A Military Strategy for the EU

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Introduction

The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty constitutes an important juncture for the EU, which merits a strategic reflection about the objectives and priorities of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). When and where should the EU contribute, or even take the lead, in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and crisis management, with its full range of diplomatic, civilian and military instruments? That ought to be determined by a more complete European Security Strategy (ESS) – the grand strategy – that outlines the EU's fundamental objective and its vital interests, by the foreign policy priorities flowing from that grand strategy, and by the EU's specific interests and objectives vis-à-vis an issue or region.

On this point, EU strategic thinking is the least explicit. While there are many strategy documents elaborating on various dimensions of the ESS – e.g. on the Neighbourhood, on Africa, on WMD, on terrorism – there is no specific strategy for CSDP. Hence there is a missing link between the vague yet ambitious goal expressed in the ESS – "to share in the responsibility for global security" – and the practice of CSDP operations and capability development. Because the overall goal of the ESS has not been translated into clear objectives and priorities, CSDP to some extent operates in a strategic void. The guidance that does exist, offers only some elements of strategy: it concerns form rather than substance. The Petersberg Tasks give an indication of the types of operations that the EU can undertake, and the Headline Goal of the scale of the capabilities that Member States are willing to commit – but that does not tell us *when* and *where* the EU needs to intervene. Furthermore, as we shall see, even about the types of operations and the scale of the effort, some ambiguities are consciously kept alive by certain actors.

Until now CSDP has thus been a bottom-up undertaking. The capabilities that have been developed and the operations that have been undertaken have gradually generated indications of what might evolve into a strategy, rather than that they have been guided by a strategy. A more explicit security and defence strategy is now required to give more direction to CSDP. Otherwise Member States cannot ensure that scarce resources and limited capabilities are consistently focussed on commonly identified priorities. In any case there are, sadly, too many conflicts and crises for the EU to deal effectively with all of them, especially in a leading role. Therefore, as the 2008 Report on the Implementation of the ESS states, "We need to prioritise our commitments, in line with resources". This holds especially true at a time when as a consequence of the economic and financial crisis defence budgets across Europe are under severe pressure and every Euro spent on defence must – rightly – be justified to taxpayers. The reverse is also true, however: if it wants to remain credible, the EU must commit the necessary resources, in line with its priorities and ambitions. Three dimensions must be considered in any CSDP-strategy: priorities and objectives, the types of operations that can potentially be undertaken to meet those, and the capabilities to be committed to that end.

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Lessons Learned from CSDP Operations

The EU has not remained idle, witness the long list of past and present operations. But an assessment of CSDP operations so far will demonstrate that Gray's (2009: 15-16) strong argument for a clear strategy applies as much to the EU as to any other actor:

> "Defence planning needs to be based on political guidance, and that guidance should make its assumptions explicit. Sometimes we neglect this, and the oversight can prove costly. Conditions, which is to say contexts, can change, and so should the working assumptions behind policy. You can forget what your assumptions have been if you forgot to make them explicit".

Overview of Past and Current Operations

The EU has so far completed four military operations:
- Concordia in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) (2003), following up on a NATO operation, to assist the peaceful implementation of the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement, with a force of 350.
- Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (2003), to stabilize the area around the city of Bunia in the east of the country, with a force of 1800.
- EUFOR RD Congo (2006), to provide stability during the presidential elections, with a force of 2300.
- EUFOR Chad/CAR (2008-9), to protect refugees, facilitate humanitarian aid, and assist the work of the UN, with a force of 3700.

It has also completed six civilian-military missions:[2]
- EUJUST Themis in Georgia (2004-5), to assist with the reform of the criminal justice system, with a dozen experts.
- EUPOL Proxima in the FYROM (2004-5), to assist the country's police, with a force of some 200 police and civilian officials.
- EU support to the African Union Mission in Sudan (2005-7), a mixed civilian-military operation proving advice, training and transport, with some 50 civilian and military personnel.
- EUPAT in the FYROM (2006), a follow-up mission to Proxima of some 30 police advisors.
- Aceh Monitoring Mission in Indonesia (2005-6), monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement between Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), with some 80 monitors.
- EUPOL Kinshasa in the DRC (2005-7), supporting the Integrated Police Unit of the country's national police in the transition period, with some 30 police advisors.

Three military operations are ongoing:
- EUFOR Althea in Bosnia (since 2004), following up on a NATO operation, to stabilize the country after the civil war, with a force that has now been down-sized to 1950.

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[2] In reality, some of the civilian missions are military operations in all but name, and are implemented by military personnel in civilian dress, but have been labelled civilian for political reasons.

- EUNAVFOR Atalanta (since 2008), to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia, with a force of 1800 manning 4 frigates and various other vessels and aircraft.
- EUTM Somalia (since 2010), to train Somali security forces in Uganda, with some 150 personnel.

Finally, eleven civilian-military missions are ongoing as well:
- EUPM in Bosnia and Herzegovina (since 2003), following on to the UN's Integrated Police Task Force to assist the country reforming its police, with a force of 280.
- EUBAM in Moldova and Ukraine (since 2005), assisting both countries with border management, with a force of 200.
- EUSEC in the DRC (since 2005), an SSR mission with some 50 staff.
- EUJUST LEX for Iraq (since 2005), training criminal justice officials with some 40 staff.
- EUBAM Rafah in the Palestinian Territories (since 2005), monitoring the border crossing point between Gaza and Egypt with some 25 staff.
- EUPOL COPPS in the Palestinian Territories (since 2006), to assist the police, with some 100 staff.
- EUPOL in the DRC (since 2007), a follow-up mission to EUPOL Kinshasa, assisting the country's police, with some 60 staff.
- EUPOL in Afghanistan (since 2007), assisting the country's police, with some 450 staff.
- EUMM in Georgia (since 2008), monitoring the implementation of the Six Point Agreement between Georgia and Russia, with some 400 monitors.
- EULEX Kosovo (since 2008), assisting the country in the police, judiciary and customs areas, including some executive tasks, with some 1700 international and 1100 local staff.
- EU SSR in Guinea Bissau (since 2008), an SSR mission with some 16 staff.

A Lack of Strategy

The list above demonstrates that the EU is certainly active. What is far from clear though is the strategic rationale behind all of these operations. That does not mean that these operations have been undertaken for the wrong reasons or have been useless. As Howorth (2010: 3) puts it, "The record to date is nothing to be ashamed of. Every operation so far undertaken has its underlying raison d'être. None has been embarked on flippantly or for the wrong reasons". If it had not been for the EU, most Member States would in all probability not have had a policy at all on many of these issues. Most operations are of smaller scale and limited duration, with very circumscribed objectives, but not therefore without political or military risk. Moreover, they have been successful in realizing the objectives set. Nevertheless, the lack of strategic guidance does have consequences.

First, if each individual operation has been justified, without a clear overall strategy it is difficult to assess the prioritization of the EU's engagement: why is one operation chosen over another? The 2008-9 operation in Chad and the Central African Republic e.g. achieved its objectives and contributed to the protection of displaced persons from neighbouring Darfur. In the same period however the EU could with equally good reason have intervened to safeguard human security and protect populations from a renewed upsurge of violence in Eastern Congo – where it was in fact explicitly asked to do so by the UN.

Second, in the absence of a strategic framework, the ad hoc nature of decision-making is reinforced. A strategy ought to offer a platform for proactive engagement, with the aim of preventing the need for coercive measures in the first place. Without it, CSDP is mostly reactive, and the specific interests of some Member States (for historical reasons e.g.) play a larger role in the launching of operations, in particular when they are holding the Presidency, as do elements such as the political salience and media coverage of situations. The EU and its Member States have not, and indeed will not flippantly embark on an operation, to borrow Howorth's phrase – for that, the deployment of armed forces is too weighty a decision under any set of circumstances. But a strong ad hoc character does create the risk that while each operation undertaken is in itself useful and necessary, the EU does not necessarily undertake the most useful, timely, and necessary operations, i.e. those where its interests are most at stake.

Although all CSDP operations are launched by unanimous decision-making in the Council, some operations have nevertheless attracted criticism from a number of Member States – belatedly, one should say – who doubt whether EU interests are concerned. It is clearly apparent that the more obviously an operation concerns broad EU interests, the smoother the force generation proceeds, whereas otherwise it can become a painful process. Atalanta, vital to the protection of shipping lanes, is an example of the former, with Initial Operating Capability being reached on 13 December 2008 after two force generation conferences in November. One has to admit though that naval assets are more readily available, and that Member States are more ready to participate in generally less risky naval operations, than to deploy already heavily committed land forces. An example of the latter is provided by EUFOR Chad/CAR, criticized in various corners for serving French rather than EU interests, requiring five force generation conferences between November 2007 and January 2008 before reaching Initial Operating Capability in March 2008 (Mattelaer 2008: 14). The absence of a clear link with strategy thus often means that operations are launched without in fact great conviction on the part of many Member States. Half-hearted military operations tend not to go particularly well, however (Rogers 2011: 3).

Third, if the *strategic* objectives of an intervention are not spelled out, it is difficult to assess its success beyond the tactical and operational level. In some cases, part of the motivation to launch an operation has been to test CSDP procedures and capabilities; a justified objective but of course no substitute for the definition of the actual strategic objective. In other cases, military operations seem to be used as a surrogate for political and diplomatic efforts (Asseburg and Kempin 2011: 196). Again, EUFOR Chad/CAR can serve to illustrate the point: European forces successfully achieved their objectives of protecting refugees, facilitating humanitarian aid, and assisting the work of the UN during their presence in theatre, before handing over to a UN force. But those are short term objectives – it is not clear what the long term, strategic objectives of the EU's deployment in the region are or even whether the EU has strategic objectives in the region at all. Often only the end-date of an operation is defined rather than the desired end-state, or only a tactical but not the political end-state is defined (Mattelaer 2009a: 10-11), or the goals are left very vague ("to contribute to…") without benchmarks or target dates defined (Asseburg and Kempin 2011: 190). Deploying without strategy means launching an operation without having a roadmap towards the desired political end-state in the long term – sometimes even without knowing the desired end-state at all.

Fourth, if the EU itself is unclear about which strategic objectives an operation is to pursue, false expectations are likely to be raised on the part of partner countries and other

organizations involved, e.g. the UN. These partners are essential to the success of the operation, for in most cases an EU intervention will be part of a broader international effort.

The launching of twenty-four operations in the short time since its creation in 1999 is testimony to the remarkably rapid development of CSDP. At present, the momentum seems to be decreasing, however, as the appetite for new operations has decreased, although the threats and challenges have not disappeared – quite the opposite. The overall lesson learned must be that if CSDP is detached from foreign policy strategy and operations are undertaken without reference to strategic priorities, CSDP cannot but remain a limited and reactive instrument. A CSDP *strategy* therefore is an essential part of CFSP and overall EU foreign policy, if coherence within the EU is the aim.

The Benefits of a CSDP Strategy

Of course, decision-making on crisis management in general and on military operations in particular will always be to a significant extent ad hoc – that follows from the nature of crisis. It is evidently impossible – and indeed undesirable – to produce a rigid strategic framework that would contain the answer – to act or not to act – to every crisis with which the EU might be confronted, especially when deploying the military may be required. What is possible though is to produce a strategic framework, a CSDP strategy that, starting from the EU's vital interests, an analysis of the threats and challenges to these interests, and EU foreign policy priorities, outlines: the priority regions and issues for CSDP and, in function of the long-term political objectives and the appropriate political roadmap for those regions and issues, scenarios in which launching an operation could be appropriate.

Such a strategic framework is not to stifle, but to aid flexible decision-making; it is a tool at the disposal of the High Representative and the Member States in the Council to help structure the debate and decision-making about operations. Translating the EU's vital interests into a strategy for CSDP will be of immediate help in prioritizing EU deployments, in choosing which operation to undertake and which not – a necessity in view of the limited deployable capabilities. It ought also to be the basis for a proactive policy, guided by the Council and piloted by the High Representative, in function of the long-term objectives of foreign policy, seeking to prevent crises or escalation thereof in areas related to vital interests and foreign policy priorities, rather than merely reacting to events. In line with the ESS, such a proactive policy will be preventive, multilateral and holistic, putting to use all of the instruments at the disposal of the EU, of which CSDP is an integral part.

Having a CSDP strategy does not mean of course that the EU will never act in other theatres than those prioritized in it – the EU retains its full flexibility to engage wherever important interests turn out to be at stake. After all, the ESS identifies the EU as a global actor. Vice versa, the EU should not automatically jump to action whenever events occur in a priority region. The EU should not assume that is has a stronger duty to intervene than others – local or regional actors may actually have more interests and stake than the EU in some case and ought to be prompted to take action themselves. Indeed, a CSDP strategy can be a good basis for more systematic cooperation with certain regional partners and great powers. In any case clear priorities for CSDP will help to focus the strategic planning undertaken by the EUMS, and will constitute an important guideline for capability development, for prioritizing certain theatres has obvious implications for the types and quantity of required capabilities, including transport and training. Obviously, a CSDP strategy must be a living document, to be regularly and systematically reviewed.

Finally, a more explicit CSDP strategy would greatly reinforce transparency vis-à-vis the European Parliament, national parliaments, and the public. The EU should indeed not be reluctant, as it now often seems to be, to state which EU interests an operation is aimed to protect. As stated in the previous chapter, the negative connotation which the notion of interests has acquired is absurd. Policy is about interests – the important thing is that the EU does not pursue a zero-sum policy, but seeks to protect its interests in ways that do not harm the legitimate interests of others.

Launching Operations: Ten Rules of Thumb

Of course, whenever the EU launches a military operation it must ensure its chances for success. To that end, ten principles and guidelines for military operations must always be taken into account when deciding whether or not to intervene (Coelmont 2009: 23). The last two of these can be considered the primus inter pares:

1. Absolute clarity on the military tasks to be performed (in order to avoid the creation of false hope and to prevent mission creep).
2. Rules of engagement allowing the use of force whenever required to achieve the mission of the operation.
3. Unity of command.
4. Generation of sufficient forces for the objectives (which otherwise have to be adapted in function of the available forces, or deployment must be cancelled or postponed).
5. Guaranteeing the security of one's own forces without harming that of the local population.
6. The availability of reserves able to cope with any worst-case scenario.
7. Clear assignment of the non-military tasks (including to other partners present in theatre).
8. Support of public opinion at home and of the local population on the ground.
9. Clarity of the desired end-state, the ultimate political objective (the military objective being only a means to that end).
10. A comprehensive political strategy, a clear political roadmap with concrete milestones and continuous monitoring of progress.

If all CSDP operations so far have been successful, it is because in spite of the absence of strategy the EU has attempted to apply these rules of thumb. The main difficulty has usually been the definition of a clear political end-state; often the defined objectives did not go beyond the tactical level. Furthermore, once an operation launched, there is little critical follow-up; mandates are often prolonged without thorough re-consideration of the strategic objectives (Asseburg and Kempin 2011: 193-4). These ten rules apply to both civilian and military operations; the fifth principle will of course always have to be assured by the military. The key point is that in crisis management success is not the result of an addition of political, civilian and military means – rather than a sum, it is a multiplication: if one factor equals zero, the result equals zero.

When the EU does decide to intervene, European forces will not necessarily always operate autonomously. A CSDP strategy will prioritize areas where EU interests are at stake, and European troops will be called for if they are threatened. But the specific circumstances of each individual crisis will determine which organization is chosen as framework for deployment, not the other way around. EU Member States can thus choose to deploy in an EU, NATO, UN, OSCE or ad hoc framework, including of course with its main ally, the US, in function of the requirements of each specific situation. "The crisis-specific circumstances are what should determine the preference, and the EU should be able to discuss openly the best option with its partners, in particular the United States", wrote the first head of the EU's Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD), Arnould (2009: 85). If necessary, the EU itself ought to be able to launch and command every type of operation under CSDP. This simply reflects the original intention behind the 1999 Headline Goal, i.e. that in the future the EU should be capable of dealing with a Kosovo-type scenario itself. While the EU should not seek the occasion just for the sake of it, assuming the responsibility for a larger-scale

operation, even in peacekeeping, would greatly enhance the credibility of CSDP. For until now, in view of the smaller scale and limited duration of most operations, CSDP has in that sense been less ambitious than the HG envisaged (Howorth 2008: 2).

In any case, in *every* possible scenario, the ultimate objective will be political, not military; a military intervention will always be one instrument among others (political, economic, social) to achieve a broader political objective. In every possible scenario, regardless of the military framework chosen, the key European *political* actor involved will be the EU, hence the need for the *EU* to include and prioritize these regions in a security and defence or CSDP strategy as one essential component of its holistic foreign policy. For as the key political actor, the EU cannot afford not to think strategically. Alas, this has been the case all too often, "not just because of an undue deference to a mighty ally [i.e. the US] but also because there was no appetite for independent and robust thinking on strategy" – Strachan's (2009: 52) comment about the UK and Afghanistan also applies to the EU as a whole and to strategy in general. Hence the call by High Representative Catherine Ashton (2010: 2)at the informal meeting of EU Defence Ministers in Ghent on 23-24 September 2010:

> "We need better strategies for better missions […] which exploit the full range of military and civilian means at our disposal, which take our resource constraints into account and which include clear exit strategies. With the Lisbon Treaty and the European External Action Service, we have a chance to get it right".

Indications of a CSDP Strategy: Priorities for Operations

In a bottom-up way, the building-blocks of a CSDP strategy can be gathered by putting together the lessons of the EU's ongoing and past operations. More importantly, in a top-down way, a CSDP strategy has to start from the EU's grand strategy and the priorities of its CFSP, in function notably of where EU vital interests are most likely to be at stake:
- defence against any military threat to the territory of the Union;
- open lines of communication and trade;
- a secure supply of energy and other vital natural resources;
- a sustainable environment;
- manageable migration flows;
- the maintenance of international law and universally agreed rights;
- preserving the autonomy of the decision-making of the EU and its Member States.

With Gray (2010: 175) one can only confirm "the obvious truth that military strategy only makes sense in the context of a superior grand or national security strategy".

The following areas seem to be a logical set of priorities, in which the EU is in fact already engaging, but mostly not by far as strategically as it could and should. These are priority regions, rather than countries: in most cases, one of the prerequisites for success of an engagement is its embedment in a comprehensive regional policy.

The Neighbourhood

Because of its proximity, the region which the EU calls its "Neighbourhood" logically appears as a clear priority: Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and the Mediterranean basin, including the Balkans. It contains obvious lines of communication, as well as sources, of the utmost importance for trade and for the supply of natural resources, which can be disrupted by crises in the area. It functions as a passageway for large-scale migration from further beyond to the EU, while any crisis in the region itself will automatically create refugee streams towards Europe as well. The proximity in fact means that any regional crisis here will potentially have a larger direct impact on the territory of the EU than crises in other parts of the world. Although not likely today, even the spill-over of violence to parts of EU territory cannot be entirely excluded. In this region therefore the EU should not only be active, but should take the lead in safeguarding peace and security, because vital interests are directly at stake, and because in the region taken as a whole, the EU is the most powerful actor which potentially can bring the most leverage to bear. Such power comes with a duty and a responsibility.

It is a heavy duty indeed, for the region is only too crisis-prone as recent history has shown. The tense situations that have existed since the Israeli-Lebanese war of 2006 and the Russo-Georgian war of 2008, and of course the everlasting Israeli-Palestinian conflict, to this day can all easily be sparked again into open warfare. Many other issues at the very least create permanent tensions and in a worst case scenario might also lead to war within or between States: the still fragile peace in the Balkans; the "frozen" conflicts on Europe's eastern border, e.g. Transnistria; disputes between Mediterranean states, e.g. over the Western Sahara; and, as became evidently clear in 2011, the unpredictable succession in authoritarian neighbouring countries.

The strategic importance of the Neighbourhood is of course recognized in the ESS, which puts forward "building security in our neighbourhood" as the second of three strategic objectives, under which heading it explicitly states that "Resolution of the Arab/Israeli conflict is a strategic priority" – although that clear statement did not necessarily always translate into proactive engagement. The Implementation Report adds that "We need a sustained effort to address conflicts in the Southern Caucasus, Republic of Moldova and between Israel and the Arab States". And the EU is of course active in the Neighbourhood, witness the ongoing civilian missions in Moldova and Ukraine, in Georgia, and in Palestine, and the deployment of initially up to 8,000 European blue helmets in Lebanon. The rapid deployments into Georgia and Lebanon especially can be seen as prime examples of EU actorness.

But if the Neighbourhood is a clear geographic priority, it is less clear in which types of contingencies the EU should undertake which type of action. How ambitious and proactive can and should the EU be? Crisis can erupt very suddenly in the region, imposing the need for urgent decision-making and hence advance planning – nobody can predict a revolution e.g., as the general surprise following the toppling of the regimes in first Tunisia and then Egypt in early 2011 demonstrated. How would the EU have reacted e.g. if the incident on the border between Israel and Lebanon on 3 August 2010, killing three Lebanese soldiers, an Israeli officer and a journalist, had escalated into renewed armed conflict, trapping European peacekeepers in UNIFIL in the middle? Similarly, which would be the EU's options if its civilian observers were to be caught in Russo-Georgian crossfire? Or if the revolt in Egypt had targeted EU citizens? At the same time, the EU must also be proactive, not just reactive, and think about how CSDP can contribute to preventing crises. Any intervention in the region would be highly sensitive however, both in the east, in view of Russian aspirations to maintain a sphere of influence, and in the south, in view of the heavy connotations which any deployment either to Israel-Palestine or to an Arab country would entail. These considerations certainly circumscribe the possibilities for EU action.

In view of the interests at stake and the volatility of the security environment, the region certainly ought to be prioritized in a CSDP strategy. In view of the sensitivity, CSDP strategy for the region must be ambitious yet cautious and EUMS strategic planning will have to translate those priorities into a wide range of scenarios. Confidence and security-building measures (CSBMs), e.g. training missions, joint exercises and manoeuvres, can contribute to conflict prevention; many individual Member States have partnerships in this area with neighbouring States, but more coordination at the EU-level would undoubtedly increase their effectiveness. Engagement in observer missions and peacekeeping operations must certainly be continued, including in the eventuality of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, in which case the EU definitely has to be a part of any peacekeeping arrangements in order to constitute a force acceptable to all parties. Reinforcement as well as extrication of peacekeeping forces also has to be planned for, in view of the continued risk of renewal of conflict where they are currently deployed. Evacuation operations of EU citizens will also have to be catered for, e.g. in the case of civil strife in a neighbouring country. Renewed peace enforcement efforts on the Balkans cannot be excluded; if there would be renewed violence, conflict resolution would definitely first and foremost be the EU's responsibility. In other parts of the region, peace enforcement can most probably only be envisaged as a contribution to a broad political coalition that involves the primary regional actors, i.e. in the east Russia, in the south key Arab States, if major negative side-effects are to be avoided.

Evidently, the Neighbourhood dimension of a CSDP strategy is itself just one dimension of the comprehensive European Neighbourhood Policy. CSDP can only be meaningful and indeed successful as part of a broader effort, including diplomacy, political dialogue, trade and development. The EU's commitment in Lebanon is a case in point (Mattelaer 2009b): if the deployment of European peacekeepers is a good example of actorness, real strategic actorness would require much more diplomatic follow-up. The reinforcement of UNIFIL can buy some time, but cannot in itself resolve the conflict, as the August 2010 incidents have shown. Vice versa, the ENP, although its emphasis is on prevention and stabilization through a holistic root causes approach, cannot be seen separately from the politico-military dimension – ENP Action Plans will not lead to many results in a country involved in conflict with its neighbours or in civil strife. Assuming the leading responsibility for peace and security in the region is an inextricable part of the EU's overall commitment to the Neighbourhood.

Central Asia and the Gulf

Next to the neighbourhood, the ESS and the Report on its implementation single out only Iran as a priority, and the EU has indeed been "at the forefront of international efforts to address Iran's nuclear programme", as the Report states. In Europe the potential development of a nuclear weapons programme by Iran is not generally seen as a direct threat against EU territory, but it would have major implications for the balance of power in the Gulf and the Middle East. In view of its importance to EU vital interests, especially also in terms of trade routes and natural resources, the question should be debated whether in terms of security, the Gulf does not form part of what could in effect be seen as the "broader Neighbourhood" of the EU, even though formally it falls outside the scope of the ENP. The same holds true for the Central Asian security complex, including Afghanistan, where of course EU Member States contribute major capabilities to the ongoing ISAF operation – be it that by 2011 the prevailing strategic objective seems to be simply to find a way to leave – and indeed Pakistan, in view of its importance to security in the broader region as well as of its vulnerability.

EU officials have repeatedly confirmed that they do not consider the acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iran to be a casus belli, but others actors might, and might act upon that view, in which case the EU will be confronted with the direct and indirect effects. Furthermore, if in the post-Afghanistan era – now relatively near at hand – European peace enforcement operations in either region are highly unlikely, other types of intervention cannot be excluded. In June 2010 e.g. voices were raised calling on the EU (and NATO) to intervene in the internal unrest in Kyrgyzstan, or at the least to provide humanitarian aid. Although in the Gulf and Central Asia CSDP thus appears to be much more of an ancillary instrument than it is in the Neighbourhood, it does merit attention in a CSDP strategy and EUMS strategic planning. The primary focus must however be on the preventive, holistic and multilateral approach.

Africa

Africa is only briefly mentioned in the ESS, notably the Great Lakes Region, but it has been an important area of focus for CSDP. While the potential impact of crisis on EU vital interests is less direct, there is an important historical legacy and consequent sense of responsibility on the part of the former European colonial powers, and there are important other interests at stake. Furthermore, while other global actors are becoming increasingly active, they are

mostly unwilling to contribute to crisis management on the African continent. The long-term objective of the EU in the framework of its strategic partnership with the African Union (AU) is to help it acquiring the capacity to take the lead itself in dealing with peace and security on the continent. That objective is years in the future however, which implies that for some time to come the demand for an EU contribution will remain substantial, in view of the many conflicts and crises.

For that contribution to achieve maximal effectiveness and in order to make the best possible use of available means, prioritization of EU involvement is a conditio sine qua non, for so far CSDP operations in Africa have lacked an underlying strategic rationale. The DRC is a case in point. The EU and its Member States are among the key political actors involved, notably in the Security Council. Both the Commission and individual Member States are among the most important donors of development aid to the DRC. Two civilian operations are ongoing in Kinshasa, a police mission and an SSR mission. Their impact is marginal however, especially of EUSEC, the SSR mission: the armed forces of the DRC (FARDC) remain ineffective and parts of it still escape the control of the central government. Twice the EU intervened militarily in the country, in 2003 and 2006, each time at the request of the UN. When however at the end of 2008 the UN for the third time requested an urgent EU military intervention, in order to create a humanitarian corridor and protect massive numbers of refugees fleeing war in the east of the country, the EU did not act. Nor do EU Member States participate in any significant numbers in the UN force in the country, MONUSCO (which took over from the previous operation, MONUC, on 1 July 2010), although on the diplomatic front the EU has been key to its development. Meanwhile, the security situation in the east of the country remains dramatic, as evidenced by repeated instances of murder and mass rape. The question must be asked: what are the *strategic* objectives of EU involvement in Congo? Clearly, EU engagement in the DRC is everything but holistic. As a result, in spite of its massive presence, the EU is not seen as the game-changer.

Crises are unfortunately too common in Africa for the EU to intervene in all of them, so setting priorities is an absolute necessity. The Congo might actually be a priority, given the size of the country, its key position in Central Africa, the international dimension of the ongoing conflict in the east, and the presence of important natural resources. But then EU engagement must be much more consistent. To the north as well however, the EU might decide to prioritize the stability of Sudan and its neighbours. If intervening in Darfur does not now seem possible, in view of the international political context and the heavy commitment to the ongoing operation in Afghanistan, perhaps in the future and as part of a broad political coalition the EU would be able and willing to intervene itself in the necessary solution of the conflict in Sudan (or another, similar case) rather than providing only indirect support. The Sahel as a whole is becoming increasingly important to Europe's security, in view e.g. of the trafficking going on in the region. The Horn of Africa could also be an apt priority, as state failure and the consequent anarchy and lack of viable economy in Somalia are the underlying causes of the crucial piracy problem. Whereas maritime anti-piracy operations have been successful, they are just combating the symptoms as long as the situation in Somalia itself is not addressed. The training mission for Somali security forces, in Uganda, is only a first modest step to that end.

There is as yet no end to the security problems from which Africa itself suffers first and foremost. Prioritizing definitely is a challenge therefore, but perhaps the EU would have more impact if it concentrated its efforts on a limited set of priorities rather than contributing piecemeal without significant impact.

Maritime Security

Because of the piracy problem off the Somali coast, maritime security has come back to the foreground. Through its first naval operation, Atalanta, the EU is playing a leading role, alongside a NATO operation, a US-led international task force, and the navies of Russia, India, China, Japan and Malaysia. Atalanta is highly significant in two regards. First, it undoubtedly concerns vital EU interests, i.e. safeguarding a key trade route. Second, working closely together with the navies of notably three (re-)emerging powers is a unique opportunity to enhance the credibility of CSDP and to demonstrate the scope of EU engagement. The EU actually hosts the coordination meetings between all involved navies, as the most acceptable actor to all.

Maritime security certainly ought to be among the priorities of CSDP if only because except to the east, Europe has maritime borders, or what Germond (2010) calls its "maritime margins", all of them important as routes for trade and energy as well as for smuggling and migration, and crucial too in environmental terms. As Rogers (2009: 21) forcefully argues, maritime security has moreover to be seen in a wider geographic context as well and will become increasingly important, notably in the coastal zone between the Suez Canal and Shanghai:

> "[A]s multipolarity increases in the twenty-first century, the Suez-Shanghai zone will act as *the* geographic gateway between the various continental and coastal powers of Eurasia, meaning that it will continue to grow as the world's key area of geoeconomic and geopolitical struggle".

With 90% of European trade being carried by sea, Rogers argues, the EU cannot afford just to watch Russia, China and India compete as they build blue water navies and establish naval bases in this region. The EU must itself show a presence and must actively contribute to protecting this maritime route, if it wants to preserve its interests and prevent other powers, or conflict between them, from dominating or disrupting it. "Britain and France's existing aereodromes and naval stations – from Cyprus and Djibouti to Reunion and Diego Garcia – provide the focal point for this new approach", Rogers (2009: 32) points out (see Rogers and Simón 2009 for an in-depth analysis). In other words, any CSDP strategy must include a significant maritime dimension. Next to "Suez to Shanghai", the Arctic must be an area of focus for CSDP, in view of its increasing navigability and the consequent geopolitical implications (Blunden 2009). Finally, naval assets will be called upon to support crisis management operations on land.

The United Nations and Collective Security

For the EU, maintaining international law is a vital interest as such, because that has a direct impact on peace and security and thus on the stability necessary to the trade power which the Union is. Furthermore, the credibility of its value-based grand strategy requires that the EU contribute itself when the core values are at stake, notably basic human rights. It can make that contribution through the UN, in line with the EU principle of "effective multilateralism". "Strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively, is a European priority", the ESS therefore rightly states.

Importantly, the collective security system of the UN can only be legitimate if it addresses the threats to everyone's security – too much selectivity undermines the system. Even though it cannot always play a leading role, the EU must therefore also shoulder its share of the responsibility for global peace and security by playing an active role in the Security Council and by contributing capabilities to UN, or UN-mandated, crisis management and peacekeeping operations. Here too, prioritization is in order, for the EU cannot be expected to play a leading role in every UN operation, nor should it automatically grant every UN request for military assistance, even though such a request (which can also be forthcoming from a regional organization) ought not to be discarded lightly. A clearer definition of EU priorities with regard to UN operations could then be the basis for more concrete cooperation between the UN and the civil-military structures of the EU, including the EUMS, and would avoid expectations on the part of the UN which the EU could not meet.

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) could serve as one of the guidelines. Endorsed at the UN Millennium+5 Summit in September 2005, thanks to a strong EU diplomatic offensive, R2P implies that if a State is unable or unwilling to protect its own population, or is itself the perpetrator of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes or crimes against humanity, national sovereignty must give way to a responsibility to protect on the part of the international community. In such cases, the Security Council must mandate intervention, if necessary by military means (for an analysis of the concept, see Holt and Berkman 2006). If the threshold to activate the mechanism is reached anywhere in the world, the EU, in view of its support for the principle and its vital interest in upholding international law, should contribute. Not mentioned in the ESS, R2P is included in the Implementation Report – a positive signal. R2P remains very controversial however; in any case, coercive intervention is but one dimension of this broad concept, which puts the emphasis on prevention.

Interlocking Priorities in the "Grand Area"

All of these priority areas are of course highly interdependent. Maritime security is correlated to the security of what Rogers (2009: 23) dubs "strategic flashpoints" along the trade routes; hence e.g. Atalanta can only succeed if EUTM Somalia succeeds. An R2P scenario can manifest itself in Africa or in the Neighbourhood. Rogers (2011), writing on "a new geography of European power", defines the single geographic zone of attention that in fact emerges from the above-mentioned priorities as the EU's "grand area": the minimal geographic area required to sustain Europe's social model. This area holds all the basic resources and contains the key trade routes and pipelines. In line with its distinctive grand strategy, within this "grand area" the EU should first of all aim to build comprehensive partnerships with key countries, through a holistic approach that includes economic and security cooperation as well as fostering social equality, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Thus other great powers, or coalitions of hostile interests, can be prevented from dominating and thereby potentially disturbing regions that are key to EU vital interests. Within the "grand area" the EU must proactively and permanently contribute to peace and stability, in partnership with the local and regional actors. Rather than reacting to crises in an ad hoc way, the "grand area" should be the area of focus for permanent monitoring and contingency planning, so as to allow intervention at the earliest possible stage, through economic, diplomatic and, if necessary, military means. The aim is effective conflict prevention or, when that fails, rapid reaction before crises spiral out of control and crisis management demands massive means and capabilities.

Beyond the "grand area", the ESS does also mention some other regions, e.g. Kashmir and the Korean Peninsula, without indicating whether the EU ought to play an active role there. Surely, a global power cannot neglect any region of the globe. The EU's permanent strategic reflection must therefore concern the whole of the world, including e.g. Latin America or the Pacific – but the result of that reflection will not be to prioritize all of those regions. The EU must monitor all of them and adapt its CSDP strategy in function of their evolving importance to its vital and essential interests.

Types of Operations: Interpreting the Petersberg Tasks

Next to the priorities and objectives, a second dimension of a CSDP strategy concerns the tasks or types of operations which the EU can undertake. For a long time, there were as many interpretations of the EU's so-called Petersberg Tasks as there were Member States. And as decision-making on CSDP issues is by unanimity, the most narrow interpretation was always likely to win the day. In the Lisbon Treaty (Art. 43.1 TEU) Member States have now agreed on an extended definition of the Petersberg Tasks, stating that they:

> "[…] shall include joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation. All these tasks may contribute to the fight against terrorism, including by supporting third countries in combating terrorism in their territories."

As the use of the words "shall include" indicates, this is not a limitative list. From the legal point of view, the EU can thus launch *all* types of operations, with the sole exception of those linked to the collective defence of the territory of the Member States. The Lisbon Treaty has introduced an obligation of aid and assistance in case of armed aggression (Art. 42.7 TEU).[3] But in view of the caveats attached to it and given the fact that there is currently no intention to start planning for that, it appears safe to say that territorial defence will remain the prerogative of NATO for some time to come – even though of course not all EU Member States are members of the Alliance. In any case, there is no vital threat to the territory of the EU in the short to medium term. More importantly, as the ESS states: "With the new threats, the first line of defence will often be abroad". Another innovation is the Solidarity Clause (Art. 222 TFEU), which allows for the use of CSDP within the territory of the Union, at the request of a Member State, in case of natural or man-made disasters or terrorist attack, including in the latter case preventive deployment. The leading role in its implementation will however be played by the political, legal and police authorities, with CSDP in a supporting role. While a number of tasks within the territory of the EU are added to its remit, one can thus safely assume that the main focus of CSDP will remain the external security of the EU.

Within this external focus, the Petersberg Tasks comprise all types of operations necessary to deal with the priorities analyzed in the previous section. The Treaty wording makes clear that this certainly includes operations at the high end of the spectrum of violence, i.e. combat operations. The same appears from the five "illustrative scenarios" that form the basis for the planning assumptions of the EUMS (Giegerich 2009: 19-20), the first and fourth of which can clearly imply combat:

- "Separation of parties by force" (sustainable for up to 6 months).
- "Stabilisation, reconstruction and military advice to third countries" (including peacekeeping, election monitoring, institution-building, SSR, and support in the fight against terrorism, sustainable for at least 2 years).

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[3] Art. 42.7 TEU reads: "If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.
Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation".

- "Conflict prevention" (including preventive deployment, embargoes, counter-proliferation and joint disarmament, sustainable for at least 1 year).
- "Evacuation operations" (of up to 10,000 non-combatants, to last up to 120 days).
- "Assistance to humanitarian operations" (sustainable for up to 6 months).

While of course the validity of the Treaty cannot be denied, Member States remain *politically* divided over the use of force under the EU flag however. In practice therefore, in a CSDP context some capitals are reluctant to engage in anything but low-intensity operations, even though most Member States do put their forces in harm's way for national operations and for operations in the context of NATO or coalitions of the willing (Afghanistan and Iraq being the prime examples). These political differences came clearly to the fore e.g. on the occasion of the adoption by the Council at the end of the French Presidency, on 11 December 2008, of a Declaration on Strengthening Capabilities. Outlining what Europe "should actually be capable" of, "in the years ahead", this Declaration mentions operations linked to all of the illustrative scenarios except for the separation of parties by force – the one most obviously involving the use of force. In the debates in the Council Working Groups it appeared that while some Member States saw this as going back on the already stated level of ambition, others actually read the Declaration as enhancing the level of ambition… These political differences will come to the foreground when the opportunity of a potential military response to a crisis is discussed in the Council.

In order to avoid these differences from hindering objective decision-making, the starting point of any strategy for CSDP ought to be the unambiguous recognition, by all Member States, that the EU can undertake *all* types of crisis management operations, across the full spectrum of violence. In other words, everything but collective defence. As the former Chairman of the EU Military Committee, General Bentégeat (2009: 98) states:

> "The [C]SDP cannot afford to do without an active military component which is sufficiently well trained and equipped to carry out combat missions. If it limits itself to the protection side of the spectrum as regards crisis management missions, it may no longer be able to fulfil its role of defending the strategic interests of the Union".

The EU should obviously not seek out combat operations just for the sake of engaging in them – in the ideal scenario, EU strategy manages to avoid the need for coercive intervention in the first place – but the Union should be prepared to deliver force when it is *necessary*. The alternative, i.e. limiting CSDP to the lower end of the spectrum, makes sense neither politically nor militarily. Politically, it would deprive the EU of the possibility of action in crises requiring forceful military intervention, leaving it dependent on others, notably on NATO and thus mainly on the US, which might not always share the priorities of the EU, e.g. with regard to Sub-Sahara Africa. Furthermore, as recent experience has demonstrated, NATO is not the most advisable framework for operations in each and every context, e.g. in Lebanon – in some cases an operation under the NATO label can even be politically impossible, e.g. in Georgia. An alternative platform to launch operations is a necessity therefore. Militarily, all operations, including those at the lower end of the spectrum, contain a certain risk of escalation. The UN peacekeeping operation in Rwanda in 1994 is a dreadful example. Neither NATO nor the US can be expected to be always prepared to extricate or reinforce forces deployed on a CSDP operation, hence the EU must itself be able to take the necessary action under such circumstances.

Allowing the use of force under the EU flag does not run counter to the distinctive grand strategy for "positive power" and constructive engagement for which the EU has opted. The nature of a strategic actor is not just determined by the mere possession or not of the military instrument, but by the use which it makes of it. The military is an instrument of confidence-building, conflict prevention, and post-conflict stabilization, through collaboration programmes, joint exercises and manoeuvres, training missions, SSR and DDR missions, deployment of observer and peacekeeping missions, and deterrence; an instrument at the support of humanitarian and rescue operations; as well as an instrument of conflict resolution and crisis management, by backing up crisis diplomacy with a credible threat and, as a last resort, by engaging in peace enforcement. Fully integrated as one instrument among others at the service of a holistic grand strategy, to be used coercively only as a last resort, CSDP is a natural, and necessary, part of the EU's foreign policy toolbox.

The Level of Ambition and the Scale of the Effort

Once objectives and priorities have been defined and the potential types of operations agreed, the EU must translate this into the scale of effort required to be successful. Quantitatively, CSDP is based on the Headline Goal (HG) adopted by the European Council in Helsinki in 1999. The aim is to be able to deploy up to an army corps (50 to 60,000 troops), together with air and maritime forces, plus the required command & control, strategic transport and other support services, within 60 days, and to sustain that effort for at least one year. That objective is quite ambitious: if rotation is taken into account, sustaining 60,000 first-line troops requires 180,000 deployable troops, without counting logistic and other support.

In addition, since 2007 the EU permanently has two Battlegroups (BGs) of about 1500 troops on stand-by for rapid response operations. The core of a BG is a battalion, plus all support services; all capabilities, including command & control arrangements, are pre-identified. After a training period and certification process, each BG is on stand-by for six months and can be deployed within ten days of a Council decision to launch an operation; sustainability is four months. Often wrongly perceived – intentionally or unintentionally – as representative of CSDP as a whole, the BGs obviously do not replace the HG but constitute one specific additional capacity to that overall capability objective, created because of a shortage of rapid response elements. Some continue to see the "60,000" as an unrealistic objective though, in spite of the renewed emphasis put on it by the French Presidency in the second half of 2008 as well as in the French *Livre Blanc* (France 2008: 89).

In reality, the original HG ought to be quite feasible. In 1999, the number of 50 to 60,000 was arrived at by referring back to the launch of KFOR earlier that year: it was about the number of troops needed to stabilize Kosovo or, earlier, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Today, the EU and its Member States are actively engaged in many more theatres than in 1999, a trend which is likely to continue as Europe strengthens its foreign policy, and as the US is looking for burden-sharing with its European allies. As a result, EU Member States now usually deploy troop numbers equivalent to the HG or even more, if all ongoing CSDP, NATO, UN and national operations in which they participate are counted. In 2010 e.g., in addition to some 4,000 troops in CSDP operations, EU Member States' major deployments included some 30,000 troops in ISAF in Afghanistan, 7,000 in KFOR in Kosovo and 6,000 as UN blue helmets. In the years between 2001 and 2010, total numbers were at times much higher still, up to 83,000 in 2006 (EDA 2010).

This much increased rate of deployment has two major implications however, which need to be addressed. On the one hand, a lesson learned from past and ongoing operations is that to achieve durable results, operations have to last ever longer – usually much more than one year. On the other hand, at the current level of European capabilities, in the event of a crisis occurring in addition to ongoing operations, EU Member States could not, or only with great difficulty, deploy significant additional troops, except by improvising (as in case of an emergency threat to vital interests they would, accepting the increased risks for the forces deployed which this would entail) or by withdrawing forces from ongoing operations.

In order to stay in tune with this higher level of activity, the HG has to interpreted broadly. First, the ambition in terms of sustainability ought to be increased. Today, the aim is to be able to sustain a corps level deployment for *at least* one year (authors' emphasis), which already indicates that longer deployments may be necessary – that target should now be upgraded explicitly and planning revised accordingly. Second, the HG should be understood

as a deployment which EU Member States must be able to undertake at any one time *over and above* ongoing operations. Having a second corps available, the EU would be able to deal with every eventuality. Third, the capacity for rapid response must be further increased in order to allow effective *preventive* engagement, i.e. at a very early stage.

This broad interpretation of the level of ambition in terms of expeditionary operations may seem fanciful, but in fact it amounts to nothing more than adapting to today's actual level of operational involvement and logically adding to it the capacity to deal with a crisis in an ongoing operation or in another theatre. Implicitly, the need to increase the quantitative level of ambition is even recognized by the EUMS, which has drawn up a number of "concurrency suites" indicating which of the illustrative scenarios the EU must be able to deal with simultaneously. As Giegerich (2008: 21) shows, some of these "concurrency suites" demand more than 50 to 60,000 troops, as the sole scenario of "separation of parties by force" can demand as many. The more ambitious interpretation of the HG cannot seriously be considered unrealistic when measured against the total number of troops at the disposal of the EU-27, i.e. 1.8 million, and when compared to the US, which manages to deploy more troops out of a smaller total number. Today, there does not exist an official view, neither in the EU nor in NATO, about how many of those 1.8 million troops Europe actually needs. The result of any analysis will be that Europe does not need that many uniforms, but can use some additional rapidly deployable troops and some specific strategic capabilities. The aim should be to increase deployability and sustainability, perhaps at the price of reducing the overall manpower in order to allow for the required investment.

Conclusion: Converging towards an EU White Book

Today, military strategy is clearly the least developed dimension of the EU's grand strategy. Nevertheless, the key elements of a CSDP strategy already exist. At the EU level, consensus on the types of operations and on the scale of the effort has grown considerably, and shared views on the objectives and priorities are developing. These building-blocks ought now to be combined in a CSDP strategy.

True, at the Member State level there are differences between the national strategic cultures. Historically some Member States have less inhibitions to use the military instrument, others are more averse to any type of intervention (which is sometimes translated into constitutional constraints). However, convergence between the national strategic thinking of Member States, notably between France, Germany and the UK (see e.g. Jonas and von Ondarza 2010), is stronger than they might actually be willing to admit. Comparing their latest strategic documents, the 2008 *Livre Blanc*, the 2006 *Weißbuch* and the 2008 National Security Strategy and its 2009 update, confirms as much. All three documents envisage combat operations in a multinational context, including the *Weißbuch*, which states explicitly that deployment for conflict prevention and crisis management is not less intensive and complex than that in the context of collective defence, the traditional task of the *Bundeswehr* (BMVg 2006: 64). The priorities outlined overlap to a large extent. The *Livre Blanc* (France 2008: 43-49) puts strong emphasis on what it dubs an "arc of crisis" from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, including the Sahel, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Gulf, and Afghanistan and Pakistan; on Sub-Saharan Africa; on the European continent, notably the Balkans and the border zone with Russia; and on the need to prevent major conflict in Asia. The National Security Strategy (Cabinet Office 2008: 40) identifies four priorities: Pakistan and Afghanistan; "those parts of Africa suffering from conflict, including Darfur, or extremism, including North Africa"; the Middle East; and Eastern Europe. Only the *Weißbuch* is less explicit, though it does stress the vital importance of uninterrupted trade routes (BMVg 2006: 21).

Although France is the only one to translate it, in its *Livre Blanc* (France 2008: 97), into an explicit call for the adoption of a European white book, on the substance of military strategy consensus among EU Member States is actually quite strong.

The most important obstacle to the adoption of a proactive stance based on a clear CSDP strategy is not so much that Member States have such different views about when and how to use the military instrument, but rather than they remain divided about *who* should use the military instrument when necessary: the EU and/or NATO. Giegerich (2006: 84-85) makes the point with regard to the UK: "The most striking feature has to be the high degree of overlap between the norms of British strategic culture and ESDP […] The only clear clash […] exists on the dimension of preferred areas of cooperation […] the traditional position of British policy-makers is to favour NATO". The case of the invasion of Iraq in 2003 can illustrate this. The real intra-European divide over Iraq did not concern the substance and principles of policy. Based on an assessment of past policies, it can safely be argued that all Member States agree that in principle the use of force is an instrument of last resort which requires a Security Council mandate. The real issue at stake was the nature of the transatlantic partnership. If the US reverts to the use of force in a situation in which the EU in principle would not do so, or not yet, what then has priority for the EU: steering an autonomous course, based on its own principles, or supporting its most important ally? The subsequent case of Iran, in which the EU has taken the lead, demonstrates that *au fond* Member States very much agree about how to deal with a proliferation issue.

Meyer's (2006: 141) impressive empirical research on European strategic culture concludes that there is "a new European consensus that the use of military force abroad can be legitimate for the purpose of protecting vulnerable ethnic groups against massive violations of their human rights". Other elements of this consensus, which Meyer dubs "humanitarian power Europe", are the need to obtain Security Council authorization and to avoid "collateral damage", and the view of the use of force as a last resort. Howorth (2004: 212) too finds that Member States are shifting towards "a common acceptance of integrated European interventionism, based not solely on the classical stakes of national interest, but also on far more idealistic motivations such as humanitarianism and ethics". At the same time, as operation Atalanta demonstrates, Member States are also willing to act together when those "traditional" vital interests are at stake. All the elements are present therefore to build a truly shared military or CSDP strategy for the EU. The challenge will be to maintain that momentum and to sustain a willingness to intervene when necessary, as Member States' governments, militaries and publics are suffering from intervention fatigue in the wake of Afghanistan and Iraq.

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