NATO and ESDP: Institutional Complexities and Political Realities

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Relations between NATO and the ESDP work well on the ground. However, political and functional confusion dominates the relationship between the Alliance and the European Union. This goes back to the origins, different logic and policies of both institutions. In the immediate future it will surely be preferable to establish *ad hoc* arrangements, sector by sector, rather than a general agreement, which is likely to be hard to achieve, given the rapidly changing nature of the Alliance and the EU.

politique étrangère

All too frequently, when analysts focus on the relations between the two main security actors in the Euro-Atlantic area, they refer to 'the EU and NATO'. They *should* of course refer to 'the ESDP and NATO.' This may seem like a minor point but it is a crucial one. The European Union (EU) *per se* does not have a relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), nor indeed should it. The two entities are different in their membership, their essence, their *raison d'être*, their overall objectives, structures, functioning, activities and history. Any direct bilateral agenda is difficult to imagine.[1] There does exist a 'relationship' between, on the one hand, the EU's security and defense activities, since 1999 subsumed under the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and managed by the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC), and, on the other hand, NATO, represented

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1. In terms of membership, an EU-NATO framework would in fact mean 28 member states talking to Austria, Finland, Sweden, Ireland, Cyprus and Malta – or else 27 member states talking to the US, Canada, Turkey, Norway, Iceland, Croatia and Albania. What could be the political agenda for such discussions? It is often noted that NATO and the EU share 21 members. But what is not too often stressed is that one organization contains the world's only superpower and the other does not. And that makes all the difference. For an analysis of the potentialities of the EU-US relationship, see Jolyon Howorth, 'A New Institutional Architecture for the Transatlantic Relationship?,' *Europe Visions 5*, Ifri, June 2009, 20 pages, available at: http://www.ifri.org/files/Europe_visions/EuropeVisions5_Howorth_final.pdf

by the North Atlantic Council (NAC). Other interactions also take place, within this general ESDP-NATO framework, between political and military officials from both sides – at all levels. It is usually this interaction *between ESDP and NATO* that is, in effect, analysed in the literature on 'the EU and NATO.' There is a widely shared consensus among analysts and politicians that this relationship is unsatisfactory if not actually dysfunctional. Most agree that there is an urgent need to ensure that ESDP and NATO should cooperate to the maximum wherever and whenever they are involved together in operations; that they should avoid competition and rivalry; that greater coherence and synergy are both logical and possible.

Berlin Plus

The functional relationship between NATO and ESDP is governed by the Berlin Plus arrangements[2] of 2003. In reality, these arrangements work reasonably well, on the ground, wherever they apply. At present, that means only in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH).[3] With respect to BiH, for example, NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Command Europe (DSACEUR), as operational commander of the European Union Force Althea in BiH (EUFOR-Althea), interacts regularly with the EU's Political and Security Committee and facilitates liaison between it and the NAC. The Secretaries General of both the EU and NATO meet at least monthly to talk through issues of complementarity between the two entities and missions. There are liaison teams on the ground to smooth relations between staff members from both entities and there are daily contacts between representatives in BiH from both sides.

However, the fact that Bosnia is the sole example underscores the dramatic reality that *political* disagreements between member states – and particularly

The ESDP's gridlock on Turkey

between Turkey and Cyprus – have essentially held the entire ESDP-NATO relationship hostage for years. What works well in Bosnia is not allowed to work *at all* in either Kosovo or Afghanistan – to the considerable detriment of all sides. The blockage has reduced to a farce the regular official meetings between the PSC and the NAC. The official explanation for this state of affairs offered by Ankara was that it could not agree to pass NATO intelligence to the EU (a fundamental pre-condition for the Berlin Plus agreement[4])

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2. See http://www.nato.int/shape/news/2003/shape_eu/se030822a.htm
3. In fact, there have only ever been two instances of the implementation of ESDP. The first was Operation *Concordia* in Macedonia/the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in March to December 2003. The second is the ongoing operation Althea in BiH.
4. It took until March 2003 for agreement on the exchange of classified information between NATO, the EU Council, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (HR-CFSP) and the Commission, to be hammered out.

for fear that that intelligence would be acquired by non-Partnership for Peace (PfP) EU members Cyprus and Malta.[5] That 'explanation' is largely specious.

Turkey has had a hugely complex attitude towards ESDP from the very outset. Unhappy to swap strong US leadership over European security (via NATO) for weak EU involvement (via ESDP), and reluctant to abandon its active decision-shaping role in the Western European Union (WEU) for a virtually non-existent role in ESDP, Ankara has also had to contend with its highly complex EU accession negotiations, a growing popular domestic and even political anti-Americanism, plus all the repercussions arising from the stand-off with both Athens and Nicosia over Cyprus.[6] Turkey forced both NATO and the EU to spend two entire years negotiating Berlin Plus. Those arrangements could only be concluded when they were predicated on the exclusion of Cyprus and Malta from the 'deal', but this was always little other than a face-saving technicality. It also results in Cyprus occasionally blocking EU business (for instance, Turkey's participation in the activities of the European Defense Agency {EDA}, or proposals for EU-NATO counter-terrorism cooperation) on the grounds that Turkey is not complying with its obligations, under the terms of the current accession negotiations, to open its ports to Cypriot flag vessels.

Over the past eighteen months, matters have gone from bad to worse, with Turkey's refusal to allow Cyprus to be involved in the multinational task-force in South Kosovo – thereby effectively complicating plans to train the Kosovo police force – and with Ankara withdrawing its air and naval contributions to the EU's joint battle-group. Moreover, even with the official ESDP-NATO arrangements, there can be no guarantees for the EU that Turkey would cooperate with ESDP in a situation where it felt its own security interests were less than fully respected.[7] Berlin Plus was originally conceived as a set of arrangements to cover situations where ESDP was operating separately from NATO. In reality, as we have seen in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, ESDP and NATO more normally operate in tandem. Many feel that the current Operation Althea may well prove to be the last occasion on which Berlin Plus will be implemented. An entirely new set of arrangements therefore needs negotiating. That will be as difficult as it was last time around.[8] Turkey has, from the beginnings of ESDP, despite active

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5. In April 2008, Malta sidestepped its exclusion by joining PfP, thus leaving only Cyprus as the pretext for Turkey's obduracy.
6. Antonio Missiroli, 'EU-NATO Cooperation in Crisis Management: No Turkish Delight for ESDP,' *Security Dialogue*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2002.
7. Mahmut Bali Aykan, 'Turkey and European Security and Defence Identity/Policy (ESDI/P): A Turkish View,' *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2005.
8. The most detailed study of the complexities of current ESDP-NATO relations is Paul Cornish, *EU and NATO: Co-operation or Competition?* European Parliament, 2006, available at: http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/research/security/papers/view/-/id/412/

involvement in several ESDP missions, demonstrated its intention to 'play hardball' where the ESDP-NATO relationship is concerned. The bottom line, alas, is that Turkey is not entirely sure about its own strategic objectives in the current situation of flux.[9]

Political, functional and institutional confusion

Beyond the specifics of Berlin Plus, however, the entire framework of NATO-ESDP relations suffers from considerable confusion. The relationship has already generated a vast literature.[10] Implicit in the overwhelming majority of that literature are three assumptions. First, that there is some inherent *similarity and proximity*, as well as considerable overlap and synergy, between the two entities, deriving from the fact that they are both geared to delivering security in the European space. Second, that there is some *natural partnership* between the two, based, usually, on what is portrayed as a fairly self-evident division of labor. Third, that NATO, because of its history, its size and capacity and the fact that it is dominated by the United States, will naturally act as the *senior partner* in the relationship. These assumptions have arisen in part because of the historical, structural-functional and hierarchical relationship between the two entities. However, ten years after the birth of ESDP, none of those assumptions can today be taken for granted.

9. Sener Akturk, 'Incompatible Visions of Supra-Nationalism: National Identity in Turkey and the European Union,' *Archives Européennes de Sociologie / European Journal of Sociology*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2007, p. 347-372.
10. Robert E. Hunter, *The European Security and Defense Policy: NATO's Companion—or Competitor?* Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2000; Michael Quinlan, *European Defense Cooperation: Asset or Threat to NATO?*, Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 2001; Esther Brimmer (ed.), *The EU's Search for a Strategic Role: ESDP and its Implications for Transatlantic Relations,* Washington DC: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2002; Jolyon Howorth & John Keeler (eds.), *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy*, New York: Palgrave, 2003; Jolyon Howorth, 'ESDP and NATO: Wedlock or Deadlock?', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 38, no. 3, September 2003; Steve Marsh, 'The US and the Common European Security and Defense Policy: no end to drift,' in John Baylis & Jon Roper (eds.), *The United States and Europe: Beyond the Neo-Conservative Divide,* London: Routledge, 2006; Frances G. Burwell *et alii*, *Transatlantic Transformation: Building a NATO-EU Security Architecture*, Washington DC, Atlantic Council of the United States, 2006; Paul Cornish, *EU and NATO: Cooperation or Competition?* European Parliament Briefing Paper, 2006; Jean Dufourq & David S. Yost (eds.), *NATO-EU Cooperation in Post-Conflict Reconstruction*, Rome: NATO Defense College, 2006; Daniel Keohane, 'Unblocking EU-NATO Cooperation,' London: *CER Bulletin 48*, 2006; Tomas Valasek, *The roadmap to better EU-NATO relations*, London: Centre for European Reform, December 2007; *NATO and ESDP: Forging New Links*, Brussels: SDA, 2007; Franklin D. Kramer & Simon Serfaty, *Recasting the Euro-Atlantic Partnership*, Washington DC: CSIS, February 2007; David S. Yost, *NATO and International Organizations*, Rome: *NATO Forum Papers*, 2007 (Chapter 3); Simon Serfaty (ed.), *A Recast Partnership? Institutional Dimensions of Transatlantic Relations*, Washington DC: CSIS, 2008; *EU-US Defence Cooperation*, Brussels: SDA, 2008; Christopher S. Chivvis, *Birthing Athena: the Uncertain Future of European Security and Defense Policy,* Paris: Ifri, Focus Stratégique no. 5, 2008; Stephanie C. Hofmann, 'Overlapping Institutions in the Realm of International Security: the case of NATO and ESDP,' *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 7, no. 1, March 2009.

ESDP and NATO, while remaining partners in the Euro-Atlantic security framework, have followed distinct trajectories and have emerged as different types of security actors. Neither entity is at all interested in a formal division of labor. And US leadership has been badly undermined by the transatlantic crisis over the Iraq War and, currently, by the uncertainty over Alliance tasks and objectives in Afghanistan. Many believe that, with a new administration in Washington, the ESDP-NATO relationship should be easier to fix. This may be true up to a point, but it overlooks the deep political issues that still bedevil the relationship. It has been asserted that the problems between ESDP and NATO "are practical rather than philosophical."[11] This sidesteps the key point that the problems are fundamentally *political*. It is the political confusion surrounding the relationship that, in large part, prohibits practical cooperation.

Neither the ESDP nor NATO wants to share tasks officially

When, in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War, the EU first attempted to organize its military capacity in such a way as to allow it to engage in collective missions that the US did not wish to be associated with, the initial attempt was made via NATO in the guise of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) using the crucible of the Western European Union. However, this attempt simply did not work. ESDI was eventually replaced by ESDP.[12] The need for *autonomy* in the ESDP project clearly reflected the generally unsatisfactory and even dysfunctional dimension of ESDI. Nevertheless, all too few analysts really grasped the major qualitative differences between ESDI and ESDP, the former being a mechanism to allow European states to borrow NATO assets in order to carry out limited operations, the latter being an entirely new *political* project launched by the European Union, with its own internal dynamics and self-fueling logic.

Furthermore, many have assumed the existence of an implicit 'division of labor' between the two organizations: NATO does the heavy military lifting and ESDP does the less challenging tasks of crisis management and nation-building.[13] To the extent to which the current *capacity* of the two bodies is consistent with such a vision, there seems no urgent or obvious reason to call it into question. Moreover, to the extent to which the two

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11. Tomas Valasek, *France, NATO and European Defence*, London: CER, 2008, p.1.
12. Jolyon Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, London & New York: Palgrave, 2007; Jolyon Howorth & John Keeler (eds.), *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy*, New York: Palgrave, 2003.
13. See Jaap de Hoop Scheffer's Berlin speech 'NATO and the EU: Time for a New Chapter' in January 2007: http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2007/s070129b.html

bodies have found themselves involved in overseas missions in the same parts of the world (Macedonia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan), this has indeed been the pattern of the inter-relationship. However, these real-life examples notwithstanding, there is *no inevitability* about the very idea of a division of labor. ESDP has evolved rapidly towards becoming a project and a practice that is both *sui generis* and indeterminate (in the sense that nobody can foresee what it will eventually become) as well as multifaceted and complex (covering an increasingly vast range of policy instruments). NATO has evolved in its own way and is currently trying to discover its true essence in Afghanistan. There will undoubtedly be regular occasions in the future when NATO and ESDP will collaborate and will assume different functions reflecting their different natures. But there will also be increasing occasions when they do not interact at all and when the very notion of a division of labor between them ceases to have any meaning. The relationship, therefore, cannot be usefully analyzed through the quest for some sort of 'natural' division of labor.

Finally, there has long been an assumption that NATO will assume the role of senior partner in the relationship. In the early days, this took on the form of US strictures about what ESDP should be permitted to do and to become (Madeleine Albright's "3-Ds"). As ESDP crawled off the drawing board and began to emerge into the daylight, the hierarchical aspect took on the form of NATO demands for consultation over the institutional arrangements intended to underpin the embryonic new actor. There was much talk of NATO's 'right of first refusal,' by which was very explicitly meant restrictions on what the EU could undertake and decide *until* the issue had first been debated within NATO.[14] This approach dominated

The advent of the ESDP follows the progressive disengagement of the US

discussions on, for example, the EU's aspirations to undertake missions in the Balkans.[15] And there has remained a major dispute over planning procedures, in which it is assumed by some that the very existence of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) renders redundant or superfluous the creation of an autonomous operational planning capacity for the EU itself.[16]

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14. Steve Marsh, 'The US and the Common European Security and Defense Policy: no end to drift,' in John Baylis & Jon Roper (eds.), *The United States and Europe: Beyond the Neo-Conservative Divide*, London: Routledge, 2006.

15. John Peterson, 'The US and Europe in the Balkans,' in John Peterson & Mark A. Pollack (eds.), *Europe, America, Bush: Transatlantic relations in the twenty-first century*, London: Routledge, 2003.

16. Alessia Biava, 'Vers un quartier général européen?', *Cahiers du CEREM*, no. 7, 2009.

Different historical origins and trajectories

The historical origins of NATO and ESDP suggest far more difference between them than similarity. Both, of course, arose in order to address the challenge of underwriting European security. But historically there is as little in common between the two types of challenge as there is between the types of responses to them. NATO arose and persisted for forty years because of a single, massive, systemic and existential military threat not just to Western Europe but also to 'the West' in general which required an overwhelming military response. ESDP arose because of the re-emergence across the European space (and beyond) of a range of destabilizing risks and threats that required, above all, political management. NATO's rise was accompanied by the emergence of the US as the indispensable security actor in Europe, a theatre which was also projected to centre-stage in US defense planners' agendas. ESDP arose because of the gradual disengage-ment of the US from the European theatre, no longer seen as strategically central, in favor of a major concentration on other parts of the globe (Asia, Middle East). ESDP arose at a time when the EU as a global actor, having established the Single Market and a single currency, and having emerged as the largest and wealthiest trading bloc in the world, was buoyantly seeking to complement its economic and commercial clout with some serious political and even military muscle. NATO arose in an era domi-nated by arguably the starkest form of Westphalian realism, where the only concerns of international relations were to avoid at all cost another inter-state global conflagration. ESDP arose in an era marked by the quest for a new world order based on the growing role of international institu-tions, an inchoate but discernible body of international law, the ascen-dancy of non-state actors, the assertion of human rights and even human security above those of states, and much talk of a post-Westphalian order.

NATO (1949) had a fifty-year head-start on ESDP (1999), and had, despite its stark realist origins, by the turn of the century transmogrified itself into a vast politico-bureaucratic machine in search of an appropriate international role.[17] However, in the course of that search, two truths have emerged. First, that, despite its attempts to embrace both collective defense and collective security, the Alliance remains both in reality and in the minds of most of its member states (especially the newer ones) in essence a body geared to the former (collective defense). The second truth is that, despite an uninterrupted and impassioned debate between its member

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17. Philip Gordon (ed.), *NATO's Transformation*, Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997; David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed*, Washington DC, USIP Press, 1998; Sten Rynning, *NATO Renewed*, New York: Pal-grave, 2005; Richard Rupp, *NATO after 9/11: An Alliance in Continuing Decline*, New York: Palgrave, 2006.

states which has persisted throughout the 1990s and into the 21st century – a debate about its *new essence* – there remain profound political differences over the definition of that essence. NATO, to paraphrase Dean Acheson, has lost its *raison d'être* and failed to find either its soul or a clear function. The current attempts to devise a new 'Strategic Concept' highlight the very different perceptions, across the member states, of what such a concept might amount to.[18]

ESDP, on the other hand, was, as the new century dawned, a blank sheet of paper on which the various member states of the burgeoning EU were about to write a script. That script, far from narrating a strategic vision of a dynamic EU lucidly embarking on a heroic future as a regional and potentially even global hegemon, has in fact turned out to be, like *Finnegans Wake*, very much a 'work in progress.' It began with widespread assumptions about the EU's embryonic role as a *military* actor, with fears that it could even come to rival NATO.[19] But long before the EU's first overseas mission, the ESDP script-writers were already branching out into more civilian forms of crisis-management instruments: police, and judiciary and penitentiary officers. And while the first three ESDP missions did indeed correspond to the more muscular approaches implicit in these early visions (police in Bosnia, troops in Macedonia and Congo), they were rapidly overtaken by the growing range of crisis-management missions – rule of law, border control, security-sector reform, peace monitoring, etc. – which have increasingly become the hallmark of ESDP.[20]

> **The Europeans have been able to agree on the institutions and capacities of a new policy**

The policy has, in short, been driven by events and by its own evolving narrative. ESDP has, in each and every case, *responded* to circumstances and to international requests and is now almost reeling under the weight of its growing responsibility as the perceived crisis manager of choice.[21] Such a profile has, in fact, increasingly little to do with NATO *per se* or with any perceived need to devote time and resources to "solving the EU-NATO problem."

Thus, the historical origins of the two bodies reveal very different organizations responding to vastly different circumstances and challenges.

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18. See http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/index.html
19. Strobe Talbott speech at Chatham House, October 1999.
20. Agnieszka Nowak (ed.), *Civilian Crisis Management: the European Way*, Paris: EU-ISS, 2006, Chaillot Paper no. 90.
21. James Dobbins, *The EU and Nation-Building*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2008.

Neither can really be understood other than in the context of its own historical evolution. It is relatively clear what ESDP is becoming, although there is much room for conjecture over what it might eventually become. NATO, even in its 'transformed' post-Cold War guise, remains a very different actor. It has not succeeded in establishing itself primarily as a purveyor of collective security or crisis management since, despite its frenetic awareness of the need to transform, its essence remains military and defense-oriented. How do we explain this paradox? The answer lies not in history but in politics.

The politics of collective security and defense

Decisionmaking in complex multinational institutional settings is highly political. The stark fact is that there is, within NATO, very little real consensus on the true nature of the present or future agenda. Throughout the 1990s, in the absence of any realistic parallel European security/defense mechanisms, NATO did succeed in enunciating new strategic concepts (in 1991 and again in 1999), did succeed in identifying military tasks to be undertaken (in Bosnia and in Kosovo), agreed – though with much agonizing – on enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe, and undertook relatively enthusiastically the task of outreach, standardization and training to new accession and partner states.

However, in the 21st century, there has been no such comparable consensus. To be sure, the Prague summit in November 2002, taking place in the somewhat aberrant context and atmosphere of post-9/11, the US-led war in Afghanistan and the euphoric climate following the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1441 (but before the collapse of transatlantic harmony in early 2003) actually agreed on four major agenda items: the 'big bang' enlargement scheduled for 2004; the launch of the NATO Response Force (NRF); the prosecution of the 'war on terror'; and the globalization of the Alliance's remit. That was a major act of transformation. But it reflected an artificial political climate that existed only for a fleeting moment – nobody wished to rock the US boat at a critical time. And, despite the surface agreements, member states were far from agreed on their implications.

Since Prague, enlargement has taken place, although it is far from clear what benefits either the Alliance itself or the new accession states have derived from this. The globalization of the Alliance's remit has taken 40,000 NATO troops to Afghanistan, where the intra-Alliance battle over burden-sharing has become almost as fierce as the battle

against the Taliban.[22] The NRF has yet to become functional or even to find a role and is currently subject to question-marks over its very existence. And NATO's precise role in the 'global war on terror' is difficult to detect. The Riga summit (2006) demonstrated that political agreement on the main agenda items was simply impossible. And the Bucharest (2008) and Strasbourg/Kehl (2009) summits both grappled unsuccessfully with no fewer than six strategic decisions that can hardly survive further procrastination: burden-sharing in Afghanistan; the future of the NRF; the future of enlargement; the prospects for a 'Global Partnership;' the NATO-EU relationship; and the 'new Strategic Concept.'

Compared with these problems, French re-integration into the military command structure seemed like plain-sailing. And yet, despite the smiles and handshakes and general expressions of relief at the return of the prodigal son, it seems likely that France's higher-profile presence in the Alliance will henceforth complicate rather than facilitate the generation of political consensus.

And what of ESDP? Contrary to the long-received wisdom that the EU's member states would never prove capable of reaching agreement either on a common foreign and security policy or (still less) on a common security and defense policy, the reality has proved different. Not only did member states agree on the establishment of new institutions through which to manage the new policy, but they have also proved relatively successful in delivering a growing *capacity* in both military and civilian instruments with which to underpin that policy. Of course, it will never be enough, and it is appropriate to decry the shortfall between capabilities and expectations[23] but the work of the European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP) and above all of the European Defense Agency has begun seriously to address the issue of trans-European cooperative procurement.[24] The most uncontroversial and arguably the most successful parts of both the Constitutional Treaty of 2004 and the Lisbon Treaty of 2007 have been the prescriptions on the further development of CFSP and ESDP: the new foreign minister role,

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22. Robert Gates, Speech at the 44th Munich Conference on Security Policy, 10 February 2008: http://www.secu-rityconference.de/konferenzenrede.php?menu_2008=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=216&; Robert Fox, 'No Go for NATO?', *The Guardian*, 6 February 2008. Jackson Janes, 'Redefining Burden-sharing,' *AICGS Analysis*, 8 February 2008, http://www.aicgs.org/analysis/at-issue/ai020808.aspx
23. Nick Witney, *Re-Energising Europe's Security and Defence Policy*, Report. European Council on Foreign Relations, 2008: http://ecfr.eu/page/-/documents/ESDP-report.pdf; Bastian Giegerich, *European Military Crisis Management: Connecting ambition and reality*, Routledge, IISS, 2008 (Adelphi Paper no. 397).
24. Seth G. Jones, *The Rise of European Security Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

the presidency of the Council, the Foreign Affairs Committee, the embryonic diplomatic service[25] and other instruments such as permanent structured cooperation.

The working methods of the Political and Security Committee could certainly benefit from refinements, but the fact remains that, in a few short years, that committee has demonstrated the capacity of 27 member states not only to debate foreign and security policy in a positive and constructive manner, but also to deliver and manage it.[26] The 25 overseas missions already mounted since 2003 – many of them involving politically sensitive issues such as the deployment of German troops in Africa – have not always been easy to agree on. But they have all been mounted and, with the possible exception of the police mission in Afghanistan, have all been relatively successful. By contrast, during the same period, NATO has been able to reach political agreement on just *one* mission – the increasingly divisive International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan.

The reality is that – despite many ongoing disagreements over capacity, planning and policy towards, for example, Russia – it is far easier to reach *political* agreement within the EU on foreign and security policy initiatives than it is within NATO. Former SACEUR General (and current Obama National Security Adviser) James L Jones, regretted that the biggest disappointment he experienced during his years as supreme commander was "the reluctance of the Alliance to continue its transformation at the political level."[27] However, as Frédéric Bozo has so convincingly demonstrated, the prospects for reaching agreement on either the method or the objectives of political reform within NATO remain as problematic as ever.[28] This is not to say that NATO will rapidly decline or go out of business. It is likely to remain for some time the primary body for coordinating military, security and defense policy among its 28 member states. Whether one takes a sceptical view of NATO's future[29] or sees it as a body with enormous future

25. Graham Avery & Antonio Missiroli (eds.), *The EU Foreign Service: how to build a more effective foreign policy*, Brussels: EPC, 2007.
26. Anna Juncos, & Christopher Reynolds, 'The Political and Security Committee: Governing in the Shadow,' *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2007, p. 127-147.
27. David S. Yost, 'An Interview with General James L. Jones, USMC,' *NATO Research Paper #*34, January 2008, p. 2.
28. Frédéric Bozo, 'Alliance atlantique: la fin de l'exception française?,' *Fondation pour l'Innovation Politique*, Working paper, February 2008, www.fondapol.org
29. Richard Rupp, *NATO after 9/11: An Alliance in Continuing Decline,* London: Palgrave, 2006; Nick Witney, 'The Death of NATO,' *Europe's World,* autumn 2008.

potential,[30] nobody is today predicting that NATO is about to fade away. However, NATO's future after Afghanistan will be decided by the necessary and inevitable political debate among its member states over its core mission and its long-awaited new strategic concept. France's full return to the NATO fold will ensure that that conversation will be lively.

That is why it is necessary for the two organizations to abandon attempts to define a grand strategic relationship. They will not achieve it since each is still evolving very rapidly. In the medium term, it is likely that we shall see sector by sector agreements – procurement, capacity building, intelligence and information sharing, logistics, etc. – rather than some grand bargain or compact. This will, in the long run, produce a healthier relationship and will allow each organization to follow its own inner dynamics and grow organically.

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30. Sten Rynning, *NATO Renewed: The Power and Purpose of Transatlantic Cooperation*, London: Palgrave, 2005; Rebecca R. Moore, *NATO's New Mission: Projecting Stability in a Post-Cold War World*, New York: Praeger, 2007; Daniel Hamilton *et alii* (2009), *Alliance Reborn: an Atlantic Compact for the 21st Century. The Washington NATO Project*. Published by the Atlantic Council of the United States, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Center for Technology and National Security Policy and the Center for Transatlantic Relations, accessed at http://transatlantic.sais-jhu.edu/Publications/nato_report_final.pdf