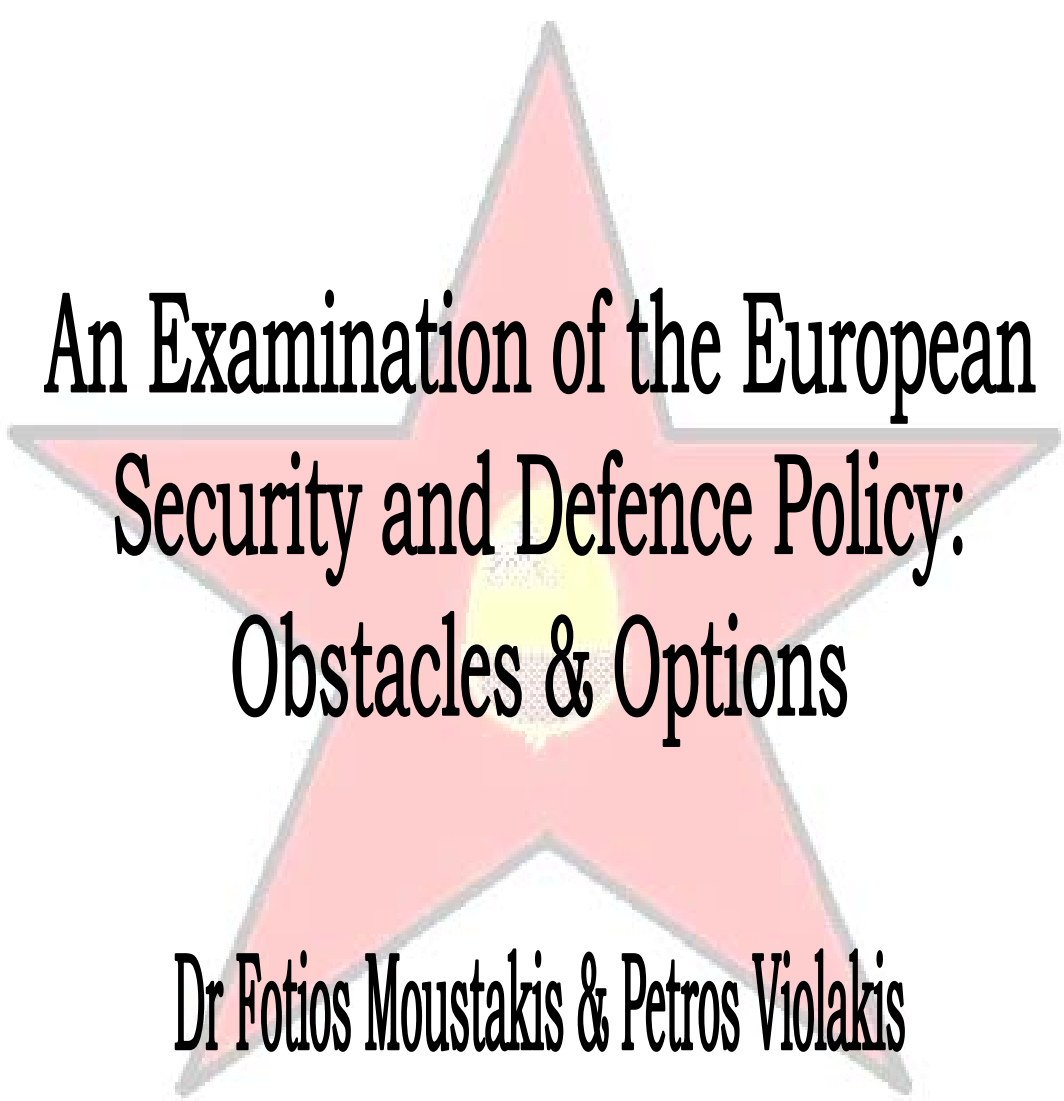


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**An Examination of the European
Security and Defence Policy:
Obstacles & Options**

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Key Points

- * What factors make ESDP successful?
 - Vision that is modified according to political-decision making
 - Structure that is created or stalled according to a list of factors

- * Current Obstacles
 - A compact EU military body needs to be created
 - The EU needs to project one military face to the world. This can be achieved by well defined steps that would eventually unify the separate task forces into a compact EU military body. To achieve this objective:
 - There is a need for a common military language, common evaluation & promotion procedures and a central military Council that has control of the EU army.
 - The military forces of the EU member states must also be incorporated (partially or completely) to this new EU task force.

- * Political Vision and willingness
 - ESDP vision and effectuation is based on EU policy makers who are prone to external influence (e.g. US). For this reason ESDP should not be considered as a wildcard in the formulation of EU foreign policy.

- * Supremacy is a result of many added value factors. One of the most important factors is technological superiority. The European military industry should build on a mutual trust environment while sharing a common vision.

Abstract:

This paper assesses the political and structural obstacles that have affected the development of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Furthermore, the paper aims to identify and examine the measures that need to be introduced by the EU in order to accelerate the smoothness of ESDP's operability.

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ESDP authentication

The end of the Cold War and the momentous events of 9/11 in the US triggered a series of global events. The balance of power, as it was known at the time, was irreversibly disrupted towards a new world order settlement. As in every system which is disrupted, the world order is expected to come to a status of balance once again.¹ In this world order re-settlement the European Union (EU) faces a number of challenges, including key issues pertaining to the ongoing transformation of the EU in the global arena in terms of foreign policy and security and defence policy (ESDP). The EU adapts to new world trends by reforming structures and building capabilities.² And despite the EU members' common understanding that development of the ESDP must be viewed in light of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) changes and the transatlantic relationship, there is solid evidence of a 'pre-division' political arrangement.

The first evidence in support of 'the existence of an embryonic division of labour between EU through its ESDP and NATO'³ emerged during Operation Allied Force in the Balkans. Cultural and political differentiation within the European countries causes diversification in foreign policy and hence seems to hinder the progress of NATO – ESDP separation. The first indications of a diversification possibility surfaced in 1967 with the French veto towards Britain's effort to join the European Economic Community. The French veto confuted the neo-functionalist logic and the belief that 'the experience of integration leads to redefinition of the national interest and eventual transfer of loyalty from the nation-state to the emerging regional or global entities'.⁴

The difficulties that occurred between France and UK in 2003 regarding the intervention strategy in Iraq were perceived to be a setback for the ESDP. Yet it was the Iraq war with its direct and immediate impact that settled the strategy scheme: Chris Hedges argues that 'War is a force that gives us meaning'⁵ and he concluded that war forms its own culture. During the first ESDP operations in Bosnia (EUPM⁶) and in Skopje (Concordia), Javier Solana presented a draft EU Security Strategy (EUSS) at the Thessalonika Council in June 2003,⁷ which was later adopted by the European Council.⁸

However, there are still many pending key EU issues that impede the operability of ESDP relating to smoothness of decision making and common vision. An EU disintegration⁹ scenario was depicted by US Defence Secretary D. Rumsfeld at the start of the Iraq war in 2003: "Germany has been a problem and France has been a problem [...] But you look at vast numbers of other countries in Europe, they're not with France and Germany... they're with the US [...] you're thinking of Europe as Germany and France. I don't [...] I think that's old Europe."

However, EU members' divergence is not necessarily about confrontation but it is about rearranging priorities and avoiding bottlenecks. European political strength could also be said to lie in diversity.¹⁰ The latest EU enlargement may be considered as an add-on value. This has implications both for foreign policy and also points to the need to be flexible in developing, for example, coalitions of the willing.

Foreign policy transformation from a national to a collective EU level is an ongoing issue with great challenges. The realization of the ESDP convergence has to create a collective understanding that will include key issues not only of what should be done but also of what has to be dealt with. The decelerating course of ESDP convergence results mainly from 'the lack of common vision'¹¹ and the inefficacy of the ESDP internal structure. An EU Security and Defence policy should have been motivated primarily by common security concerns, as happened in the past for the League of Nations and later the United Nations.

The current situation indicates that there are still many steps to be taken towards this direction. The establishment of the European Defence Agency (EDA) by a Joint Action of the Council of Ministers on 12 July 2004 may be considered as the first step 'towards supporting the Member States in their effort to improve European defence capabilities in the field of crisis management and to sustain the ESDP as it stands now and develops in the future'.¹²

This reality still needs to confront hard-shaped strategies, such as NATO positioning. Then NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson declared in March 2001: 'There is, and will be, no single European Army. There will be no standing European Force. [...] National armed forces will remain just that; national forces under the command of national governments.'¹³ This was also the view of academics and journalists:

'Adding military force to the European Union at a time of fundamental disagreement about where and when to deploy troops is a waste of resources and will likely undermine European credibility by deepening divisions among its member states. If Europeans want more global clout, they should instead focus on strengthening their capacity for what they do best, namely non-military crisis-management and post-war reconstruction.'¹⁴

'A false and dangerous idea is taking hold in Britain, especially among Euro-sceptics. It goes something like this. The Iraq war has wrecked plans for closer European integration. It has set Old Europeans against New ones, driven Britain back on the Anglo-Saxon world, reminded everyone of how much they rely on the Americans, and made the idea of a European Army seem laughable.'¹⁵

NATO's negative attitude towards the creation of a separate EU force has since been replaced by more tactful remarks. This tact was reflected in a speech in February 2004 by the current Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer 'Of course, NATO remains the foundation of our collective defence. But the EU is developing, and will continue to develop as a security actor. That is right. It makes sense...What we need is a stronger European pillar. More effective capabilities.'¹⁶

In this respect NATO proceeded to an involution of the ESDP idea by creating a Rapid Reaction Force (RF). The core idea of creating the NRF is to extend NATO's

reach in the global fight against terrorism and other emerging threats. 'If NATO does not have a force that is quick and agile, which can be deployed in days or weeks instead of months or years, then it will not have much to offer to the world in the 21st century.'¹⁷ The creation of NRF within the NATO military operation area is expected to inject confusion within the countries that participate in both the European Rapid Reaction Force and NRF and eventually make impossible any diversification of the ESDP and NATO strategy. In the event of a new Bosnia-type operation, a conflict might easily surface due to having in theory two rapid reaction forces which might be used for the same task. The goal of an ESDP is being reduced by having the same force operability under a NATO umbrella. The need for a legal framework within a European Constitution that would put into effect a European Security Policy is now becoming an issue of growing importance.

Current structural & realization obstacles

The common European Security and Defence Policy of the European Union was initiated after the St. Malo Franco-British summit in 1998, and enhanced in the subsequent councils that took place in Helsinki, Laeken and Thessalonika. At the same time, emerging issues of security and terrorism encouraged the Commission to initiate European Security Research Programmes (ESRP) within the framework of research and development (R&D) policy. These programmes are coordinated by the European Defence Agency (EDA). The role of the EDA and ESRP is to bridge the gaps between technology and industrial capability in Europe.

The Commissioner for Research, Phillipe Busquin, lined up with the European Commission's defence R&D policy and in association with the Commissioner for Industry, Errki Liikanen, promoted the Community research programme in the field of security and defence. The main focus of the Framework Programmes¹⁸ was until then exclusively civilian, leaving military use as a secondary potential beneficiary of the technological outcome.¹⁹ This first supporting step in R&D triggered a dialogue that is called "preparatory action", between academics, research teams and industry. This dialogue is considered to be a strengthening tool for EU academics and institutions. This bond, it is hoped, would promote the creation of international institutions on the lines of the Euro-fighter coalition and the European Space Agency that will be able to deal effectively with emerging technical integration problems. 'Then, as the new organizations proved their effectiveness in dealing with various technical problems, states would delegate more and more tasks to international institutions.'²⁰

Another aim of the preparatory action is to identify the needs and demands in the field of security in order to link them with the institutions' contribution in terms of technology and know-how. The preparatory action was launched in October 2004 in the field of security research (PASR)²¹ and resulted in the creation of eleven consortia of institutions and industry awards. The selected areas included space technology, three dimensional simulation technology for crisis management, geospatial data analysis, network security, etc.

The Western European Armament Group (WEAG)²² assets were transferred to EDA. WEAG was initiated in 1976 when the Defence Ministers of the European NATO nations (except Iceland) established a forum for armaments cooperation. WEAG's panel II refers to research and technology cooperation in terms of strengthening the European position in defence research and technology. The EUCLID²³ Programme, involving industry and research institutes, has until very recently been the main instrument for pursuing this mission.²⁴ The Western Europe Armament

Organisation (WEAO) has also been incorporated in the EDA. Its research activities began in Ostend in November 1996 with the creation of a Research Cell (WRC)²⁵ within the Western European Union (WEU) structure.

The thirteen Common European Priority Areas (CEPAs) are now being coordinated via the EUROFINDER mechanism. All European members may present their own proposals to meetings and conferences on an annual basis, with government and industry representatives' participation. This structure works, despite some procedural obstacles resulting from weaknesses at the operational level, where a few untrained or unwilling "professionals" with a national representative role hinder European research development events, leading to a lack of cooperation between military industry and research communities.

A deeper investigation of this bottleneck would simply bring to the surface once again the need for a series of institutional and organizational changes in military administration and R&D management policies. There are also cases where the lack of personnel in key military positions who understand what academics can contribute, frustrate any effort for mutual understanding and high level cooperation in technological issues between the academic society, industry and research institutes. The existence of a common European procedural framework that would describe the formulation and evaluation procedures of military policy-making and administrative boards might prove to be a powerful tool that national governments and committees could use against corruption and power overuse. This framework could create a basis for a common EU military culture by setting common criteria for evaluation and promotion within the Forces.

EU policy makers for military and research issues are only partially aware of these obstacles; nevertheless some steps towards ESDP convergence have already been taken. Gordon stated that:

If done right, the development of a serious EU defence force could be a good thing for all concerned—reducing American burdens in Europe, making Europe a better and more capable partner, and providing a way for Europeans to tackle security problems where and when the United States cannot or will not get involved. If done badly, however, the EU project risks irrelevance as an empty institutional distraction—or even worse, a step back toward the situation in the Balkans in the early 1990s, when separate European and American strategies and institutions led to impotence and recrimination.²⁶

EU enlargement from fifteen to twenty five countries has made the decision making process of the EU more difficult.²⁷ The EU's current metamorphosis also includes a new definition of security policy. There are new issues within ESDP framework, such as homeland defence and terrorist attacks. The first step was made in Thessalonika in June 2003, when the EU summit called for enhanced cross pillar cooperation.²⁸ The proposal included the creation of a database that would link military capabilities to civilian protection. Also the proposal established measures that would enhance the ability to react to nuclear, biological and chemical threats.²⁹

The unfortunate outcome of the European Constitution voting decelerated the progress, however. This settlement would have provided the EU with a definition of its international role, values and a hierarchy of its means for international action, and a description of the demarcation and division of powers. It would also have facilitated the constant monitoring of future developments and thus enable clear assessment of its failures and successes.

The European Constitution aims to provide a legal framework for the EU's military operations. Also, the creation of a definition framework for the military duties of all EU member countries would establish a fair and indisputable security and defence scheme. This well defined scheme would disallow any national private policy that contradicts the EU's common goals. Another issue that could be settled through the acceptance of the constitution is an agenda of military tasks (exercises, applications etc). This agenda could provide regular common exercises and an operations programme agenda that would be complementary to NATO exercises and could, for example, establish a framework regarding the supervision of the EU's external borders.

Similarly, a common EU strategy regarding military supplies is needed. Military supply policy is a multilevel³⁰ political and economic policy for each European country. The need for supporting inter-European industries has become an issue of industry viability, especially with the USA's technological superiority.

The Need for Military Professionalism

At the December 1999 Helsinki European Council meeting EU member states set themselves a military capability target known as the Headline Goal.³¹ EU member states should be able to deploy 60,000 troops within 60 days and sustainable for a year in support of the Petersberg Tasks. A key feature of the original Helsinki Headline Goal was the voluntary nature of member states' commitments. This led to the first cataloguing process, which helped identify next steps. Nevertheless, this process will not act as a guarantee since the resources are not actual or available. Despite the fact that the Helsinki Headline Goals were formally met in 2003, the Thessalonika European Council in June 2003 acknowledged that the EU's operational capability across the full range of Petersberg tasks still remained limited. At the same Council member states also decided to set a new Headline Goal. The new Headline Goal 2010 (HG2010) was adopted in May 2004 by EU defence ministers. This envisions that EU member states will be 'able by 2010 to respond with rapid and decisive action applying a fully coherent approach to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations covered by the Treaty of the European Union'.³² The first application of the European Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) which resulted from these headline goals came in Bosnia, where the EU replaced NATO in charge of 7,000 men. The EU RRF was formulated by Britain, France and Germany, while Italy took over in the second half of 2005.

We have already touched on the emerging "competition" between NRF and EURF. Such a competition could result in a comparison between EU RF and NATO RF in terms of professionalism. Today, most European countries face the same problem. Their costly maintained forces are unsuitable for meeting many of the threats which Europe currently faces. The lack of basic up-to-date military equipment and training might prove to be of vital importance for future EU operations. Professionalism is thus a key issue for a successful ESDP policy. The claim of professional military status implies levels of high functionality. Traditionally the EU has been a civilian power concerned with welfare generation and economic regulation. This point of view is encouraged by many academics who believe that a European army is only the extension of a foreign policy project. 'As an international actor, the EU is ambiguous. The EU has always, and inescapably, been a Foreign Policy project but that does not mean that it is cast in the constraining mould of the statist version of foreign policy.'³³

Military professionalism should be measured and judged according to a universal conception of military power in terms of actual preparedness and performance. Introducing standards of professionalism in the ESDP is an issue of high importance for the EU:

“Training, field and command post exercises will be required to develop effective working practices, levels of professionalism and shared understanding. There is little evidence that sufficient attention has been paid to this and the EU must ensure that standards of training at all levels are laid down and monitored under the ESDP.”³⁴

Speaking about professionalism is one issue, and introducing professional standards is another. Today there are no European standards that could describe a “good soldier”. The same applies for military promotion procedures. The application of a common accepted assessment method would ensure meritocracy within the European militaries and would ensure the smoothness of internal (administration) operations.

Joint training makes an important contribution that ensures this smoothness and enhances operability among EU coalition forces. It has proven in practice to be beneficial for all the participants; increases cooperability and effectiveness of the troops while securing smooth operability in real events by enabling problems that emerge in the exercises to be identified and addressed. Joint training is also used as a military cooperation pillar in order to enhance bilateral relations.

“... [It is] evident that the successful conduct of crisis-management missions in areas such as Kosovo, FYROM, Bosnia and other regions where the European Army is or will be activated, requires specialised training for political and military personnel participating in these missions. Joint multinational training is also needed for all personnel taking part. The European Commission is developing a training programme for the political personnel. We, the Greek Presidency, will develop a joint training structure, in the Security and Defence sector, for military staff participating in crisis-management missions, in aiming to create for the European Union and for our personnel a common culture in security issues. Security threats have changed after the international terrorist attacks; re-training, for our military staff in particular, is therefore much needed in order successfully to tackle these new challenges.”³⁵

According to the then Greek Presidency, joint training was considered to be the foundation to a common European military culture that sources from NATO, which first provided the joint European operations with a common “military language”. Joint training could be achieved as an action through EU military camps (and an EU military academy) with their own budget settlement directly from EDA.

Industrial and military effectiveness

Supremacy of coalition forces is a result of many added value factors. One of the most important factors (if not the most important) is technological superiority. Acquirement and production of high technology military equipment imply the existence of economic prosperity (or a strong economy). In this direction and in terms of measuring success in the high-tech area, one could look at the current and emerging procurement programmes, which are the basis for future developments

not only in the armament but in the technological area in general. They affect the whole product cycle by triggering new needs. The defence industry will need innovative ideas. The European Union's increased funding towards R&D programmes, combined with "in-reach" goal setting, will result in technological equilibrium, if not superiority.

France, Germany, Italy and Britain created OCCAR (Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière d'Armement), an organisation that aims to improve the efficiency of the management of trans-national weapons programmes. Spain and Belgium have also joined and Netherlands is closely associated with it. These actions should be supported by EU member states' understanding of the need for increased expenditure on the ESDP, or at least maintaining the same level of funding. But the situation has not changed substantially since 2000:

'First and foremost European defence budgets continue to shrink. (...) Second, Europe's defence industry has been slow to consolidate, resulting in a large portion of investment going to redundant company overheads. Third, the United States' continuing conservative approach to technology cooperation has substantially impeded transatlantic technical cooperation, imposing irritating constraints on our best allies...'³⁶

In a recent Franco-Greek conference,³⁷ G. Kamenos, a member of the Greek Parliament, argued that there should be a new research and development organization only for the military sector within the European Union whose output should be supported by a newly formed EUROCHAMBER whose objective would be the provision of a course on European military research and development issues. This new legal form could operate within the EDA by strengthening and linking CEPAs with the industry.

The need for European countries to enhance their R&D strategic policy-making has only been considered in recent years. The technological superiority of the other side of the Atlantic has created a highly competitive environment. Research and development analysts recognized the need to fill this technological gap by raising funds and increasing the number of researchers within the EU. Yet these efforts should be a part of a wider long term EDA policy and not a series of disconnected activities.

The absence of an effective common EU foreign policy and security strategy dispossesses Europe of a chance to apply other instruments of influence in international relations. China's acceptance as a full World Trade Organization member is expected to change the balance in trade³⁸ and the EU will face some difficult issues. The EU's current product protection policy with the implementation of CE Certification and tariff and taxation barriers over imports and exports has proved to be successful. Global military commercialization with the entrance of a big player such as China will unbalance military offsets and will eventually raise new issues in the military and political spheres. The key issue for NATO and EU in terms of maintaining competitive advantage is that the standard military equipment should be kept technologically superior at a global level. Technological superiority is achieved by investments in research and development. And the old-style industries are using protectionism not to gain time to adjust, but to keep things as they are.³⁹

In this respect, prior to the creation of initiatives in the military industry sector with a long term goal of enhancement of cooperation and technology, a primary evaluation of the current situation is required. This includes a quantitative

assessment of demand, environmental analysis in terms of competition, demand and pricing and finally an innovation assessment. However it is extremely difficult to define the nature and scope of defence economics. 'Deterrence and defence strategies, military alliances and burden sharing, effects of military expenditures on economic growth and development, weapons procurement and contract design, arms trade, control and disarmament, conversion of the defence industries' all play their part.⁴⁰

Political interference in the military industry market regarding offsets, in most cases, is confusing in terms of performance evaluation. Production effectiveness in this case may be accounted as offsets. However, it is the political willingness that protects military co-operation and co-production, but with the support of economic mechanisms in order to increase efficiency and rationalize future procurement decisions. Most European countries agree that economic analysis of defence expenditures and weapons production is the first priority in order to ensure industries' viability. At this point the question becomes the evaluation criteria for the national military industrial strategy. A common methodology should be adopted by EU members in order to have a common benchmarking system. Of course it is the national policy makers (under EU general policy) that would structure the budgetary resources, technological efforts, investment and capital expenditure.

The national policy makers' responsibility is to enhance European regional and interregional industrial cooperation with the use of economic grants. The role of the EU is to create bonds between European industry managers who created their industries within a national policy scheme. The change of the EU into a new regional entity over a national policy entity should have transformed national industry culture to a regional industry culture. This reform was partially confused with the multinational entities that already existed. Industry managers should be encouraged towards a better comprehension of the fact that they are in the same alliance (EU). In this new twenty five member regional military industry economy, competing as a single entity in a global market, internal competition should be only a historical perspective.

EU industrial disputes can only be overcome by intense efforts by all member countries and institutions. The emerging European military industry market should be built on a mutual trust environment while sharing a common vision. Military industry marketing managers need extended risk tolerance in leaving one market share and gaining another. Industrial pioneering and cooperation will provide fertile ground where initiatives may flourish.

The introduction of military industrial operations and location management reform procedures in the industry sector should be triggered by initiatives resulting from a common EU core military policy. A healthy EU industrial market which is not competing with itself will minimize not only investment but globalization risks as well. The case of fourteen shipyards within the EU that are competing with each other is characteristic. Companies in the same technological field should be encouraged to cooperate more closely (maybe merged to a bigger corporate shape), providing total military technological solutions, technology superiority, capacity enlargement and of course quality assurance. Such military industry entities would be extremely flexible and would provide a wide spectrum of military services and products for member states.

EDA's central policy making role is extremely important for the encouragement and support of this effort, considering the fact that this issue might prove to be a matter of simple viability for many European industries. One of the most important

supporting actions for the success of a common EU industry operation and location management policy is the offset of national policy linearization. This action could be considered as a preparatory step for minimizing the commercial risk.

The creation of a central policy would provide a general framework for EU governments at a national level. This framework could include taxation incentives and government participation in vendor consortiums. The same framework could describe EDA funding policy towards the industries through national governments. Moreover there should be directives for obligatory participation in the European armament market for all EU countries as internal buyers and sellers, to enhance regional absorption of European-created armaments. European military technology products should cover the primary needs of all European armies. The integration of initiatives and directives that target EU policy making in the EDA policy area would create the basis for a real ESDP.

The new institutionalism approach assumes that international, including regional institutions [...] are established to overcome market failures, solve coordination problems, and/or eliminate other obstacles to economic cooperation...This approach, delivered from Neofunctionalism, neoinstitutionalism, and other earlier theories of political integration [...] stresses the importance of international, that is regional, institutions as necessary means of facilitating and securing the integration process.⁴¹

Economic interdependence among EU member states will inevitably lead towards a new EU-based governance policy. European institutions' change of role is triggering a series of structural changes. Only when these changes come into force will the institutions be able to tackle the emerging challenges of the EU.

Conspectus

During the last decade progress was made towards the creation of a European military force through the establishment of ESDP. This progress that resulted from a common decision of the fifteen member states depicts the track of the EU countries towards an ideal convergence. In this convergence track there are many structural and political obstacles to overcome.

ESDP effectuation is based on a common vision of the EU member countries and the creation of a strong support structure. The realization of the ESDP vision should be established by treaties (on the lines of the Maastricht Treaty) or by a European Institutional Framework, otherwise the ESDP vision will be vulnerable to European politicians' decision making, a procedure which is quite vulnerable to national economic policy making and US foreign policy pressure. A well established European army operational role defined in new treaties and incorporated in every EU member country's constitution would create a list of "every-day" tasks for the EU Rapid Reaction Force that nominally already exists.⁴² The marriage of technology and professionalization of the EU military forces is producing a high standard military capability that is able to complete extensive and difficult military operations on a global level while increasing the culture of military convergence among member states. The creation of a common EU military culture, which was initiated through NATO exercises, may be strengthened with the implementation of separate, EU army exercises.

In this view, the creation of a strong support structure for a self-sufficient EU task force⁴³ should be based on elements such as the creation of a common EU military

culture and partial unification of EU member states' military forces. However, these structural changes would also require a strong legal framework such as an EU Constitution. The Constitution was expected to strengthen the legal aspects of ESDP and eventually the European army while settling a common base for EU military industrial relations in terms of mutual production and military products absorption strategy. Whilst the army is in abeyance, progress can be made on military-industrial capability.

European military industry competitive advantage must be based upon technological superiority and pioneering. These issues would benefit from a market protectionism environment that would enable them to gain full power in the world market. This role is partially implemented by EDA and will benefit from the establishment of a common strategy creation agency.

The institutions' role in all these processes needs to be examined. The transformation process of the EU during the last decades should now be matched by similar transformations among EU institutes. The creation of EDA illustrates the need of the EU for new institutions whose policy making exceeds national aims. New policy-making institutions and the transformation of old institutions into regional strategy institutions will ensure the successful transformation of the EU into a common foreign policy making region.

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- ²³ European Cooperation for Long term in Defence
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- ⁴¹ Gilpin Rober, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*, (Princeton University Press, 2001)
- ⁴² One such a task could relate to EU border surveillance
- ⁴³ Not NATO oriented

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See:

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