# EU Security Cooperation and the Transatlantic Relationship

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## The Dinner and the Dishes: A Transatlantic Debate about Security

The recent article by Robert Kagan (2002) – widely read and commented upon – put the matter of transatlantic relations in stark terms: The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) differ in their approach to security issues because the US has dominant military power and has, therefore, force options not available to Europeans who, in consequence, have developed a non-military, "soft" approach to security that reflects their military weakness. Kagan's argument is a version of the law of the hammer: if you have a hammer, you will find a purpose for it and a way to use it; if you do not have a hammer, you will try to find a way to solve your problem without one or, as Kagan argues, you will stop identifying problems you don't have the means to solve. The security relationship between Europe and the US today has been characterized as one in which the US makes the dinner and the EU does the dishes.

This paper takes a somewhat different view about where European security cooperation and the transatlantic relationship are going. We observe that, in responding to widely recognized changes in the security environment, the EU and its member states have been following the well trodden route of building functional interdependence and institutional capabilities in order to create the conditions from which value agreement and an increasingly focused "political will" can emerge in the foreign and security policy domain. Although the EU's emergence as a security actor is primarily directed toward European regional security, the paper argues that changing structural capacity and political will are producing a paradigm shift in Europe that challenges the traditional transatlantic relationship.[1]

## The EU as an Emergent Security Actor: What Kind of Security and Through What Means?

Since World War II, Western Europe has had to manage at least three kinds of security problems that have been addressed by partly overlapping structures at three levels of organization (Mason and Penksa 2001). Until recently, the most important of these problems was the global-strategic confrontation that defined the Cold War between the Western and Soviet Blocs, a confrontation in which the NATO alliance was focused on the European core of that struggle. Emphasis on the military balance between the blocs and the importance of the United States in that equation meant that American policy preferences, both civil and military, were dominant (Grosser 1980; Bundy, et al., 1982).

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[1] For alternative perspectives regarding the transatlantic alliance, see Gordon (2003) and Kennedy and Bouton (2002).

The second level of security concern, the Western European region, itself, was largely subsumed within the global-strategic conflict, and with minor exceptions like the Greek-Turkish conflicts, regional conflicts were suppressed by the overriding necessity to maintain bloc cohesion. Indeed, during this period, cohesion was so important that both Europeans and Americans concentrated on building the civil structures of cooperation that would prevent regional conflict from emerging.

Domestic security and the control of internal conflict was the third level of concern for Western governments. To the extent to which there was a collective dimension to domestic security it took the form of investment programs to reduce grievances in troubled regions or in areas of continuing colonial responsibility like the ACP countries where conflict might undermine the domestic stability of some EU member states. Throughout the long Cold War, both the US and its European allies were constrained in their domestic politics by the delicacy of the power balance with the Soviet bloc. In retrospect, it seems quite remarkable how regional, cultural and political differences were held in check out of a concern that social turmoil or the loss of political focus could weaken the West in the global balance (Flanagan and Hamson, eds, 1986: 318).

The decompression of the European security environment in the post-Cold War era shifted attention away from the global/strategic arena of conflict to the new security threats that were quick to surface in the European region. The frightening instability of the entire Soviet zone confronted Western Europe with the problems of economic, demographic and political turmoil on its doorstep – a turmoil that, if allowed to develop, would almost certainly spill over the threshold of the EU. The series of violent events in the former Yugoslavia and Albania showed the size of the security problems that could erupt in Europe and the ways in which those problems could compound and spread.[2]

The easing of most – if not entirely all – of the Soviet threat meant that groups, interests and regions in Western Europe, itself, were freer to assert themselves with less fear of consequence. The collapse of the political Left in EU member states was matched by the growth of stronger neo-nationalist or ethno-regionalist movements. National political systems also had to accommodate claims for greater autonomy from well-established domestic regions. Unprecedented migration raised new social and political challenges everywhere. Indeed, the relaxation of pressure at the global/strategic level released the same kind of long-restrained interests around the world and that upwelling of political "demands" impacted Europe in ways that made politics as usual increasingly difficult in the EU.

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[2] For analyses of the war in former Yugoslavia, see Glenny (1996), Maass (1996), Owen (1995), Silber and Little (1997), Woodward (1995) and Zimmermann (1999).

Europe's response to these changes was complex. Gradually, the sense of relative powerlessness that vulnerable Western Europe had felt in the face of the overwhelming nuclear confrontation began to dissipate. At the same time, the evolution of the EU seemed to vindicate the faith of EU member states in the effectiveness of neo-functional interdependence as an effective way to manage a complex environment. The counterpart strategy of "détente" employed successfully to ease Cold War tensions in Europe and pave the way for German unification, also seemed an appropriate way to deal with the outside world in the new era. Indeed, Robert Kagan (2002) has summarized eloquently the European belief that peace and prosperity (what he calls "paradise") are functions of structural arrangements that promote them. Henry Kissinger had been speaking Europe's language when he referred in the 1970s to the need to build a "structure of peace." It was the model Europe had used to build what has become the European Union (Kennedy 1987: 407-408).

The member states of the EU also had developed a profound respect, born of long European experience, for the socio-cultural context within which all policy initiatives are embedded, and a consequent reluctance to expect rapid change or to believe that interventionism abroad in the name of liberal values would produce more than destabilization. It seems likely that an important part of European resistance to US strategy in the Iraq crisis stems from this conviction.[3] At the same time, however, those same EU states had repeatedly demonstrated their belief that the merits of open but properly regulated markets and domestic regimes – the social democratic model – would ultimately persuade others to conform to similar norms. The steady growth in European economic interests in the Mediterranean Basin, the Middle East and Eastern Europe reflected the conviction that markets and increased contact could bring both rewards and enhanced security (Piening 1997: 9).

Even before the end of the Cold War, the EU began to develop structures of cooperation in the security field but nothing really happened before the main security problem shifted to the specifically regional level; that is, until regional security issues were no longer seen as aspects of the global-strategic balance. The obvious problem facing Western Europe was that no military structures designed mainly for regional security were developed during the Cold War (Aybet 1997). The vigorous use of civil strategies to address post-Cold War security threats is testimony to forty years of experience in building a dense network of civil cooperation in the West. When the new era opened, civil strategies like development grants, strategic investments, legal agreements, consultations, trade incentives and the like were the only instruments available to the EU. When conflict outstripped the capabilities of civil structures in former Yugoslavia, it was clear that only NATO, a global-strategic structure, or individual national military capabilities that were

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[3] See "Belgian daily says Europe must acknowledge interests diverge from USA," 11 March 2003, *BBC Monitoring International Reports;* Barry Renfrew, "Europe and U.S. face growing split far beyond Iraq," *The Associated Press,* 10 March 2003; and Sebastiana Rotella, "Rift with Europe Runs Deep," *The Los Angeles Times,* 18 February 2003.

geared either to the global-strategic conflict or to domestic security concerns were the only means available to deal with violent turmoil in the region.[4]

The awkwardness and uncertainty of revamping NATO and continuing to rely on the United States for European security has been obvious. Since no one in Europe seems prepared to gamble with the uncertainties of Russian nationalism or the possible future uses of nuclear weapons, however, the global-strategic level of security is a continuing problem for which the solution seems likely to remain anchored within the Atlantic Alliance (McCalla 1996: 472). Unless there is a major divergence of strategic concept between Europe and the United States – and it is possible that the Iraq crisis may demonstrate such a gap – Europeans will have little incentive to dislodge the United States and forge an autonomous security structure on which Europeans could genuinely rely for global-strategic purposes (Glaser 1993). Perceptions about Europe's role in the 'big picture" could change rapidly, however, in the face of foreign policy changes in the US and elsewhere.

At the level of security within the European regional, cooperation looks very different. It is true that violent inter-state conflict seems virtually impossible in Western Europe and seems unlikely even in Central Europe. The menace of the Russian bear during more than four decades did a great deal to stimulate the building of multifaceted cooperation in the West. That cooperation now makes conflict "unthinkable" among EU members and increasingly also among prospective members. In parts of the Balkans and among some of the adjacent European republics of the former Soviet Union, however, the prospect of such conflict is alive.

More threatening than cross-border conflict is the danger of turbulence in the domestic society and politics of neighboring states because serious domestic turmoil always has important spillover effects that erode the security of others. Among those dangers to domestic stability are migration from areas of instability, threats to EU citizens and economic interests in those areas, agitation of domestic groups stimulated by sympathy for or antipathy to those in the troubled region, and disrupted trade flows and contracts that have follow-on economic consequences. In sum, turmoil spreads and unlocks new sources of conflict elsewhere. The more interdependent the region, the more these spillover effects are to be anticipated and the more sensitive state governments are apt to be about conflict anywhere in the region.

The steady deepening of interdependence in Western Europe has generated a complex network of structures of cooperation in the region – with the EU, itself, at the center of that network. The matrix of cooperation has recently started to include the defense sector. In explaining the spillover effect on defense industries, Terrence R. Guay

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[4] See Anderson (1995); Gnesotto (1994); Nuttall (1994); and Zucconi (1996).

(1996: 412) cites an interview with a WEU official: the pressure to integrate Europe's defense industry is coming, the official said, "from both industry and the national governments. It's the new dimension and organization of the market which is pushing industry to restructure and consolidate." This environment of multiple and overlapping structures of cooperation has fostered and been reinforced in turn by the structures of the European Union in much the way that early neo-functionalist thinkers had imagined (Haas 1968; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970).

What this means is that the EU has become the "decision maker of last resort" when important, cooperatively managed activities require definitive cloture. To the present, this EU integrating role has not extended to most aspects of security, but changes in the security environment are creating action imperatives at the regional level that strongly suggest the continued expansion of EU competence in the security field (Hill 1997). Quite simply, there is no alternative in view that can perform the integrative function for a cooperative system of regional security. But to say that there may be a need for the EU to adopt a security role is not an explanation of how this might come about. To explore that transition, we need to turn attention to the building of political agreement and effective institutions in the security field.

## Political Will and Structural Capabilities: Creating the Conditions for Security Cooperation

Political cooperation requires at least two conditions: a complementary political will among states and a structural capacity with which to act (Penksa 2000). In the security sector, this is clearly evident. Security is one of those "hot button" areas because it touches core national values. Security decisions that involve the possible use of force, the deployment of forces, civilian or military, or the authorization of financial expenditures embody the most serious of state priorities – the lives and fortunes of citizens. Hence, states opt for collective action when that course of action serves national values better than purely national action would serve them.

Member states of the EU meet their security needs by relying on a combination of strategies: national self-reliance, bilateral and multilateral agreements, *ad hoc* agreements, cooperation within organizations like NATO and the UN, and EU action. Simply put, EU action will be selected when states agree that collective European action can do more than other arrangements to reduce the financial and resource burden of acting alone, provide a vehicle for state action by countries too small to act without partners, or provide states with enhanced moral legitimacy.

For European action to take place, and for a truly robust European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) to emerge, member states need to have the political will to pursue common action. States must agree on the nature of the security threat, have a convergence of perspectives regarding the policy to be selected and agree on the means to implement common decisions. Lindberg (1963: 11) reminds us that "political and economic integration cannot be expected to succeed in the absence of a will to proceed on the part of member states."

Political will and member interest in EU action, however, is not enough to produce common action; there must also be agreed upon structures and procedures that can mediate among state, EU and private sector interests and convert interests into action. Keohane (1989: 174) puts the matter succinctly: "without institutions there will be little cooperation." Regular, routine contact is essential for joint political cooperation – through ongoing diplomatic meetings, bureaucratic cooperation, common forums for debate and analysis, and systematic consultation among member states and Union officials. And, of course, more than the interests of EU member states must be pursued. The Union as a whole has collective security interests beyond those of individual states. Once created, institutions may help to shape and change the outlook and approach of member states in security matters as they have in the economic sphere. Institutions are not epiphenomenal (Krasner 1983: 5).

If all forms of political cooperation require both political will among participants and structural capacity to act, security cooperation imposes an especially high requirement in both respects. Since what is at stake in security cooperation is – as we have said – the most fundamental of national values, the political will that motivates it and the structural capacity that implements it can be neither equivocal nor unreliable. Participants in such structures are required to offer unwavering rhetorical and material contributions to the common effort. Achieving normative conformity among member state perspectives is often every bit as challenging as the marshalling of political, economic and military resources.

## ESDP: Adding the Hammer to the Toolbox

Effective European security cooperation depends on the constant and successful interplay between political will and structural capabilities. While these are conceptually distinct forces, in practice, it has been the European method to rely upon the interdependence of the two. An initial expression of political will is essential for cooperation to begin, but subsequent cooperation often depends on the development of capable and reliable structures of decision-making that create a nexus for cooperation and mediate the process. The further development of policy agreement then becomes dependent, to a large extent, upon the stability and effectiveness of the structures created and their ability to reinforce or alter member state priorities and values. In turn, member states may find it

necessary to redesign the structural framework of European cooperation as experience lengthens, priorities change and new structural needs emerge.

We need look no farther than the post-Cold War era to illustrate the interaction between political will and capabilities in European security relations. European integration has always been about enhancing security – whether through Monnet's functional approach of limited integration in key policy areas or by creating the more comprehensive conditions and structures for economic and political union. Until the Treaty on European Union (TEU, 1992), however, there was no explicit mandate for foreign and security policy integration.[5] In only ten years, EU member states have gone from planning a European pillar *within* NATO – the "European Security and Defense Identity," (ESDI) – to designing new EU decision making structures and increasing the EU's ability to act in international crisis prevention and management in ways that do not necessarily depend upon NATO planning and assets.[6]

What accounts for this change? The end of the Cold War, the breakup of the Soviet Union, German unification, growing international pressures for Europe to "speak with one voice" – these were all external catalysts for a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). From the embers of war in the former Yugoslavia a new political consensus emerged about the need for significant changes in European security cooperation. European weaknesses (material and institutional) in both Bosnia and Kosovo, dependence on the United States and growing frustrations with U.S policies increased political will to develop specific European capabilities. EU members realized that in the diffuse and complex environment of the post Cold War period, there would not always be an automatic convergence of European and American interests, nor could United States involvement in European affairs be taken for granted. The 1998 St. Malo Declaration by Britain and France began to move Europe beyond dependence on NATO as the sole vehicle for *both* regional and geo-strategic security.[7] In sum, the Balkans experience stimulated a new commitment to CFSP, and member states acknowledged that CFSP required the creation of new structures in order to furnish the Union with independent capabilities for crisis prevention and management "without unnecessary duplication of NATO."

The European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) is at the center of EU efforts to improve CFSP and encompasses *both* civilian and military response capabilities. On the military side, member states have agreed to create, by mid-2003, a 60,000 strong rapid reaction force capable of deployment within sixty days and able to remain in theatre for

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[5] It is true that the Single European Act of 1986 opened EPC and aspects of security cooperation to the European Community, but military capabilities and initiatives were pointedly omitted. See, for discussion of EPC, Ifestos (1987) and Regelsberger, et.al. (1997).

[6] See Anderson (2001), Ginsberg (2001), Nuttall (2000), Piening (1997), Rhodes (1998) and Smith (2001) for comprehensive overviews of CFSP.

[7] Franco-British Summit, *Joint Declaration on European defence,"* St. Malo, 4 December 1998.

up to one year (otherwise known as the Helsinki Headline Goal). In the area of civilian security, EU member states agreed to provide up to 5000 political officers for international crisis missions. As this new planning suggests, European security cooperation is based on a multifaceted approach to conflict prevention and management. The European Council in Cologne, 1999, stated that the EU is expected "to take decisions on the whole range of political, economic, and military instruments at its disposal when responding to crisis situations." In direct challenge to Kagan's (2002: 21) conclusion that the "[EU] mission is to oppose power," member states expect the EU to develop *both* civilian and military crisis capabilities.

ESDP is not about turning the EU into a military alliance although this could occur at a later stage of political development. At Le Touquet in February 2003, Britain and France entered into an agreement for mutual military assistance that they have invited others to join.[8] For the present, however, ESDP is about providing the Union with the full range of instruments necessary to become a more effective regional and global actor. As noted by the British in a paper on civil-military cooperation in the EU, "the development of the ESDP within the EU is unique in that it has the potential to deliver a fully integrated civil and military crisis management capability, internally as well as externally."[9]

New missions require new and enhanced structures of decision-making. In addition to the already elaborate structures for CFSP, ESDP has spurred significant structural development. Key among these new structures is the new set of political and military bodies established by the Nice European Council (2000): the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and the EU Military Staff (EUMS).[10] These committees are supported by the work of the High Representative for CFSP, the Council Secretariat DG E, and the newly created Policy Unit, Situation Center, and the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management.[11]

Since ESDP was established, change has been continuous and rapid. Two Military Capabilities Commitment Conferences have been held since November 2000. The European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP) was begun in order to address the perceived shortfall in European military capabilities (e.g. strategic transport by air and sea; strategic intelligence; and command, control and communications). The new group of political and military structures has been in place since 2001. At the European Council 2001 meeting in Laeken, ESDP was declared partially operationally.[12] The first mission of

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[8] Franco-British Summit, *Declaration on strengthening European Cooperation in Security and Defense*, Le Touquet, 4 Februrary 2003.
[9] UK Non-Paper, *EU Civil-Military Co-Ordination*, 15 July 2002.
[10] See "Council Decision setting up the Political and Security Committee," 22 January 2001, 2001/78/CFSP; "Council Decision on the establishment of the Military Staff of the European Union," 22 January 2001, 2001/80/CFSP and "Council Decision setting up the Military Committee of the European Union," 22 January 2001, 2001/79/CFSP.
[11] See Penksa (2003) for an extended analysis of the new ESDP structures.
[12] See the Presidency Conclusions, The European Council Laeken, 14 and 15 December 2001.

ESDP was launched when the European Union Police Mission (EUPM)[13] began its work in Bosnia and Herzegovina on January 1, 2003, and operations for ESDP are likely in the Balkans and elsewhere.[14]

As the preceding discussion demonstrates, ESDP officials have spent the last two years building structures, conceptualizing new decision-making procedures, and building a security culture within the EU.[15] In practice, this means that officials have been developing crisis management concepts, running exercises, and building communication between civilian and military departments. In essence, they have been working to assure that ESDP will become an institutionalized and significant component of CFSP.

Adding the hammer to the EU toolbox requires significant cultural change, on behalf of EU officials and in the member states.[16] For example, EU civilian officers need to learn the language of the military-strategic culture while national military officials must become accustomed to the legal-administrative framework of the EU.[17] Some of this learning takes place naturally. Officials in the Council's DG E Secretariat, national officials and military officers occupy the same secure building on Avenue de Cortenbergh, and ESDP decision-making procedures require interaction among ESDP bodies. In the case of the Situation Center, national representatives work alongside representatives from the Policy Unit, the Commission, the Council Secretariat, EUMS, and the Police Unit. But, this type of day-to-day contact in Brussels also needs to be supported by value change in the national capitals. Since January 2002, there has been a program in which Council Secretariat officials are detached to member state MOD's.[18] DG E officials learn more about the defense aspects of security cooperation while MOD's are given direct contact with a EU official. Innovative programs such as this exemplify the importance of creating the conditions that build trust, familiarity and experience so that the nascent structures of ESDP become a reliable component of the European security framework.

As ESDP missions intensify, there will be an even greater demand to improve coordination between civilian and military officials, between national capitals and Brussels, and between ESDP bodies in pillar two and Commission actions in pillar one. It is not enough for ESDP to exist, for ESDP to become a fully capable and reliable

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[13] The website for the EUPM is www.eupm.org.
[14] See Judy Dempsey, "Bosnia role boosts EU military ambitions," *The Financial Times*, 25 February 2003, p.6.
[15] See Cornish and Edwards (2001) and Larsen (2000).
[16] In the fall of 2002, Penksa (2003) conducted approximately fifty personal interviews with officials from NATO, DG E of the EU Council Secretariat, the EU Policy Unit, the EU Military Staff, the Commission and national representatives from France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Because of diplomatic sensitivities, most of the officials who were interviewed requested anonymity.
[17] Personal interview, Official, DG E Council Secretariat, 26 September 2002, Brussels.
[18] The material for this section is based on a personal interview with an official from DG E of the Council Secretariat, 26 September 2002, Brussels.

contributor to European security, and perhaps, even to global security, its structures must be coherently articulated and operate effectively. The EU has experience as a civilian actor, but even in civilian security, there is room for improved coordination. The EU still does not have an expressed mechanism to coordinate Union programs with national and bilateral programs. In a situation like Bosnia, where the Union acts alongside its member states and other international organizations, the absence of such machinery results in duplication and sometimes even conflict.[19] This should become less of a problem if the EU assumes organizational and operational control for both civilian and military operations in the Balkans. Nevertheless, for ESDP to succeed in other parts of the world, the Union must be able effectively to coordinate the national, bilateral, multilateral and EU level capabilities that it has at its disposal. This type of coordination places enormous pressure on the structures of the Union.

Recent developments suggest that officials recognize the unique challenges posed by ESDP. From the 22nd until the 28th of May 2002, the structures of ESDP were tested in the first Crisis Management Exercise (CME 02). In the final exercise report, the EU concluded that substantial progress had been made in developing the EU capability for strategic crisis planning, but that the planning process between civil and military instruments needed to be improved, as well as those between civilian instruments.[20] As we know from the ongoing debate in the European Convention, greater clarity needs to be achieved about the relationship and division of responsibilities among all of the ESDP structures.[21] Some of the most salient issues involve increased powers for the High Representative for CFSP and redistribution of the roles of both the High Representative and the External Relations Commissioner; the creation of an EU diplomatic academy and service; the establishment of an European External Action Service comprised of DG RELEX officials, DG E officials and seconded staff from national capitals; swifter access to ESDP financing; and greater flexibility in decision-making and action.[22]

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[19] Penksa (2003) conducted approximately twenty-five interviews in Sarajevo with officials from the major international organizations involved in the stabilization of Bosnia – OHR, OSCE, EU, NATO and member state embassies. Officials frequently commented on problems of duplication and conflict among bilateral and multilateral programs. With multiple organizations represented in Bosnia and masters located in more than one European capital, divergence among European actors has been an all too frequent occurrence. Now that Lord Paddy Ashdown has been appointed as both the High Representative for Bosnia-Herzegovina and the EU Special Representative, officials cite greater consensus and collegiality among members of the international community. For the EU, duplication and overlap between bilateral and Union projects is still a problem, even with Ashdown's double appointment. Until the Union has the capacity to coordinate its projects with that of member states, project duplication will remain a possible obstruction to a more effective and coherent CFSP.

[20] "CME 02 Final Exercise Report," Council of the European Union, 26 July 2002, COSDP 253, Restreint UE.

[21] http://european-convention.eu.int.

[22] See the European Convention, *Final report of Working Group VIII-Defence,,* CONV 461/02, 16 December 2002 and the *Final Report of Working Group VII on External Action,* CONV 459/02, 16 December 2002.

We are not suggesting that these changes will be easy, immediate or inexorable. A changing security calculus produced the political will for ESDP. Currently, a new commitment to improving the effectiveness and coherence of Union structures is necessary. This means pursuing joint ventures in procurement, achieving the Headline Goal, streamlining and further developing Union decision-making structures, and most urgently, continuing to foster member state agreement on regional and strategic priorities. ESDP will only be as effective as the CFSP it supports.[23]

What of the relationship between the EU and NATO? ESDP is not intended to supplant NATO; in fact, all the official documents of ESDP repeatedly affirm the importance of the transatlantic relationship. On March 14, 2003, the EU and NATO finally reached agreement on "Berlin plus," the arrangements that will enable the EU to have access to NATO planning, assets and capabilities.[24] But, the EU cannot rely only on the transatlantic link. As the recent crisis with Iraq suggests, EU and US interests will not always converge. When they do not, the EU will require its own framework for cooperation. Even if the EU and US find issues on which to cooperate through NATO, the EU will still need ESDP to complement its CFSP. Some ESDP missions may involve the US, others (more regional in nature) may not.

There is no doubt that ESDP is in its embryonic form. Analyses like those provided by Kagan (2002), however, miss the real and steady progress that is occurring in the sector of ESDP. Contrary to assertions that the EU has become a complacent, inward-looking community that rejects military power in international relations, the member states have made it clear that they do not want the EU confined only to soft forms of power, or rather, the "low end" of the Petersberg tasks.[25] In fact, the logic of EU economic and political integration increasingly has called into the question the distinction between soft and hard forms of power. Member states have shared interests; common values require both common action and the means to make cooperation effective. ESDP is about adding another tool to the repertoire of available instruments for EU crisis prevention and management. Clearly, there is a constant interplay between political will and capabilities (Shepherd 2000). The record, thus far, is that both elements are transforming the nature of the transatlantic relationship.

## ESDP and the Transatlantic Relationship

So overwhelming was the Cold War security threat to Western Europe and so indispensable was the American contribution to European defense – especially America's nuclear contribution – that the US could largely orchestrate all aspects of European

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[23] See Duke 2001; Keukeleire 2001; and Missiroli 2001.

[24] "NATO and EU sign accord," *BBC News,* 14 March 2003.

[25] There are no geographical restrictions to ESDP. Moreover, the "big three" agree that the purpose of ESDP is to respond to any crisis situation that EU member states believe to be a threat to the stability of the Union, including crises that would require the use of the military instrument.

security in ways that would support the confrontation with the USSR. The NATO Alliance was the centerpiece of the struggle and the structure by means of which the US led and largely defined the security of Europe. Security from this perspective was a single, integrated whole. The US supported the Christian Democrats in Italy because a rise to power of the Italian Communist Party would tip the balance in favor of Soviet influence. America negotiated with the Spanish dictator about the placement of military installations because the defense of the West needed geographical depth. In the aftermath of the oil embargos that crippled Europe in the 1970s, the US fought the efforts of West Europeans to build a pipeline to the USSR because that link would give the Soviet Union both access and influence in Western Europe. From the American perspective, there was only one security problem.

The security calculus has become much more complex since 1990. There are still global-strategic issues, but the focus is much less clear. Today, as in the past, NATO and the immense American power behind it are important as an intimidation to any who would provoke serious conflict in Europe or the security region around it. Yet, since the identity of potential adversaries is not certain, the mission is less to deter a specific threat than to provide for a variety of possible contingencies. Almost immediately after the fall of the Wall, however, conflict in the Balkans and severe tension almost everywhere in the former Soviet sphere of influence shifted the focus to security *within* the European regional theatre. In a short time, that change revealed that the US was not necessarily interested in Europe's regional security problems and could not be relied upon to take part in a timely manner. James Baker III (1995:636) explains that the American position in 1991 was that the then-EC could handle the Yugoslav crisis and "most important, unlike in the Persian Gulf, [US] vital national interests were not at stake" and that "clearly, [the] central focus for months to come would be on managing the peaceful dissolution of the USSR" (637).

It also became quickly apparent that the members of the EU had neither the organization nor the right kinds of military capabilities to deal with regional conflict. Without a reserve capacity for credible military enforcement, the substantial "soft security" weapons the EU could deploy – economic development aid, membership in the Western club, technical assistance of all kinds – were not effective in highly mobilized conflict situations like those in former Yugoslavia. NATO did eventually enter the fray there, but Europeans have come to understand that in any regional conflict of less than global-strategic importance, the attention of the US would not last long.

In the Cold War, there were no European regional security problems that did not have global-strategic significance. In the present era, the US might continue to lead NATO, but the extent to which the US will be an active participant in issues of chiefly regional interest seems almost certain to be limited. President Bush, the elder, commented in 1990, "We are not in Europe for the sake of the Europeans – we are in Europe for our own sake" (Huerlin 1996). A decade later, President Bush, the younger, spoke of US

withdrawal from Bosnia, and the then-prospective National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, outlined a new vision about European security, one in which the American military should be reserved for war-fighting, in the Persian Gulf or the Pacific, while the weaker European forces should concentrate on peacekeeping at home."[26]

It is this changed situation that has stimulated the rapid development of the EU as a nexus of security cooperation. Inevitably, the transition from global-strategic to regional security arrangements has been difficult, but as this paper has attempted to show, the progress has been steady. The new security structures already discussed have started to create a complex network of institutions, patterns of behavior and convergent values about security. The elaboration of structures as a way to facilitate value convergence – political will – is a familiar strategy in Europe. What is still unclear is whether neo-functional methods will be as effective in security as they were in the integration of the economy (Aybet 1997).

From the American perspective, the emergence of a new set of structures that foster cooperation in security matters – cooperation that does not include the US – is both positive and negative. On the one hand, it is entirely compatible with the desire of the US to organize security regionally and to build strong local structures to stabilize world regions. Such structures can guard against small-scale problems that could become a risk for US interests in the region and that could become larger security problems. It is also true, however, that when regional structures do not rely on the decisive military intervention of the United States, those structures are not likely to defer as often to US leadership.

In this regard, the Franco-British declaration on February 4, 2003, at Le Touquet was a kind of guarded declaration of independence.

> We welcome the rapid progress in the development of [ESDP]. The European Union now has the capacity to take decisions and to act in crisis management, including institutions, civilian and military assets, which will enable it to conduct operations with or without recourse to NATO assets.

It remains to be seen if the Iraq crisis will throw these arrangements off the tracks as some commentators have suggested.[27] In this regard, two things should be noted. First, the new arrangements had not really begun to function before the confrontation over Iraq emerged in full bloom. If the British really are prepared to commit themselves to joint security, the new arrangements may begin to forge increasing consensus on security as

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[26] *The New York Times,* 25 October 2000.
[27] See Anatol Lieven, "Europe must face up to a fractured future," *The Financial Times,* 3 February 2003, p. 25 and Burkard Schmitt, "Disunity holds the EU back from a major global role," *The International Herald Tribune,* 13 February 2003.

parallel arrangements have in other policy areas.[28] Secondly, the main difference between France and Britain in the Iraq crisis has not been about identifying Iraq as a security threat but how and when to proceed in dealing with it. In other foreign policy domains, it may prove similarly easier to fashion agreement on goals rather than on methods. Indeed, common positions in CFSP are becoming easier to reach while agreement on strategic means still is a difficult and laborious process.[29] In the Balkans, where there is a clear CFSP and a consensus about European policy (e.g. the use of EU membership as a form of political leverage over potential candidate countries), the EU is at its most effective. As a British official acknowledged, the slow and steady construction of an EU security and defense culture will encourage countries to think about European responsibilities, not just transatlantic priorities.[30] Over time, a security and defense culture in the EU may reduce the free rider problem that historically has haunted NATO.

From the US perspective, the ESDP should be attractive if it helps to share the costs and risks of stabilizing the European regional security environment. The US has massive economic and military interests in Europe, itself, but strong US influence in Europe also gives the US added weight in other parts of the world. In particular, the US wants a privileged engagement with Russia, the largest European power and the only one with the capacity to destroy the US. That relationship will be affected by America's position in the rest of Europe. The bottom line is probably that the US encourages the continued integration of Europe in as much as it consolidates regional security but resists any developments likely to produce a single European voice that might resist American security policy elsewhere in the world.

In the Balkans, the United States has encouraged the EU to assume greater responsibility for security stabilization. The EU will likely take over the NATO peacekeeping role. The EU Police Mission already has begun its work and the EU is set to take control of a mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. (FYROM). Diplomatically, the US has lent critical support to EU negotiating efforts in the region.[31] During the last two years, the US and EU acted in diplomatic partnership in crisis prevention activities in the Presevo Valley of Southern Serbia, in the FYROM and between Serbia and Montenegro. In the FYROM, the EU Special Representative operated in concert with the US Special Representative. In Serbia and Montenegro the US Secretary of State coordinated with the EU High Representative. In Southern Serbia, the EU High Representative worked alongside the Secretary-General of NATO.

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[28] As reported by a high-ranking British official in Brussels (Personal interview, 18 September 2002), "a convergence of member state perspectives already is occurring in regions such as the Balkans, North Africa and the Middle East (e.g. the Palestinian-Israeli peace process). On most issues of international security, there is more European convergence than US-EU convergence."

[29] Ibid.

[30] Personal interview, Official, British Foreign Office, 23 October 2002, Berlin.

[31] Personal interview, Official, Policy Unit, 25 September 2002, Brussels.

EU influence in the Balkans has been enhanced because it has the leverage of EU membership and related incentives to employ in crisis situations and because CFSP is best developed in this region. The EU has enjoyed the support of the US government, which due to its security interests in other parts of the world, has been willing to allow the EU to assume more responsibility and diplomatic visibility. Outside the regional context, however, transatlantic relations may be more difficult to manage and less cooperatively based.[32]

Part of the changed dynamic in relations between the EU and the United States is highlighted by Geir Lundestad (1998) in his analysis of US hegemony, or, as he puts it, American "empire building" in Europe. Lundestad contends that once the Atlantic framework is at risk, American support for European integration will quickly wane. His conclusion is that "the end of the Cold War may have widened the perimeters of the Atlantic framework, but there are still limits to how far Washington will permit a 'friendly' EU to move" (Lundestad 1998: 169). While the current Bush administration supports ESDP, it does so out of the hope that ESDP will increase European military capabilities, assets that will be deployable for NATO and US led missions. In reality, the US is loath to see a unified and independent CFSP emerge, especially when that CFSP diverges from American political priorities and diminishes the subordinate role of the EU. The question is whether US resistance will significantly slow the development of a more autonomous CFSP.

The Europeans are developing the structural means in which to analyze and formulate common security positions. A high-ranking US State Department official notes that the "PSC [of the EU] is meeting twice a week and the United States is not in the room . . . the EU is having security conversations that do not include the US and it is very frustrating for us but quite healthy for the Europeans."[33] These PSC conversations take place outside the NATO framework, without the participation of the US, and enable EU members to reach agreement on polices which may either support or diverge from US positions.

In the last two years, EU-US differences over the ICC, the Kyoto protocol, the death penalty, the ABM Treaty, and most recently, over Iraq, have underscored the growing independence of the EU as well as an accompanying value disagreement with the Bush administration. Policy divergences such as these reflect a distinctive European approach to the exercise of power and a belief in the importance of multilateral approaches to solving conflict. It would be erroneous to suggest, however, that the transatlantic dispute is nothing more than a conflict over hard versus soft forms of power, where the US is the military superpower willing and able to use force and the Europeans, the "wimps." A US official admits that the "EU is developing a full tool kit in which to respond to security

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Personal interview, US Mission to the EU, 20 September 2002, Brussels.

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threats and in many ways, is better situated to address many forms of international conflict than is the US because its conception of what needs to be *in* the toolbox is unique in the world."[34] ESDP offers the EU an opportunity to become a more equal partner to the US, but also, perhaps, a political challenger.

As Ginsberg (2001) and Nye (2002) both demonstrate persuasively, the EU already constrains American power and influences it politically. In elaboration of this point, Ginsberg (2002: 181) reminds us that "EU-U.S. political relations have become so dense, complex and distributed across nearly all geographical and functional areas of the world that it would be difficult if not impossible to grasp the universe of the instances of [EU] political impact." This dense network of interdependence is reflective of the shared values that have anchored the transatlantic relationship for more than half a century. While analysts who predict the death of the relationship overstate the seriousness of the present rift, those who underestimate the growing political impact of the EU commit just as serious an error. Nye (2002: 35) captures the seriousness of the present moment quite accurately: "whether these deeper values [in the transatlantic relationship] will prevail will depend in large part on how the United States plays its hand." When US officials comment that, "we expect to fight a war in Iraq and to see Europe there the day after, with their checkbooks open,"[35] or when European divergences over the exercise of US force in Iraq are dismissed as "old Europe," the danger of mismanagement of transatlantic relations is apparent.

Almost no one in Europe has wanted to see the US retire from the field of European security or to sacrifice NATO as the defense alliance of last resort. At the same time, however, most members of the EU want to build a more integrated political system and they accept that this must include the security dimension. Indeed, since the EU already has and uses many tools of "soft security," the remaining issue is the enhancement of military capabilities attuned to the needs of the contemporary era (Shepherd 2000). Many of those involved in the Convention on the Future of Europe that is scheduled to report in June 2003, believe that building effective structures of regional security cooperation is essential as a base for the future global influence of the EU.[36] The practical realities of managing European security interests, both regional and global-strategic, are certain to increase the pressures for a more coherent CFSP. Certainly, enhanced and effective security cooperation in the European Union is essential if the EU is to manage effectively the nearby security environments of Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean Basin and the Middle East.

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[34] Ibid.

[35] Personal interview, US official, 18 October 2002.

[36] Judy Dempsey, "UK and France to unveil Europe defense initiatives," *The Financial Times*, 2 February 2003, p.4.

To balance the contradiction between wanting continued US involvement in European security and pursuing a more autonomous and more comprehensive security and defense capability, the EU must be willing to share with the United States the costs and risks, not only of European security, but to a lesser extent, also global security. To that end, the EU must improve military capabilities and in the aftermath of the Iraq crisis, its member states will have to demonstrate the political will to find European solutions to global problems. If the transatlantic relationship is to be preserved, however, it also means that the US must rethink its approach to transatlantic relations and alter its view of Europe. It cannot view the exercise of soft power as a "lesser" form of power, especially when many global problems require the well-developed expertise and broad array of security assets (civilian, police and military) that Europe has to offer. If present developments in ESDP continue, the EU is on tract to add a significant military capability to its already broad range of security tools, an addition that should make its soft power more effective as well.

## Britain in ESDP

We cannot leave the subject of ESDP and its development, without interpreting the important but unusual position of the United Kingdom in European defense. In this regard, it does not seem unreasonable to say that, in the circumstances of the past several years, Britain's participation in CFSP – and especially in ESDP – is a kind of lifeline by which it has tethered itself to Europe. At base, the tenuousness of Britain's position in Europe emerges from the fact that it is a member of the EU, a regional community to which it *must* belong because of its geography, history and economic interests, but a community whose emergence and development the UK has done much to retard and deflect. It is rather as though it has entered a marriage that it is ever reluctant to consummate.

Given Britain's historic posture in Europe, leadership of the Union has fallen inevitably to France and Germany whose convergence of views initiated the EC/EU project. With Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), Britain's position in Europe became more marginal than it had previously been because the implications of EMU for "ever closer union" are clear. Lacking either a firm will to enter EMU anytime soon or the possibility of doing so because of problems of domestic politics, Britain has presented itself as a valuable partner in crafting and implementing ESDP.[37] It is the only area in which it can

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[37] British interests in developing ESDP are explained by both external and internal factors. European shortfalls in military capabilities, and dependence on the United States and NATO in both Bosnia and Kosovo, led to the British realization that the EU needed its own crisis response mechanisms. An UK official (Personal interview, UK Delegation to NATO, 24 September 2002) recalled that ESDP was an idea that originated in the Ministry of Defense, which wanted to find a way to increase European military capabilities. The EU context was viewed as a potentially persuasive context in which to encourage countries to increase defense expenditures. From the perspective of the Foreign Office, ESDP was possible only if the transatlantic relationship was given first priority. Additionally, ESDP has been a "European peg" on which the British Prime Minister could hang his hat. An official from the British Foreign Office

be more valuable than Germany as a partner to France. But it has endeavored to use its central position in the nascent ESDP to keep the EU militarily dependent upon the Atlantic Alliance and, from that point of view, to keep the EU from closing ranks as a system of defense cooperation. The open door to the West would mean that the politics of European defense would always include the US as a participant – a sort of transatlantic and extra-Union form of variable geometry. The significance of the agreement at Le Touquet in February 2002 may be the signal it gave that the UK was prepared to relax its insistence that the European Union should not develop any significant military capability autonomous from NATO.

Britain's assumption of the role of "first friend and ally" of the US in the Iraq crisis may be viewed as a high-stakes gamble to accomplish three related things. First, the UK wants to keep the US in Europe by making the Atlantic Alliance important to the US and also to keep the Alliance primary in European security. This allows the UK to play a special role as intermediary between Europe and USA and it also gives added weight to the "Anglo-Saxon" voice in the EU. Second, Britain wants to maintain the American defense link because it balances and sidelines French influence on defense matters at the same time that it privileges the UK. It is important to recall, in this regard, that it is Britain, not France, which has a permanent leadership position within the military structure of NATO. Keeping the Atlantic Alliance central to European defense (i.e., keeping America committed to European defense) also has the effect of supporting and expanding the existing role of UK defense contractors (e.g., BAE and Rolls Royce) in the US market. Finally, Britain needed a way quickly to establish a bond with the Bush Administration after it came to power. The relationship between President Clinton and Prime Minister Blair had been an unusually close one and, genuine human sympathy apart, a prominent role alongside the US in the post-September 11 period and in the confrontation with Iraq undoubtedly helped to overcome the suspicion of the new conservative White House. Important as military capabilities are, the United States may be over emphasizing them at a time when actual world problems often require a much broader and more nuanced approach.

Quite naturally, the goal in Britain's Atlantic strategy is to give the UK maximum flexibility and influence in the defense area and to prevent Britain from being either marginalized in Europe or drawn toward the strategic priorities of its Continental partners. It should be added that, for Britain, keeping an important – even vital – relationship with the US is more than just preferring one alliance to another. The transatlantic relationship also means remaining embedded within the world of Churchill's "English-speaking peoples" – an arena in which Britain may still claim some deference as the "mother country."

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(1 October 2002, London) explained that, "St. Malo represents a radically different approach to European integration. We decided to intentionally shape the process through positive engagement. Because we are outside EMU, we needed to find another way to become a leader in Europe."

## Conclusion

In response to the profound change in the global security environment since the end of the Cold War – a change that includes the widespread rise in the politics of identity, claims for autonomy, and the use of terror attacks by alienated groups and individuals – the European Union has moved to enlarge significantly to the East and to deepen its integration by building new political will and structural capabilities to make it a more effective agent for foreign and security policy. In doing so, the EU has been using the gradualist strategy of encouraging value convergence by creating networks of interaction and cooperation that facilitate ever more ambitious joint efforts. It was a strategy that worked well in developing economic integration and may also prove effective in the more contentious domain of foreign and security policy. Indeed, it is the argument of this paper that the transformation of the geopolitical environment and the EU's response to it are producing a paradigm shift in Europe that challenges the traditional transatlantic relationship.

The preceding sections have sketched the main outline of the EU's emergence as a security actor and described the growth of value consensus, shared experience and institutional innovations that have marked the cautious entry of the EU into the security field. The development of ESDP has been a focus of particular attention, and we have discussed the impact of ESDP on Europe's relations with the United States as well as the special role played by the UK. It remains now to return to the observation that all this is changing the way in which Europe approaches transatlantic issues.

The security community at the heart of the traditional transatlantic relationship has shown great vitality in the past decade. After an initial period when NATO seemed unlikely to continue as a relevant security actor, the Atlantic Alliance has been shown itself to be flexible in adapting to the changed security environment. The Partnership for Peace (PfP) and other arrangements to include former Warsaw Pact members represented a series of efforts to extend the influence of NATO to the East and to engage Russia in ways that reduced its sense of threat from NATO expansion. The decision to offer formal membership in the Alliance to some former Warsaw Pact countries formalized the intention to incorporate Central and Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea into a security system led and effectively dominated by the United States. The eagerness of new members to join suggests two conclusions: the continuing attractiveness of NATO as a security community and a willingness of new members to follow American policy leadership. From this perspective, the Atlantic Alliance is alive, well and growing in influence.

The emergence of the EU as a security actor within the Atlantic Alliance – and parallel to it – is the phenomenon we have been reviewing in this paper. In our analysis, the transatlantic relationship is very much complicated by developments like ESDP. From one point of view, the development of EU security policy adds to the capabilities of

Alliance members and it is a net gain for the Alliance, a direction in which the UK has tried to take EU security planning. In somewhat hesitant ways, however, others in the EU have wanted a more autonomous capability – one that would enable EU action with or without the US. Obviously, this is an approach that could only emerge in a post-cold War context.

There are several reasons to believe that the US led alliance may have weaknesses that favor the continued development of ESDP. First and most obvious is that the glue that held members in line behind US leadership, a common danger and a common enemy, is largely gone. What replaces it is the continuing need to balance an overly large, but very much weakened, Russia should the latter be made threatening in some future situation, and also by the more recent *deus ex machina* of global terrorism. What is gone is both the urgency and the focus of the threat.

Second, the main security concerns of Europe in the current era are specific to the extended European region and do not much involve issues of global strategic importance. Here, too, NATO is attempting to adapt by creating immediate reaction and rapid reaction forces designed partly to steal the march on the EU's similar initiative (Headline goal). But NATO's RRF proposal, itself, recognizes the mismatch that has come to exist between intercontinental missiles, nuclear weapons, and carrier battle groups, on the one hand, and Europe's regional security issues on the other. Nor is it clear how long alliance partners would be willing to accept US leadership on a RRF if most of its military force is to be contributed by Europe.

Third – and this has been a main point of this paper – the momentum of EU integration has been very great in the past fifteen years and the transition to EMU has strongly reinforced and extended the pressures for further cooperation in foreign and security policy fields (Aybet 1997: 200). A capacity for autonomy from US policy is the hallmark of that cooperation, a fact that was acknowledged even by the UK at Le Touquet on February 4, 2003. Britain's effort to keep the US firmly in Europe, at least in part to sustain British leverage within ESDP, is a credible explanation for the extraordinary risks run by the Blair Government in supporting the US position in Iraq so vigorously. At the end of the day, the Iraq crisis appears to have weakened the transatlantic link without also having strengthened – at least for the present – CFSP. In this regard, however, it is worth noting two press reports of March 14, 2003. An article with the headline "France 'poisoning' efforts to win peaceful solution, says UK" is located next to an article proclaiming that "London and Paris push ahead on common EU defence goals."[38] In the midst of strategic divergence over Iraq, the UK and France seem to have the political will to put ESDP back on track.

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[38] See James Blitz, "France 'poisoning' efforts to win peaceful solution, says UK," *The Financial Times*, 14 March 2003, p.3 and Judy Dempsey, "London and Paris push ahead on common EU defence goals," *The Financial Times*, 14 March 2003, p.3.

The fourth element in the pattern of change we have been examining is the more diverse composition of an enlarged NATO alliance. Not only will it include new actors from Central Europe and the Balkans, but also the development of CFSP within the EU means that, to an extent that has no precedent, members will be under pressure from the EU as well as the US when policy preferences diverge. In an atmosphere of greatly reduced threat from any specific enemy, it is not clear that the US will exercise the same degree of influence as in the past.

Fifth, if the US does perceive a diminished capacity to lead and to mobilize Europe's resources in pursuit of policy goals increasingly far afield from Europe, it is reasonable to project that its interest in the Alliance will wane as some analysts have suggested.[39] In fact, this tendency, already apparent in the administration of President Clinton has become explicit in the current administration of President Bush.

Past experience and present evidence suggest strongly that the Atlantic Alliance, with NATO at its center, will continue to be the centerpiece of formal relations between Europe and the US. The relationship is vastly more than the security community at its heart, but that community has long mitigated tensions that have arisen in the course of normal economic, legal and diplomatic interaction across the Atlantic. What is being eroded to a degree as yet uncertain is the near monopoly of influence and leadership that the US has exerted in security affairs. US leadership will continue to be crucial in a genuinely global-strategic conflict, but it is instructive that America's strategy for dealing with Iraq in global-strategic terms met stiff European resistance.

What present developments in ESDP suggest is that the EU and its member states will increasingly make policy decisions that have security implications with less and less concern about what the Americans will do. If it continues to develop, ESDP would appear to give the EU a stronger negotiating position across-the-board within Europe and in its enlarged security zone. Where this leaves the EU in the blurred zone between regional conflicts and global-strategic ones that affect the international balance of power is a question of increasing interest in the years ahead.

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[39] See Ronald Brownstein, "Washington on Brink of a New Era," *The Los Angeles Times,* 18 March 2003.

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