

CFSP Watch 2004 – United Kingdom – by Tim Oliver

- 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)?**

In early 2004 the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office published 'UK International Priorities: A Strategy for the FCO' (available through the FCO website), a document which set out the UK's foreign policy priorities. The strategic policy priorities are: A world safer from global terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction; Protection of the UK from illegal immigration, drug trafficking and other international crime;

Yvonne Fletcher (outside the Libyan Embassy in London) remains a potential source of contention.

EU on. HMG has been keen to work with the EU and other or8.5559.8ITMfo work with

welcomed by HMG as a means of addressing interoperability, deployability and sustainability. HMG sees an important role in this for the new European Defence Agency. HMG has repeatedly been keen to ensure that the EU improves its planning links with NATO.

The UK is comfortable with NATO's involvement in Afghanistan and would welcome further Nato involvement in Iraq. Indeed, the UK was keen to meet the request from Iraqi Prime Minister Allawi for assistance in training the Iraqi security forces. Problems regarding the deployment of troops from some Nato members has raised concerns that this may undermine the unity of Nato's integrated military command.

For further comment on UK views of the relationship between NATO and ESDP please see the section below detailing Permanent structured cooperation, the proposed mutual defence clause and the civilian-military cell at EUMS.

On crisis management there is general agreement that the EU and the UK were taught painful lessons in the Balkans from ambitious but meaningless declarations, reliance upon an ambivalent US, ineffective capabilities or use of 'soft power', a lack of leadership thanks to squabbles and internal EU jockeying. The EU is now seen to be making up for lost ground. The UK accepts and pursues a leading role in crisis management. HMG knows that it has armed forces with significant experience/capabilities to deploy. However, the desire for an independent capacity to act comes into play. If necessary the UK will go it alone in crisis management independent of both the EU and UN, e.g. Sierra Leone. Britain has also continually stressed the opportunities NATO offers the EU in terms of crisis management, sighting the Macedonia operation as a good example because it was only possible with NATO assets. The UK is not uneasy with the idea of EU operations in areas beyond the immediate neighborhood of Europe, such as the current operations in the Congo or discussion of committing troops to

than conflict management and resolution, and has since the St Malo declaration of 1998 accepted that the EU requires a mixture of foreign policy instruments including defence and intelligence. In doing so the UK has been keen to ensure that the EU can field more than diplomacy and economic instruments and can play power politics when needed. There has been some limited discussion about the European Security Strategy amongst the UK foreign policy community. However the document generated little or no interest among UK politicians, the media or the public. HMG preferred the document to pass without comment given the sensitivities to European defence issues in both the media and Parliament.

3. The Results of the Intergovernmental Conference 2003/2004 on the Constitutional Treaty

Most documents and speeches relating to the British approach to the European constitutional Convention and IGC can be found on website of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (www.fco.gov.uk) The UK did not offer any specific documents or detailed proposals with regard to external relations, CFSP or ESDP. The UK is in favour of the position of a **European Foreign Minister**, and the President of the European Council. The UK is keen to ensure that the EU G35solutie249-17.185

European Convention HMG did state that it would consider extension of QMV on a case by case basis stressing that any future decision to move to QMV would have to be made by unanimous agreement in the Council.

The UK is not in favour of the idea of using **QMV on issues put forward by the EU Foreign Minister**. HMG accepts the need for QMV in some areas of implementation if necessary, as set out under Maastricht (unanimity for foreign policy but some QMV for implementation).

The UK is in favour of expanding the **Petersberg Tasks**. HMG is very happy to see tasks that involve military resources. Having led a large number of operations the UK appreciates the lack of European military capabilities and the need for it to wield both hard and soft power instruments. HMG would like to see the EU move beyond dealing with the long run problems of crisis management and instead tackle immediate problems, which will require more immediate and effective military instruments. There is a strong desire to go beyond merely 'monitoring the situation'. In achieving this aid and devel

Americans and fail to achieve greater coherence among European forces. HMG feared it would be used to create an avant-garde group of Member States that would be incompatible with the overall workings of the EU. However, HMG's position changed following the Franco-British-German trilateral talks in November 2003. At this meeting HMG seemed to ease its opposition to the proposals, and accepted the idea of a specifically European military headquarters, provided this was integrated with the NATO framework. This approach was confirmed at a meeting on 24 November in London between Prime Minister Blair and French President Jacques Chirac, when the British Prime Minister emphasised that, despite his desire to strengthen European defence, nevertheless 'NATO will remain the cornerstone of our defence'. This change was in part a result of recognition by all that ESDP would need to be built from the bottom up through the development of specialist contributions from EU members. HMG secured assurances that became part of the package, such as the ability of all states to join forms of structured cooperation at any stage. The UK has sought guarantees and reassurances about how member states will qualify for participation in an operation to ensure that the Council has oversight of the initiative. These reflect two of the UK's concerns: first, that the member states should be ready to develop improved defence capabilities. Secondly, in doing so member states should commit themselves to supply by 2007 (through either national contributions or multinational contribution) units to carry out crisis management missions, supported by sufficient transport and logistical capabilities. HMG has therefore appeared to recognise that US leadership in major military operations will not be put at risk by ESDP and structured cooperation. UK views ESDP as only modest in terms of desired military capabilities and the UK should therefore face no

currently set out in the Convention text. We believe that a flexible, inclusive approach and effective links to NATO are essential to the success of ESDP. We will not agree to anything which is contradictory to, or would replace, the security guarantee established through NATO." This approach was supported by all three main political parties and as a result received very little public discussion. HMG pushed for the eventual deletion of any reference in the draft Treaty to an EU mutual defence commitment which HMG viewed as divisive and a duplication of NATO. The text now makes it clear that for those States which are members of NATO, NATO "remains the foundation of their collective defence" and the instrument for implementing that commitment (Article I-40.7). This is the first time an EU Treaty text has stated this so clearly.

The UK Government has been a proponent of the **European Defence Agency**, and sees it as an important means through which to improve European capabilities. The UK wants the agency to be "capability led" and follow four operating guidelines: determine the capabilities that are required; evaluate honestly how far short of these capabilities the member states are falling; analyse

The UK would like the **European Defence Agency** to focus upon the development of capabilities and in doing so stresses the central role of Defence Ministers in the agency's decision-making process. This creates something of a tension with the French government who would prefer the Agency to be multi-

(Britannia Royal Naval College), Professor Emil Kirchner (University of Essex), Dr Kerry Longhurst (University of Birmingham), Dr Ian Manners (University of Kent), Professor William Patterson (University of Birmingham), Professor John Peterson (University of Glasgow), Dr Alistair Shepherd (University of Wales, Aberystwyth), Professor Richard Whitman (University of Westminster), Dr Neil Winn (University of Leeds), Dr Martin Zaborowski (Aston University), Dr Geoffrey Edwards (University of Cambridge), Professor Richard Gillespie (University of Liverpool),

The leading non-academic research institutions and their associate experts include the Royal Institute for International Affairs (Chatham House), the Foreign Policy Centre (with Mark Leonard), the International Institute for Strategic Studies (with Dr Dana Allin), the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) and the Centre for European Reform (including Charles Grant, Steven Everts, Heather Grabbe and Daniel Keohane). On European issues, which also include discussion of CFSP, see the ESRC 'One Europe or Several?', UACES (University Association for Contemporary European Studies) and the British Foreign Policy Research Centre.