been regarded as a competitor of NATO and especially of the US. That was the final conclusion drawn from the Iraqi crisis. Yet, paradoxically enough, Polish military engagement in Iraq was a breaking point to the approach to CESDP. Poland regards itself as military capable of participating in CESDP, and has political ambitions to act as one of European leaders in the field.²

- The position of your country towards NATO after enlargement (in relationship with the ESDP), as well as NATO's role in Afghanistan and in Iraq;

With the day of its accession to NATO Poland began actively support the next round of NATO enlargement. Yet, when the '911' brought a profound change in the US approach to NATO and its expansion, Poland was somewhat bewildered. It became clear that the rush to accept new members had little to do with their real military eligibility but more with the US's political strategy. The quiet consent of Russia was another sign that NATO had entered a new phase.⁷⁵

especially in its approach to NATO yielded a delicate but discernible shift in Polish security policy. That seemed to be the moment when the approach to CESDP began to evolve positively.

Poland endorsed the invocation of article 5 of NATO in response to '911' and backed the US operation in Afghanistan. However, as majority of members it felt being neglected by the fact that the US circumvented the alliance while conducting the mission in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the government approved deployment of 300 troops for the stabilization mission in Afghanistan under the aegis of NATO. Poland has also been in favour of NATO engagement to Iraq. (As a matter of fact, the Polish-led multinational division in Iraq got logistical support from NATO HQ). The government has from the beginning argued that NATO should engage there, if not by deploying troops then in training Iraqi security forces. Concluding, it seems that NATO evolution since the '911' has had a significant influence upon Poland's perception of CESDP which appears now as a much more balanced than in the years 1999-2001.

- The role of the EU in crisis management e.g. in Europe and Africa

As the Ukrainian crisis very clearly showed, Poland is interested in a preventive political role of EU in places where potential conflicts may threaten Europe's security. Poland also supported the peace-keeping role of EU on the Balkans. Africa is also regarded as an area of European crisis management, but it seems to be beyond the scope of Polish foreign and security policy now, which is not to say that this will remain so in the future.

- The perceived impact of EU enlargement on CFSP/ESDP (old versus new Europe?)

It is fair to say that EU enlargement was seen essential for both CFSP and CESDP to become politically more relevant to Europe's security. There was a fear that if developed before enlargement, both projects might provoke a strategic split of Europe. In this sense, the Rumsfeld-speech evoked rather negative feelings as it sounded like a self-fulfilling prophecy. Though Poland was aware of the existing perception-gap between old and new EU members on such issues like Russia, Ukraine, Caucasus, it tried to play it down, rather than stress it and risk creating new tensions. In a nutshell, despite the increase of the EU membership which may complicate the functioning of CFSP and CESDP, Poland regards enlargement as a new political impetus to both projects.

- The view of the European Security Strategy (ESS) as a instrument for enhancing coherence in the EU's security policy; how does your country view the ESS and which issues are of particular importance?

The reception of ESS in Poland was very limited. The announcement of the draft version of the document and the subsequent discussion on it overlapped with the climax of the debate on the EU Constitution, which dominated Polish media and public attention shifting all other issues – with the exception of war in Iraq – into the background.

In general, ESS was welcomed with satisfaction. The new Polish Strategy on National Security, from 8 September 2003³, corresponds in many regards with ESS. There is no doubt, however, that Poland's attitude depends on what EU will do on the basis of ESS, rather than on what

At the beginning of the IGC, the government decided to change the tone somewhat and stress its positive attitude towards the extension of QMV, in a certain sense to counterbalance its tough stance on the system of weighted votes. The foreign minister – Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz¹¹ stressed in his text in the one of the leading Polish dailies “Rzeczpospolita” that Poland always was for the extension of QMV, as unanimity in many instances became a factor hampering the deepening of integration.¹² However, in the course of actual negotiations which followed Poland again exhibited a much more lukewarm attitude on the issue. It was due both to tactical calculation and conviction. Poland sided with the British on the issue of structural cooperation and QMV extension in exchange for the neutral British stance on the issue of weighted votes (Poland along with Spain was defending the Nice formula, whereas Germany and France were pushing for the acceptance of a double-weighting system). On the other hand, the government was well aware that agreeing to QMV extension in the realm of CFSP would have important internal repercussions - provoking the wrath of the opposition (with an exception of Civic Platform). Especially taking into account the fact that the defence of unanimity became a pet-project of many Polish Eurosceptics, some of whom claimed, even before the 2000 IGC, that the EU system relies too heavily on QMV, and that there is an urgent need for reconsideration of the *status quo*.

- Crisis management: What is the official position on expanding the Petersberg tasks and making reference to tasks that involve military resources? Which regions does your country consider as particularly promising for EU crisis management (e.g. Africa, Southern Caucasus)?,.3866

Poland is a very NATO oriented country and as such it has never supported the creation of a fully-fledged operational EU headquarters which it saw as a competition to NATO. Poland is ready to support the strengthening of all aspects of CEDP as long as it does not threaten or endanger the cohesiveness of NATO. The government is of the opinion that the Berlin Plus format is sufficient. Creating operational EU headquarters in Tervuren at this stage of the Union's policy development was seen as unnecessary duplication of NATO assets. Especially, that the issue of an operational EUHQ came up within the context of the 'chocolate summit' and against the backdrop of mounting tensions over Iraq. It was therefore seen as an ill-timed idea which could only add more fuel to the flames. Officially, however, for tactical reasons, Poland's government did not take a very clear-cut position on the issue. Poland's European affairs minister Danuta Hübner remarks testify to that calculated caution: "There is a clear need for harmonisation of efforts in the field of military capabilities undertaken by NATO and the EU. In this context, certainly more debate on the creation of a separate EU military headquarters is needed. Much remains to be done to fully implement the 'Berlin plus' agreement, which provides for EU access to NATO operational planning".

- What is the official position of your country on the new provisions for permanent structured cooperation, the final wording of the mutual defence clause, and the role and tasks of the defence agency? Should the agency become the institutional nucleus for European procurement and a single budget for defence?

During the works of Convention and the last IGC Poland accepted the idea of including a solidarity clause into the new Treaty. In the view of the Poland's government, such clause could be made operational in case of a terrorist attack, nevertheless its application would have to be limited to dealing with the effects of a given attack on the territory of a member state.¹⁴ Just like most of the other new member states, the Polish attitude towards the concept of flexible integration from the outset has been characterised by certain ambivalence. Consistently, Poland had serious reservations about the idea of closer cooperation within ESDP (referring to common defence clause). when it first appeared on the Convention's agenda. In the words of the foreign minister: 'Finding the security of all member states indivisible, Poland has serious reservations about the idea of closer co-operation in ESDP'.¹⁵ There were fears that closer co-operation in the field of defence would undermine the common defence provisions of the Washington treaty (art. 4 and 5), which for Poland would be unacceptable. Poland always feared also that if the Union's ambitions in security and defence policy were to be realized, it could be left out of it, either from political reasons or because of its rather dubious military potential. Therefore the Polish government was always against setting strict 'convergence criteria'. Structural cooperation, in its initial form, was seen in Warsaw not only as a possible tool for exclusion but also an initiative which could threaten NATO – i.e. make it irrelevant in the field of 'out-of-area operations' in Europe - and as such was assessed with a great degree of suspicion. Poland's stance on the issue changed only after an agreement was reached by the major players - France, Germany and Great Britain - just before the Naples meeting of foreign ministers in November 2003. Only after her Majesty's government took care of the controversial aspects of the whole concept, Poland chose to support the inclusion of the newly worded provision concerning structural cooperation into the Treaty. It was possible largely because in the course of the negotiations among the three the language of structural cooperation was made more inclusive and, most importantly, the draft protocol enumerating conditions which had to be met (new version of which did not preclude the participation of less technologically developed countries in the structural cooperation) was considerably watered down. In the end, Warsaw also accepted the idea of setting up the European Armaments Agency, when it became crystal clear that the participation in its work was to be open-ended. Again to quote the words of the foreign minister: 'Poland will join in all undertakings and forms of cooperation that will not weaken the North Atlantic Alliance

¹⁴ Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, *Future of the CFSP*, (2003) op.cit.

¹⁵ Ibid.

