

## **CFSP Forum**

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## Note from the Editor

Karen E. Smith, London School of Economics, Editor

Three key topics regarding EU foreign policy are covered in this issue of *CFSP Forum*: EU policy towards the Middle East, research on the EU-UN relationship, and the impact of enlargement on the CFSP. Sven Biscop argues that the EU needs to exercise more leadership with respect to the Middle East. Robert Kissack then analyses different ways of researching the EU's visibility at the United Nations. Gisela Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet reports on the findings of a major research project on the impact of the 2004 enlargement on European foreign, security and defence policy.

## Europe and the Middle East: Time to Resume Leadership – Including Towards the US<sup>1</sup>

Sven Biscop, Senior Research Fellow at Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations (Brussels) and Professor of European Security at Ghent University, Belgium

After mediation by Saudi Arabia, Fatah and Hamas reach an agreement to create a government of national unity, which hopefully will end intra-Palestinian strife. A bomb attack in Lebanon demonstrates once again how fragile the situation in the country remains ever since the 2006 war. A leaked memo of Javier Solana, the EU's foreign policy chief, explicitly states that sanctions alone will not solve the Iranian issue.

Three recent news items from the Middle East, all of which raise the same question: what is the EU doing about it?

The EU has assumed leadership. The 'EU3' (France, Germany and the UK) led negotiations with Iran. In mutual agreement EU member states sent nearly 8000 blue helmets for a reinforced UNIFIL to Lebanon. The EU also achieved some success. For a while Iran did suspend enrichment. But then negotiations broke down and sanctions were adopted. By themselves, the sanctions will not automatically

precarious. Without adequate follow-up, failure is almost certain.

The EU seems already to have forgotten its earlier leadership role however. At the December 2006 European Council, the EU returned to the habitual declaration, 'calling for', 'urging' and 'inviting', but without announcing any initiative. Above all, it is up to the EU therefore to resume the initiative.

Evidently, any European initiative would be



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leads to agreement over time. This is consistent with a sociological institutional understanding of EU foreign policy making, in which learning plays an important role in the adoption of European positions.

In an ideal world the researcher would be able to witness EU coordination meetings take place, but alas that is infeasible given the number of EU coordination meetings taking place. Therefore researchers must look for proxy measurements of coordination such as the two discussed here. I argue that declaratory cohesion is the more important of the two proxies, although the third output (non-cohesive position) remains outside our remit of study.

The choice between measuring declaratory and voting cohesion need not be an either/or decision, and by measuring both, a new set of research questions opens up to us. Do EU member states speak and vote cohesively, or do they sometimes do one and not the other? In terms of quantifying change over time, is there a convergence of voting patterns prior to common statements (i.e. does voting cohesion precede declaratory cohesion) or do they occur at the same time? Comparing the two illuminates which EU member states impede common statements and what factors might trigger a change in policy (such as a change in national government). Thus by looking at the two proxies together we are able to look more closely at changes in EU member state behaviour over time and to what extent EU membership alters national interests and policies in the UN system.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This paper is based on a working paper of the LSE's

performed the task of delivering the all-important hard-security guarantees, whilst the EU was about broader political, social and economic issues'. Seeking first of all reliable protection against all possible attacks on their newly-gained sovereignty — the well-known argumentation goes further — this predilection for the hard-security providers NATO and the US drove the EU right away into the profound rift about Iraq and into the division of the 'old' and 'new' Europe. And this division is the most important reason for all the questioning about the future of CFDP and ESDP after enlargement. Therefore, a closer look at the new member states' 'Americomania' is most interesting.

It seems indeed that these profound European misunderstandings have been provoked by the unfortunate concomitance of two distinct factors: the fear of exclusion (again), and the requirements of NATO accession. All experts from the new member states agree that their countries' passive, defensive or even hostile attitudes towards the first efforts of the EU to shape ESDP were mainly due to the fear of being excluded again from the main decisionmaking structures. Poland, for example, hoped that with its NATO accession in March 1999, the country's 'exclusion from core decisions concerning European security were finally over. However, just three month later, it appeared that this was to be reversed when, against the backdrop of war in Kosovo, the Cologne European Council articulated plans to create an autonomous European Security and Defence policy (ESDP) as the military arm of the CFSP'.9 The new member states were simply taken by surprise.<sup>10</sup> Thus, Poland and others immediately took up the struggle for appropriate and equal involvement of non EU-European NATO member states into ESDP decision making procedures; completely in line with the US, they supported the American 2trategy: i-1.no decoupling, no duplication, no discrimination. When through the Berlin-Plus agreement of December 2002, the participation of non EU-European NATO member states in ESDP was secured, Poland's attitude slowly began to change. Therefore, the unfortunate temporal concomitance between the first eastern enlargement of NATO and the EU's decision to develop ESDP is to a certain amount responsible for the candidate states' reluctance to support the latter.

A second unfortunate concomitance contributed to the profound division within Europe with regard to Iraq. Whilst Poland, through its unconditional support of the US-led war, hoped to secure its position as America's preferred

protégé and therefore signed the famous 'letter of the eight', other Central and East European countries found themselves in a much more uncomfortable position. Lithuania, for example, just like Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria and Romania, was not yet definitively admitted to NATO when they had to choose sides in the Iraq issue. Thus, when in February 2003, the president of the US Committee on NATO, a non-profit dedicated to the promotion and expansion of NATO, urged in an e-mail that these states sign the Vilnius group's letter of support for a US-led war against Iraq, Lithuania complied. 'The text was non-negotiable: "take it or (do not) leave it", the e-mail said'. The unanimous vote of the US Senate in favour of the second eastern enlargement of NATO - Vitkus presumes would probably not have been possible without this proof of unconditional loyalty.

Operation Concordia in Macedonia which was hailed as 'the first and successful test-case of the Berlin-plus agreement' — but not to the EU stand-alone mission, Artemis, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Czech Republic, too, participated in Concordia as well as to the Althea mission because both ensured 'very close cooperation with NATO' for which 'Czech policy had constantly called for'. 14

A further position common to all new member states is their commitment to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), launched in 2002. Mainly the small or medium sized new member states, such as Hungary, the Czech Republic and Lithuania, are heavily concentrating on this approach; these states 'strongly supported extending the ENP to cover also the Southern Caucasus [...] in order to link those countries to the European political space'. 15 It is interesting - and maybe amusing - to note that all three countries expect ENP to not only enhance their security, but also their role in foreign policy. Thus, Hungary is intending to 'become an important partner for the EU and the United States alike', 16 and Lithuania is even dreaming of the role of a 'leader of the region'. 17 Probably due to the deep polarization that European integration encounters in the Czech Republic, Prague's expectations seem to be more modest.18

With regard to the overall expectations concerning CFSP and ESDP, Poland clearly presents a special case amongst the new member states. Indeed, with its accession date approaching - thus putting a definitive end to its outsider status - and the negative impacts of the Polish Iraq engagement increasing, Warsaw gradually adopted a more constructive approach towards CFSP and ESDP. At the beginning of the constitutional process, Poland like all other states. opposed strongly possibilities of flexible integration and enhanced cooperation in CFSP and ESDP. But the country's attitude

> began to evolve as soon as it became clear that Poland could actually be one of the 'ins' [...] At the same time other member states [...] came to see Warsaw as a natural member of a European

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