

Beyond Strategic Culture? Grand Strategy, the European Union  
and Security Cooperation

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## Abstract

This paper will consider the extent to which European Union (EU) foreign policy is driven by humanitarian and/or geopolitical considerations. The paper will also analyse the extent to which the EU's external actions have a sense of cohesion and shared culture that enables the Union to develop joined-up thinking on security questions. What can this also tell us about EU power and Grand Strategy in the world and the extent to which Europe is in relative decline as is often posited in the literature on global governance? The paper will do this by focusing on case studies which facilitate an analysis of the extent to which the EU has developed a strategic culture in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The key case here is the Libya operation of 2011 as this was a test for EU actorness as well as the prospects for a European strategic culture. This case will be juxtaposed with European involvement in the Atlantic Alliance in the Afghanistan case to test the extent to which EU external action is coherent and the extent to which such actions are guided by a coherent strategy that we may term Grand Strategy.

## Beyond Strategic Culture? Grand Strategy, the European Union and Security Cooperation

### Setting the Scene: EU Grand Strategy and Cooperation in a World Transformed

Much recent literature on the European Union (EU) in the world has concentrated on the extent to which Europe is in decline in the wider world due to deficits in intra-European cooperation, structural reasons in Europe and globally, EU ideational deficits in European security thinking, a lack of EU strategic vision and ambition. The Australian political scientist Douglas Webber has recently written in 'Declining Power Europe? The Evolution of the EU's Power in World Power in the Early 21st Century' (forthcoming) that: power is '...the capacity to cause other (extra-EU) actors to behave in ways that they would not do otherwise'. This clearly takes its lead from Steven Lukes first face of power: 'A has power over B to the extent that B will do something that he would not do otherwise' (Lukes, 1974). In this context, Webber foresees several types of "European Union "EU" Powers": On the one hand, he cites Material hard powers – (a) military threat or use of force (b) economics (sanctions and restriction of EU market access) as being part of the European power structures. On the other hand, Webber cites Normative "Soft Power" Ideology - via persuasion and diplomacy - as being at least as significant as material power in explaining EU actorness and strategy. This argument is couched in the context of the EU and Europe more broadly being in decline due to its inability to marshal military and/or economic resources. Even so, the EU's Power Base and Multidimensional operations rest on several fronts: Regulatory politics (as in top down policies advanced in particular by the European Commission aided by adherence to the EU's *acquis politique*); Environmental politics (the EU has held increasing sway over environmental protection in Europe since the 1990s and in global climate talks); Monetary and fiscal policy (the EU has implemented economic and monetary union via the Central Bank and Single Currency since the early 2000s); External Trade policy (the European Commission holds great sway in negotiations bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally and its powers have arguably been enhanced by the Lisbon Treaty of December 2009); Security and defence policy (the EU's security policies in the areas of Justice and Home Affairs have gained salience since 9/11 whilst in foreign policy the CSDP has concentrated on crisis management. The new EEAS may have broader impacts on the diplomatic level in the CFSP); Promotion of

democracy and human rights (the EU has programmes to promote its normative values towards the outside world and they have had varying success in their own terms), and; Promotion of regional integration and co-operation (emulation is the greatest form of flattery. ASEAN, MERCOSUR, NAFTA, AU have all - to some degree - copied the EU's model but lack its deep integration).

Following Webber above, the EU's *regulatory politics* derives from the Single European Market and its application of EU-wide rules in areas of monopolies and mergers. For example, the EU invoked anti-trust legislation to scupper GE's proposed merger with Honeywell highlighting the centralised powers of the Commission to regulate Europe-wide in this area. In terms of *environmental politics*, the EU was a world leader until the ill-fated Copenhagen summit of 2009 which to some degree rendered the Union as being less significant in the field. In terms of *world trade* the EU is still an incredibly important actor though has lost ground to the BRICS in recent years and in the World Trade Organisation multilaterally, though the Union is still an extremely potent actor bilaterally in the majority of such negotiations. The EU is an effective monetary and fiscal actor after the introduction of the single currency and Central Bank in 2001. However, this has to some degree been undermined by successive Euro-crises since 2008 and the flaws of the system have been exposed. Some EU member states would prefer more market based solutions to the economic crisis whereas others would prefer more political union to match the economic structures at the EU level. However, the EU has been superseded to some degree by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in providing solutions to Europe's southern debt crisis. Furthermore, as Webber points out, the Euro has not replaced the dollar as the world's reserve currency with countries holding 2.5 times more of the latter as opposed to the former in 2012. With regards to *security and defence policy* defence cuts have reduced the prospect of a 60,000 EU Rapid Reaction Force to a handful of yet to be tested "Battle Groups" of much smaller size and ambition. In terms of *democracy promotion and human rights* the EU has successfully used its normative power in enlargements to change the thinking and behaviour of states joining the EU. However, where there is no carrot (such as enlargement) the EU has been less successful in using its values and norms to effect change externally. Examples include Russia's annexation of the Crimea and the Arab Spring. Finally, the mantra of extolling the virtues of *promoting regional cooperation and integration* to the outside world has brought the EU's lower and vision into question at a time when regional integration projects are under pressure worldwide. All of the above

implies that the EU is in decline in world affairs and that its prospects of developing a Grand Strategy predicated on a defined strategic culture is therefore less relevant in contributing towards global governance in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Nevertheless, the EU is a political project at its heart and is guided by strategy. Strategic culture in this context is linked to culture more generally. Strategic culture is a 'set of general beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours patterns...' (Snyder, 1977). Others see strategic culture as being part of the socio-psychological arena of decision choices available to policy-makers, whereas others still see strategic culture as being part of the beliefs and assumptions framing choices. Strategic culture can be influenced by international norms and social constructions of the wider world and internally-processed norms. The constructivist turn in International Relations (IR) has highlighted that material norms alone in themselves cannot explain strategic choices and values underlying these norms also influence what is understood as culture or strategic culture. EU strategic culture is a relatively under-researched field, but has gained saliency in the literature in recent years (Winn, 2014). Work in the field has been done by Howorth (2007, 2010) and Biscop and Coelmont (2011a) to define how we might think of strategic culture and how the EU responds to this in its search for a grand strategy. Meyer (2005, 2006) has contributed a constructivist analysis of strategic culture in the EU to the debates. Menon has fused institutionalist and realist approaches toward CSDP in his work (Menon, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011a). Chappell has written on CSDP from the perspective of strategic culture and role theory (Chappell, 2012). Luis Simon has written on CSDP strategy and crisis management (Simon, 2012). Mattelaer has written on EU military operations and their relationship with strategy (Mattelaer, 2013). Michael E. Smith has combined aspects of institutionalism and realism in his analysis of CSDP (Smith, 2011). Kempin and Mawdsley have written on the relationship between CSDP strategy and US hegemony (Kempin & Mawdsley, 2013). In 2011, a special issue of *Contemporary Security Policy* was devoted to CSDP and strategic culture with articles on different aspects of EU security policy and strategic culture from various theoretical perspectives (Haglund, 2011; Haine, 2011; Kammel, 2011; Norheim-Martinsen, 2011; Pentland, 2011; Peters, 2011; Rynning, 2011a, b; Schmidt, 2011; Schmidt & Zyla, 2011; Zyla, 2011). A similar, theoretically aware collection of articles on CSDP was also published as a special issue of the *Journal of Common Market Studies* in 2011 using Foucauldian theory, policy networks, realism, social constructivism,

institutionalism, and varieties of social theory (Bickerton, 2011; Bickerton, Irondelle, & Menon, 2011; Hofmann, 2011; Menon, 2011a, b; Merand, Hofmann & Irondelle, 2011; Merlingen, 2011; Meyer & Strickmann, 2011; Rynning, 2011b; Toje, 2011).

In many ways, the EU is a mixture of material factors and ideational beliefs in foreign policy terms. The ideology of normative power Europe is one such prominent example of this. Indeed, the EU is nothing if not a normative as well as a partially conceived material project that is predicated on building a broader European peace project alongside broadly European economic material foundations. The normative power Europe concept is also an extremely useful analytical framework for analysis (Manners, 2002). Others go further claiming that the European Security Strategy (2003) has reset the European strategic mindset to go beyond traditional national and materially-based definitions of power towards an ideationally-defined conception of European security and also constructivist modes of analysis for this new Europe of ideas. Grand strategy is a set of ideas and actions made up of political, economic, military and cultural bases that help to define foreign policy. EU Grand Strategy comprises aspects of physical security, economic statecraft and value projection (Smith, 2011, 150). In the end, the EU is a humanitarian actor that is guided by humanitarian considerations as well as geopolitics (Kreutz, 2015).

It is an interesting exercise to consider the extent to which EU foreign policy is driven by humanitarian and/or geopolitical considerations. Furthermore, it is also an interesting exercise to ascertain the extent to which the EU's external actions have a sense of cohesion and shared strategic culture that enables the Union to develop joined-up thinking on security questions. This might be all the more important if Europe is in relative decline in the world. What can this tell us about EU power in the world and the extent to which Europe is in relative decline as is often posited in the literature on global governance? The paper will do this by focusing in on case studies which seek to illuminate the extent to which the EU has developed a coherent strategic culture in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and juxtaposing this with European involvement in the Atlantic Alliance to test the extent to which EU external action is coherent and the extent to which such actions are guided by a coherent strategy that we may term Grand Strategy. As such it also seemed appropriate to couch these questions in terms analysing big strategic case

studies around Libya in 2011 and the last days of the Afghan ISAF mission which recently ended with US and European effective withdrawal.

### The CSDP Experience So Far: CSDP under a NATO Umbrella?

The key EU institution engaged in CSDP operations is the Political and Security Committee (PSC) (Dzable, 2011, pp.211-228). Let us introduce the paper with some basics. CSDP operations can either be civilian, military or a combination of the two. CSDP civilian missions encompass activities such as election monitoring, stabilisation, educational projects, peacekeeping and so forth. CSDP military operations involve the stabilisation of a territory, for example, in Europe or beyond via the use of a mixture of civilian and military instruments. Military operations are financed by the EU member states which participate in the operation. Costs as such lie where they fall and this can disincentivise states from participating in EU military crisis management operations. Pure EU military missions – if such a thing exists in practice – are deployed as a last resort derived from the range of external tools available to the EU in the foreign affairs field. CSDP military operations are dependent on the participating EU member states to enact the terms and conditions of the mandate of the given operation. In practical terms only France and Britain have a semblance of world class defence capabilities but a high percentage of member governments are able to muster penny packets of military capabilities to enable CSDP military operations, particularly Italy, Spain, Poland, Germany and Romania. CSDP operations take place under the concept of permanent structured (PESCO) that was enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty 2009) (Biscop and Colemont, 2011b). PESCO is intergovernmental in nature and is dependent on the EU's member states capabilities and intentions. PESCO itself extends beyond the confines of CSDP and does offer a convenient framework for developing national cooperation in the EU to mount CSDP military crisis management operations on a coalition of the willing basis.

The experience of CSDP from its inception in 2003 to present today over a decade later has mainly been concerned with delivering military civilian missions and civilian-military operations under the EU's crisis management concept. This is a niche marketing position by the EU concentrating on what it can do in its Neighbourhood and is linked to broader economic and development policies especially through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Thus far the CSDP experience has not

specifically been in the defence field *per se* beyond tackling maritime piracy in the Indian Ocean in Operation Atalanta and in peace support operations. CSDP civilian missions and military operations have been mainly focused on post-conflict reconstruction, election monitoring, peace keeping/peace enforcement, providing assistance to development priorities and so forth. The main defence provider in Europe (when we are speaking of conventional territorial defence and power projection) is still the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). In practice CSDP operates under a NATO umbrella providing goods and services for crisis management in Europe and in its Near Abroad whilst NATO concentrates on collective defence. CSDP's successes have been qualified and limited to crisis management. As the former head of the European Defence Agency has argued:

...European defence ministers have repeatedly launched new plans of action [in the EU and in CSDP]...to little or no effect...With an entrenched economic crisis across Europe, and almost universally falling defence budgets, 'pooling and sharing' is now on everyone's lips...Yet, away from the ministerial declaration and the conference hall, virtually nothing changes (Witney, 2013, p.3).

This is ironic given the emerging two-tier nature of the Atlantic Alliance where Europe and America seem to be drifting apart on Grand Strategy. The Obama administration's international priorities are changing away from Europe towards a destiny in the Asia-Pacific region. Former US Defense Secretary Robert Gates argued several years ago that Europe was not pulling its weight in transatlantic relations and globally, which has been reinforced by his successors Leon Panetta and Chuck Hagel. CSDP was absent during the Libya crisis of early 2011, and this could have been an ideal test for its military capabilities in the framework of the EU military crisis management doctrine. The EU failed to go beyond the trilateral Anglo-French-American military action as this was a NATO operation in all but name. The EU one surmises has an incentive to develop CSDP accordingly to deal with such eventualities? In an era when the US is withdrawing resources from Europe, Washington is engaged in a dual policy of retrenchment and counterpunching. Retrenchment, in this case, meaning from traditional allies and counterpunching in interdisciplinary high intensity areas such as counter-terrorism, low-intensity conflict, counter-insurgency, intelligence liaison with selected partners and so forth.



Essentially, the US wants Europe to take on more burdens from the US perspective and the EU's member states still seem to want to concentrate on crisis management in CSDP. Europe is in fact in possibly in danger of becoming far less important in US grand strategy unless it becomes more relevant and capable militarily beyond crisis management? It is also possible that Europe might be in global strategic decline in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Following this line of argument it would also be in the EU's best interests to develop CSDP capabilities for good practical military reasons and to increase the level of defence integration in Europe. This also has broader implications for the European integration project itself and the political union project. If the EU and its member states are unwilling to go beyond what exists the prospects for a federal EU defence policy and the creation of a federal Europe are attenuated. The same logic could also be applied to building the prospects for a Grand Strategy and accompanying strategic culture.

Even if NATO holds sway in European and transatlantic defence *per se* there are still problems with the Atlantic Alliance. For instance, during the Libya crisis NATO performed reasonably effectively, but was fragmented with multiple member state priorities particularly in Europe. Basic splits exist between Atlanticist and Europeanist states on both theological and practical grounds. Four groups of states exist in NATO: (a) those with the right mix of troops and weapons (b) those with the right means and solidarity to contribute towards the wider operational and philosophical underpinnings of NATO (c) those who were against the Libya mission but had good military capabilities, and (d) those that lacked the means altogether. In the Libya operation the UK and France took the lead in Europe whereas Germany and Poland did not participate. The French position on NATO of not using US assets for military operations was left exposed by the EU's Capability-Expectations Gap and its own lack of assets in a number of areas. US assets were not favoured by Paris, but Europe lacks key military capabilities for crisis management including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) – JSTARS, AWACS and Air-refuelling. Europe collectively "owes" the US \$222million for the Libya operation which the US had to lead from behind following Anglo-French requests for logistical assistance. This was also embarrassing for Europe as a military actor and for the EU in particular.

The above reflections on the Libya operation are subsumed within a broader debate on NATO and its role in world. One could also add to this that the EU is increasingly

subsumed militarily speaking into NATO and that this has undoubtedly affected the Union's strategic culture which is broadly transatlantic. However, saying that there are key differences between Europe and the US on what role the Atlantic Alliance should take in the wider world. On the key issue of NATO as either an Out-of-Area versus a Regional Actor the US foresees the Atlantic Alliance as being as being an Out-of-Area actor. In the US worldview NATO should deal with a range of interdisciplinary issues such as counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency, military cyber threats to critical infrastructure and weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The evidence since 9/11 backs this up with US foreign missions in Iraq and Afghanistan underpinned by NATO and individual European states. The US needs Europe to be a reliable ally in NATO in fighting mini wars around the world and not all European states agree with this role for themselves by any means. Europe through its practice conceives of itself as being a regional actor in defence and believes that NATO should focus on European and transatlantic defence not on developing a more interdisciplinary global role for the Atlantic Alliance. This view holds little sway in Washington which takes a disproportionate burden of finances and troops in NATO. Several EU states have also expressed a preference for pursuing an autonomous EU defence policy through CSDP but this is far from reality and is contested between EU member states. Again, given there is a lack of a shared grand strategic script in Europe on NATO and CSDP alike this attenuates either meaningful European participation in NATO (as it has evolved as a global actor since 9/11) or to offer a European alternative to the Atlantic Alliance through the structures of the EU and CSDP.

The EU's lack of a common identity in NATO and CSDP is further demonstrated in the decade long commitment in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a key security threat to the Euro-Atlantic community. The preferred US strategy for dealing with Afghanistan since 9/11 has been COIN-led with debates on counter-terrorism entering strategy in recent years. The preferred European approach to Afghanistan has been one of stabilisation and reconstruction predicated on crisis management style Petersburg Tasks such as peace keeping. This is at odds with the US proclivity for fighting mini-wars using military COIN techniques as has been the case in Iraq and Afghanistan. As is mentioned above, the EU's focus on European and Neighbourhood security is also at odds with the American view of global security. Additionally, most European states would prefer NATO and the EU to stick to the Euro-Atlantic area rather than becoming out-of-area organisations that fight mini-wars around the globe. Finally,

European military force structures are still overly land based and lack key maritime and airlift capabilities that are needed even for effective military crisis management, much less fighting a war. This does not work for either developing Europe's wider military role in NATO or for developing effective military capabilities in an EU context for the operation of CSDP and will have an impact on the wider political union project if not addressed by the EEAS and the EU's member states.

CSDP is concerned with EU civilian and military crisis management rather than traditional war fighting and power projection. European armed forces are correspondingly designed for conventional attack and crisis management in Europe and in the European near abroad. European militaries cannot therefore undertake large combat missions beyond Europe's borders. On a larger scale this has caused problems in Afghanistan: America's limited wars are not supported by the EU/Europe more generally. On a smaller scale, as is evidenced above, France and the UK even had to call on US logistical support in the context of the Libya operation in 2011 which was characterised by a close geographical proximity to Europe and the operation was of extremely limited duration. If Britain and France cannot carry out such a limited operation alone then the prospects for EU defence does not bode well (that is even if the UK was more committed to European defence and European integration, which it is not in general).

Additionally, and to complicate matters, Europe has not had a homogeneous policy on Afghanistan. The US, UK, Canada, the Netherlands and Denmark have all operated at various times in the flashpoints of the Afghan-Pakistan border (with the Netherlands subsequently withdrawing troops anyway). Germany has constitutional restrictions on rules of engagement (RoE) and cannot go beyond peacekeeping and has deployed troops in the less fraught northern districts of the country. Differing national threat perceptions in Europe have also militated against a single European foreign policy on Afghanistan. Anglo-Saxon core states prefer military COIN, whereas the majority of EU member states have pushed stabilisation in Afghanistan as opposed to military COIN.

Differences in strategy on Afghanistan between Europe and America have strained alliance cohesion in NATO. National interests abound and coalitions of the willing operate within the EU and NATO on defence matters when it comes to actual military operations of any kind, not just in Afghanistan. The Atlantic Alliance lacks a shared strategy generally and on Afghanistan in particular. As is well know, the EU similarly

lacks a Grand Strategy worthy of the name in general and struggles to even mount military crisis management operations of any size. In NATO there have been debates on force transformation in the past five years towards high tempo out-of-area operations, but the majority of European allies have opted out and instead concentrate on civilian crisis management in CSDP. These debates actually started at the end of the Cold War with the first Gulf War in 1990-91 which was an out-of-area operation. The US out-of-area strategy emphasises high technology conventional military force transformation which Europe cannot compete with given its military technology and capabilities gaps. However, the Europeans might have a point in that whilst the US strategy is suitable for fighting conventional wars it is not necessarily suitable for conducting guerrilla warfare or COIN operations.

Therefore, since the 1990s US force transformation has been oriented towards rapid reaction in US army doctrine. This was quickened after 9/11 under Donald Rumsfeld at the Department of Defense. European force transformation has correspondingly been much slower and this has irritated the US as it means Europe cannot contribute to out-of-area operations in any meaningful way. For example, Europe has relatively poor capabilities in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) compared to the US. By 9/11 NATO was not the primary forum for US-EU and wider European military cooperation. Instead, ad-hoc coalitions of states emerged to react to international crises on case by case basis. Today in practice the EU's CSDP is the main referent point on a day-to-day basis for the majority of EU member states and not US-led NATO out-of-area operations. The EU and its member states have therefore not seen the need to transform their militaries to either enhance conventional war fighting capabilities or to contribute to fighting mini-wars around the globe under an American umbrella through NATO after 9/11. Instead, ad-hoc coalitions of the willing have been engaged in out-of-area activities since 9/11 in NATO and bilaterally. Correspondingly, neither, CSDP or NATO create common interests and threat perceptions: they react to national concerns. The UK and France are the only European states with this national capability out-of-area anyway and the lack of European capabilities constrains NATO force transformation to take on full-spectrum operations as in Afghanistan or Iraq.

This is further compounded by budgetary issues that pre-date the current economic downturn. The EU and its member states do not spend enough on defence to be capable of force transformation beyond Europe's borders. Europe is not equipped for

asymmetric warfare, COIN, and CT operations beyond its borders if a military component is required. Europe is instead most equipped for defence in its own territory (relying on US support should any existential threat(s) emerge in the future) and military crisis management through CSDP. Nevertheless, the EU does possess significant non-military capabilities that can be deployed in NATO, CSDP and in other forums globally. The EU/European contribution to global security since 9/11 is human skills, area expertise, foreign languages, civil-military units and “human centric” expertise which are all important capabilities in an era of globalised security threats. Indeed, the experience in Afghanistan leads one to conclude that fighting insurgency needs more than just military COIN. Civilian capabilities build confidence in the host population. In terms of the transformation of human-centric skills around interdisciplinary issues such as terrorism the EU has a niche in these non-military areas. Arguably, Europe needed a unified strategy on Afghanistan and needs a broader Grand Strategy, based on an updated ESS (2003) document. The Union *itself* does not have the resources and powers to go beyond what already exists but has ambitions to transcend the current mix of EU capabilities and crisis management-oriented doctrines. The passage of the Lisbon Treaty (2009) and the subsequent creation of the EEAS are something of a potential game changer in this regard but are still promissory.

This is all the more important given that Washington’s strategic priorities are gradually shifting towards China, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific. “Traditional” ties of history and shared culture between Europe and the US are slowly breaking down as older generations of American elite’s of European descent pass away. President Obama himself is a prime example of this trend. Furthermore, burden-sharing is a perennial issue in transatlantic relations: the US spends about 4.5% of GDP on defence whereas European average is a little over 1.3% based on fragmented national contributions. The European allies will not share the defence burden with the US globally and transatlantically and this is undoubtedly having a knock-on effect for US-European relations as it has periodically since the founding of the Atlantic Alliance. Even where European military capabilities are put into effect this is done on a case-by-case mostly bilateral basis between France and Britain in a pragmatic way. In the case of Libya in 2011 European defence cooperation was replaced by bilateral pragmatism to “get things done”, an extension of the bilateral Anglo-French defence agreement of late 2010. Multilateralism in CSDP and NATO is not efficient given defence deficiencies and pragmatism of individual European

states. This serves to encourage bilateral arrangements and modes of thinking about strategy.

Europe has made little movement to create usable and practical civilian and military structures beyond the European continent and crisis management. CFSP/CSDP was a side player in Afghanistan, if at all and had also been a side player in the Libya interventions in 2011. This has further exacerbated the differences within Europe on defence and transatlantically as well. The US favours out-of-area limited wars whereas EU member states generally favour national foreign and defence policies which predominantly concentrate on either the defence of Europe itself or on CSDP crisis management mostly of the civilian variety. To some degree this chimes with the Obama doctrine of selective leadership in humanitarian crises, but the rub is that Europe in this view has to learn to fend for itself outside of “global game changing crises” that affect Europe. The US will no longer automatically step in to help. This does not bode well as even the UK and France – the most capable of all EU member states militarily – were unable even to handle the relatively low tempo temporally limited Libya operation and had to ask for US help. Such help might not be so forthcoming in the future as US strategy changes to Asia-Pacific and especially if Europe does not help itself when it comes to developing defence capabilities. It is a fact that the Libya operation was not possible without US military hardware and logistical support to Europe. Indeed, despite all the rhetoric in the EEAS for the EU to develop its own defence capabilities through CSDP, Europe is not capable of defending itself or mounting military operations beyond CSDP-type missions, so therefore will be less relevant to the US in the future. What does this mean for European defence integration and for the European project more generally? This would seem to present the EU with a golden opportunity to develop its military capabilities, develop a renewed ESS with a Grand Strategy, and also kick start the political union project to create a federalised EU.

## Conclusion: EU Grand Strategy in an Era of Relative Decline?

To a greater than a lesser extent, even if there has been an increase in EU actorness and greater strategic awareness in recent years, if this is being done against the backdrop of broader EU/European decline in the world (which is in itself contested) then the prospects for EU Grand Strategy will be surely attenuated. Any EU Grand Strategy - if it exists - is still largely based on the EU's economic prowess and to a secondary sense on diplomacy and traditional foreign policy. The EU's norms and values through its normative power are in effect transferred into the economic realm multilaterally via regulation. The EU's grand strategy is a mixture of constructed values and norms as well as materially-based factors. The upshot is that if the EU is to rest itself away from - potential or real - relative decline it should ratchet up the prospects for economic and political integration in Europe in order to build up pan-European capabilities in the wider world. As we have seen above, this should also include the security and defence realms. Going back to Webber (forthcoming), the EU's major powers in the world are in the areas of trade, regulation, and environmental policy. However, one wonders about the extent to which the member states will cede powers to the EU in other areas to maintain Europe's place in the wider world. This has to be open to question given sluggish EU responses to Afghanistan, Libya, Georgia, Ukraine, the Crimea, the Arab Spring and the Euro crisis. To conclude, norms and values can define one's position in the broader world, but they cannot in themselves guarantee multilateral cooperation in Europe itself. Furthermore, issues with the structure of modern Europe might also preclude such active cooperation in the future thereby undercutting the prospects for a renewed ESS and by extension a vigorous EU Grand Strategy that would be worthy of the name at a time when Europe is potentially in relative decline in the wider world.

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