The ESDP

Its Impact on the EU as an Actor in International Security

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Abstract

This paper is a critical examination of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and its importance for the EU as an actor in international security. The ESDP, far from being irrelevant, allows the EU to assume a meaningful role in the areas of civilian and military crisis management, albeit on a smaller-scale. In the multipolar, post-Cold War world, it is increasingly important for the EU to be able to assume a security role, something it has been sorely lacking since its inception. The body of this paper is divided into 3 sections. The first section explains both how and why the ESDP came into being, and also discusses the European Security Strategy (ESS). The second section examines the role of the ESDP in the contemporary international security world, and explores the EU/ESDP and US/NATO relationship, the ESDP and Russia relationship, and how the ESDP fits into the five key threats of the ESS (terrorism, WMDs, regional conflicts, failed states, and organized crime). The final section of the thesis explains the future role of the ESDP, and discusses the capabilities issue and the future of the EU/ESDP and US/NATO relationship.

*Key words*: ESDP, NATO, EU, CFSP, European Security Strategy, International Relations, Transatlantic Relationship, International Security
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1 Introduction

The creation of the ESDP has signaled the ushering in of a new era for the European Union in the realm of international relations. The name itself (European Security and Defence Policy) describes something that has never really existed before in the European sphere. For the latter half of the 20th century, the collective security of Europe was something that fell firmly within the realm of NATO. But with the end of the Cold War, the international security situation began to change drastically. The ongoing development of the ESDP can be perceived as a natural consequence in response to these changes. As the European Union has continued to expand and assume a greater role on the world stage, it has also needed to devise a means that would allow it assert itself in matters of security. Relying solely on means of ‘soft power’, as the EU has been apt to do for the greater part of its lifetime, is oftentimes simply not enough should a serious crisis or conflict emerge. Sometimes force is needed to back up diplomatic initiatives. The EU experienced its own shortcomings in the area of conflict management when the crises erupted in the Balkans throughout the 1990s. The EU, with virtually no collective means of ‘hard power’ at its disposal, was left on the sidelines while NATO and the US effectively had to bear the full responsibility for managing a crisis that was in the EU’s own backyard. The inability of the EU to manage such a conflict that was so close to home made it clear that the EU needed its own means of providing military and civilian assets for conflict prevention and crisis management. The ESDP has been the EU’s answer to these concerns, and its impact on the EU as an actor in the realm of international security is something that needs to be explored.

1.1 Problem

The very existence of the ESDP goes against conventional wisdom when it comes to security matters. International relations theories have told us time and time again that when it comes to security, it is the nation-state that matters. If we are to heed the teachings of realism, “security interests are perceived to be in conflict rather than complementary, interstate politics tends to be a zero-sum game – that is, if one state wins, another must lose” (Hix, 2005: 375). When dealing with security matters, nation-states are motivated by their own self-interests, and are oftentimes hesitant if not outright standoffish when faced with the prospect of security cooperation. Therefore cooperation between states is unlikely as there is little opportunity for the provision of a common public good, and there are no credible enforcing agents in a system of anarchy (Ibid). Unlikely is the key word.
here. Generations of US theorists have been weaned on neo-realism and tend to see all power relations in terms of balancing, bandwagoning, and buckpassing (Howorth, 84: 2006). The ESDP represents an anomaly in the face of such theoretical assumptions. The fact remains that the ESDP does exist, the nation-states of the EU are cooperating in security matters, and they are doing so for reasons which are not motivated solely by national self-interest. Isn’t this interesting, if not strange? Economic cooperation is one thing, but the military cooperation we have seen amongst the EU member states in the form of the ESDP is very unexpected. Such a scenario consequently gives rise to a variety of questions. But in order to make the focus of this essay more clear for the reader, the research problem and general direction of the essay can be summed up as follows:

Why does something like the ESDP even exist? How does it impact the role of the EU as a unitary actor in security matters? What significance does it have for the international security environment?

Aside from the theoretical paradox that arises when attempting the frame the ESDP, other ambiguities arise. For example, what is it and what it is for? Some are under the impression that the ESDP represents an effort to establish a European army or that it is meant to function as a European NATO. Others believe that the ESDP is supposed to be a tool that can allow the EU to force its collective will where it sees fit. Some even believe that it is meant to help the EU ‘balance’ against the US (at least in the realist sense). However, none of these assumptions are true. Yes, the ESDP does represent the ‘strong arm’ of the CFSP in areas where means of ‘soft power’ alone are not sufficient. It represents something dramatically different when compared to the traditional ‘normative/soft/civilian power’ role we have commonly associated with the EU. The EU has always relied on economic, cultural, and political tools to reach its foreign policy goals, and has stressed “the acceptance of the necessity of cooperation with others in the pursuit of international objectives and a concentration on non-military means to secure goals” (Smith, 15: 2003). But now – for the first time – the EU possesses military capabilities that can allow it to make a collective contribution as a security actor. The ESDP signifies “the institutional confidence and processes to manage and deploy military force as part of the accepted range of legitimate and effective policy instruments, together with the EU’s legitimacy as an international actor with military capabilities” (Cornish, 587: 2001). The ESDP represents something new and exciting for political scientists. After reading the essay, the reader should have a thorough understanding of why the ESDP is important, how it allows the EU to deal with contemporary security threats, and what its significance is for both the EU and the global security environment.
1.2 Theory

Theories such as federalism, neo-functionalism, and liberal intergovernmentalism are excellent theoretical tools for explaining European integration. However, they focus most of their attention on the internal dynamics of the EU and shy away from matters of security. If the main focus of this essay was to explain how the ESDP came into being, then these theories could be helpful in understanding how and why this occurred. But the problem is that these theories focus on economic, political, and cultural factors (all of which are important), but they make very little mention of security. This essay is concerned with the external security role that the ESDP allows the EU to assume, so the absence of such theories should not come as a shock to the reader.

Since this is the case, perhaps one could turn to theories of international relations for theoretical assistance? The three dominant theoretical frameworks in contemporary international relations are liberalism, constructivism, and realism. Liberalism asserts “the primacy of economics and societal economic interests over politics and power relations” (Hix, 2005: 376). But the ESDP was not created as a response to economic concerns, so liberalism is not relevant given the context of this thesis. Then we have constructivism, which “sees international relations as dominated by cultural, ideological, and ideational forces” (Ibid). Constructivism is a bit more relevant, but not exactly what I am looking for. That leaves realism, which at first glance seems the most relevant. After all, realism focuses on the belief that states are motivated by the desire for economic and military security or power, as opposed to ideals or ethics. However, the focus is on the nation-state, and neither the EU nor the ESDP are nation-states. So how can realism explain the ESDP?

Well, in a sense realism is a theory that can be helpful for understanding what the ESDP is not intended to do. Realists regard the nation-state as the primary actor in international politics, and place the emphasis on power politics and persistent ‘balancing’ between states. According to this theory, “international politics is driven by an endless struggle for power which has its roots in human nature” (Baylis, 149: 2001). In addition to this, “sovereign states are rational self-seeking actors resolutely if not exclusively concerned with relative gains because they must function in an anarchical environment in which their security and well-being ultimately rest on their ability to mobilise their own resources against external threats” (Burchil, 87: 2001). When placed against this backdrop, the purpose of the ESDP inevitably leads to all sorts of confusion. According to realism and other theories of international relations, nation-states are the primary security actors, but the EU is not a nation-state. So when an entity like the EU attempts to become a security actor through something like the ESDP, it becomes difficult to apply traditional international relations theories. The convergence of individual security interests through the ESDP goes against the norm, especially considering that “from a realist perspective this is unlikely, as security interests tend not to vary over time” (Hix, 2005: 399). And when considering the ESDP, one needs to realize that it “is not designed to “balance” US power in the
structural realist sense” and “the EU has set its face squarely against the sorts of considerations of power politics that are inherent in structural realist logic and lie at the heart of “balancing”” (Howorth, 84: 2006). The ESDP represents something new, and is therefore difficult for international relations scholars to pinpoint. The guiding principles behind the ESDP are pragmatic, institutional, international, multilateral, multi-level, rules-based, and transformative, rather than strategic, coercive, self-interested, and military (Ibid). Since none of the aforementioned theories can provide a complete framework for this thesis, the essay will instead be explanatory in nature and provide a critical assessment of the ESDP.

1.3 Method

This paper represents a “deviant” case-study. When a body of theory is fairly well developed and substantial evidence has confirmed it, a detailed study of a deviant case can be illuminating (Odell, 2001: 166). Deviant case analyses are studies of single cases that are known to deviate from established generalizations (Lijphart, 1969: 692). The ESDP represents a deviant case because it is an unlikely occurrence in the realm of international security relations that does not fit into the existing theoretical norms. In response to realism, its existence proves that nation-states are capable of supranational cooperation in security matters, and are even able to do so without being motivated by power politics or the need to maximize their own self-interest. Considering a case where the main causes were present but the expected effect did not occur might shed light on the theory’s limits, helping to identify conditions that are necessary or favorable for its operation (Odell, 2001: 166). According to realism, which seems to be the dominant theory of international relations, something like the ESDP should not even exist. But the fact that 25 EU nation-states are cooperating in the realm of security through a policy like the ESDP goes to show that realism and its emphasis on self-interested nation-states vying for power in an anarchic international environment cannot explain everything, especially something like the ESDP.

Taking all of the above into account, the body of the essay is divided up into three primary sections that are intended to build upon each other. The first section describes the evolution of the ESDP, and provides a thorough account of both how and why the ESDP came into being. The European Security Strategy (ESS) is also put into focus. This is due in no small part to the fact that the ESS is the primary doctrine that frames EU foreign policy, especially in areas of international security. The second section of the paper examines the contemporary role of the ESDP in various matters of international security. How the ESDP affects the relationship between the EU and US/NATO is discussed, and this issue is explored in further detail in the “three D’s” subsection, which deals with the three primary US concerns of de-linking, discriminating, and duplicating. How the ESDP influences the EU/Russia relationship is also touched upon. After this, the ESDP is put to the test when it is faced with the 5 key threats of the ESS, namely terrorism, WMDs, regional conflicts, failed states, and organized crime. The final
part of the paper explores what the future role of the ESDP will be. Problems such as the inherent lack of ESDP military capabilities and their meaning for the effectiveness of the ESDP are discussed. Then the matter of EU/ESDP and US/NATO relations is taken one step further, and some answers in regards to how the two will continue to coexist going forward is covered. Finally, I will present some brief conclusion and discuss them.

1.4 Material

The material for this paper was based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources used were rather limited, with the European Security Strategy being the one that was utilized most. The bulk of the paper is written based on research compiled from secondary sources, with a large amount of the research articles and essays providing critical looks at both EU security policy and the ESDP. The majority of these secondary sources were obtained through the ELIN system at Lund University. The intention was to use sources that were as up-to-date as possible and that were analytical rather than descriptive in nature. The ESDP has only been in existence since 1999, so there is still a dearth of books written about it. However, I have hardly found this to be a hinderance while writing the paper. The ESDP is by no means a stagnant policy, and it has continued to evolve since its inception. Given this, much of the research done about it is also constantly evolving, and it is an exciting subject to research considering its relatively new and unexplored nature. The paper is not overly reliant on any one source, and can therefore give a more unbiased and nuanced account of the the subject matter.
2 The Evolution of the ESDP

Many are under the impression that the beginnings of a common European defence community first began with the establishment of the ESDP in 1999. In actuality, Europe “tried to establish a defence community nearly fifty years ago in 1954, when it failed” (Guttman, 2002). This is due in no small part to the fact that at the time the Cold War was still in full swing, and the United States felt that it was necessary to shoulder most of the burden for the security of Western Europe. During the Cold War, Western Europe acted as a buffer against the Soviet Union, and thus was of vital strategic importance to the United States. However, the eventual end of the Cold War and the subsequent fall of Communism changed the nature of the transatlantic security situation significantly. Europe was no longer as vital to US interests. So it was then only a matter of time before Europe would begin to take the issue of establishing a common European defence policy into its own hands.

Throughout the 1990s, numerous events transpired that ultimately culminated in the establishment of the ESDP. One of the most important was the establishment of the Common Foreign and Security Policy in 1992. The CFSP was especially significant, because it specifically covered the issue of defence. Its predecessor, the European Political Community, “had not discussed defence issues at all: NATO was the organization responsible for defence” (Smith, 2003: 41). Europe was beginning to take collective action for its own security, and set about doing this partly through various treaties, such as the ‘Petersberg tasks’. These tasks – which include, but are not limited to, humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking – gave a new facet to the EU’s external role and also opened the door for the use of military force by the Union (Duke, 2006: 479). It must be noted that these tasks “fall short of NATO article 5 collective self-defence abilities” (Gunning, 2001: 1). At the time (1992) these tasks were intended to help manage a possible destabilization in Eastern Europe (in the wake of the fall of Communism), and by the end of the decade this destabilization is exactly what happened, with far-reaching implications for the evolution of a more robust European defence policy. Another important event was the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, which was significant because “what had previously been referred to as the ‘eventual framing of a common defence policy’ was now rather referred to as the ongoing ‘progressive framing of a common defence policy’” (Strømvik, 2005: 112). The tasks for this policy were to be built on the goals set out by the Petersberg Tasks.

All of the above events were certainly instrumental in the evolution of the ESDP. But it was undoubtedly the crises in the Balkans during the 1990s that really brought to light the shortcomings of European defence policy coordination.
So it can be said that the Balkan crises served as a catalyst for the creation of the ESDP. The EU’s inability to tackle the build-up of the crisis in Kosovo and the ambivalance and delays in US policy were vital factors in creating a foreign policy demand for some new initiative (Cornish, 2001: 588). The US more or less shouldered the entire burden for the campaign, which inevitably had negative consequences. The political tensions felt on both sides of the Atlantic regarding burden sharing and power sharing can be summed up succinctly: Americans resent being asked to shoulder more than their fair share of the military burden, while Europeans resent being dictated to by the United States (Hulsman, 2000). In addition to this, “the crises in the Balkans, which dominated the 1990s, created a powerful stimulus because the former Yugoslavia is situated inside today’s European Union (Howorth, 2006: 84). In essence, “Kosovo highlighted the EU’s inability to address crises in its own back yard” (Gunning, 2001: vii). A former German foreign minister described it quite well when he stated, "the Kosovo war was mainly an expression of Europe's own insufficiency and weakness; we as Europeans never could have coped with the Balkan wars that were caused by Milosevic without the help of the U.S." (Hulsman, 2000). Europe obviously needed to do something about this situation, especially since similar problems could always arise in the future.

In the late 1990s the UK did an about-face which ended up having a profound impact on the development of the ESDP. The real beginning of the drive was a conference in Saint Malo in December 1998, where Prime Minister Tony Blair turned his back on 50 years of British skepticism and agreed that the European pillar of NATO should be built using the EU as its base (ibid). The British desire to establish common European operational and military capabilities coincided with German and French interests, and the culmination of this course of events was the British-French ‘Saint Malo’ declaration. This ground-breaking declaration proved to be the diplomatic turning point in the creation of the ESDP as it affirmed that the EU required “the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by a credible military force, the means to decide to use them, and the readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises” so that the EU could “take decisions and approve military action where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged” (Watanbe, 2005: 7). The Saint Malo declaration can be seen as the point when both the framework and main objectives of the ESDP were finally established. All of the aforementioned developments (the dwindling strategic importance of Europe for the US, the Balkan crises, and the need for the EU to have capable military and operational capabilities for crisis management home and abroad) and the need to deal with them ultimately came together in the form of the ESDP. It can be said that “these three developments sychnorized neatly with the endogenous dynamics of the European Union itself as it ceased to be ‘just’ a market and aspired to emerge as a political actor on the world stage” (Howorth, 2006: 84). For the first time, Europe was beginning to assume a collective role as an actor in international security. What ended up happening is that from 1998 to 2002, the ESDP advanced at each successive European Council, and eventually became a reality.
All of these events came to a head when the ESDP was formally established at the Cologne European Council in June 1999. What ended up happening is that the 15 members of the EU signed up to the objectives that were set out at Saint Malo the previous year. The next major step was the Helsinki European Council in December 1999. The two main proposals made at Helsinki were the development of rapidly deployable European military capabilities (the ‘Headline Goal’) to undertake humanitarian and peacekeeping roles (also known as the ‘Petersberg Tasks’) and the establishment of new EU security institutions (Oakes, 2001: 9). The goal of having 50,000-60,000 troops ready by the year 2003 for operations lasting up to one year gave the EU member states an ambitious goal to strive for (Duke, 2006:479). This “Euro-army” – the so-called European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) was set to be the heart of the ESDP, with “the aim is to be able to deploy a force of up to 60,000 soldiers, backed by the necessary heavy lift, communications, ships and aircraft and to command, protect and sustain it” (Jenkin: 2002). On top of this, “It means 180,000 when you actually take the rotation into account” (Guttman, 2002). And when one also considers that this force is meant to be deployed within 60 days, it becomes apparent that this was no small undertaking.

The Feira European Council in June 2000 added civilian aspects of crisis management to ESDP actions. This brought the ESDP closer to its goal of being “an instrument to undertake the full range of conflict prevention and crisis-management operations defined by the Petersburg Tasks through a mixture of military and civilian means” (Berenskoetter, 15: 2006). Following the Nice Treaty in 2000, numerous security institutions were also established within the Council structure in order to oversee the ESDP. Among them “a Political Security Committee (PSC) [that] is [meant] to coordinate day-to-day running of the EU’s foreign and security policy; former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana heads this effort” (Hulsman, 2000). Both an EU military committee (EUMC) and EU military staff (EUMS) were also created. The EUMC is an EU military authority and the EUMS is tasked with implementing the decision making of the EUMC, performing early warning, situation assessments, and strategic planning for crisis management, including the identification of relevant forces (Watanbe, 2005: 7). The ESDP was finally declared fully operational at the Laeken European Council in 2001, although the process of developing its capabilities continued.

2.1 The European Security Strategy and beyond

Even though the ESDP was now fully operational and capable of carrying out crisis management operations, it still lacked a doctrine that could provide a framework or explanation for its actions abroad. In response to this, in 2003 the ESDP created what is known as the European Security Strategy. Entitled “A Secure Europe in a Better World”, this document can be perceived as the European counterpart to the National Security Strategy of the United States. Though it did not chart a specific course of action, this document for the first time
offered an EU-wide threat assessment and an acknowledgement that the EU had to take on a global responsibility as a security actor (Giegerich, 2006: 387). Part of the underpinning rationale also seems to also be collective self-interest; the European Security Strategy affirms that “A European Union which takes greater responsibility and which is more active will be one that carries greater political weight” (Duke, 2006: 485). It identifies 5 key threats: terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), failed states, organized crime, and regional conflicts – essentially the same as those seen by the United States (Howorth, 2006: 83). In contrast to the massive visible threat in the Cold War, none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means (Solana, 2003: 7). In addition to this, the root causes of these problems “incorporate diverse factors such as imbalance of political, socio-economic or cultural opportunities amongst different identity groups; lack of democratic legitimacy and effectiveness of governance; lack of effective mechanisms for the peaceful conciliation of group interests and the lack of a vibrant civil society” (Duke, 2006: 484). However, the EU approach towards these threats is somewhat more nuanced than that of the US. The US tends to view these threats and their causes in more black and white terms, and subsequently seeks to deal with them through a more heavy-handed approach, military or otherwise. George W. Bush and his national security team have launched a new strategy of pre-emption and, if necessary, military intervention (Rummel, 2002: 453). On the other hand, the EU sees these threats as being much more complex, and thus tries to tackle them in a more comprehensive way. Javier Solana is pleading for security responses that ‘are not just comprehensive, integrated and long-term, but also broadly owned and managed (Ibid). And in his own words, “conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early” (Solana, 6: 2003).

In order to deal with these threats, the Security Strategy gives the EU 3 key strategies for defending its security and promoting its values. The first strategy is “to confront threats by conducting a policy of conflict prevention using a combination of civilian and military capabilities” (“Brief”, 2005: 12). These civilian and military capabilities will be discussed later throughout the “ESDP and the Five Key Threats of the ESS” section. Even though the EU is somewhat lacking in collective military capabilities in order to undertake large-scale conflict prevention, management, and reconstruction, it still has powerful trade and development polices that it can use in combination with its rapid reaction force in order to provide solutions on a somewhat smaller-scale. The military and civilian tools contained within the ESDP give the EU a unique combination of hard military power and soft civilian and diplomatic power. In its diversity the EU’s range of instruments far out outstrips that of other international organizations, for example the OSCE or NATO (Flechtner, 1: 2006). But in theory, at least, the European arrangements have the advantage, in terms of being able to conduct a crisis management operation that does not require a formal handing of responsibility from one institution to another – with all the inherent difficulties that such a process can entail (Hunter, 86: 2002). Given that all of the 5 threats mentioned earlier are quite complex, the EU is “particularly well-equipped to deal with such multi-faceted situations” (Solana, 7: 2003).
The second strategy is “to build security in the European neighbourhood by acting in the Middle East, Balkans, and Caucasus” (“Brief”, 2005: 12). As the EU continues to expand, the integration and stabilization of the states in and at its borders is increasingly important. The intended effect of the two aforementioned strategies is to create “a ring of friends from the Caucasus to the Balkans and around the Mediterranean” (Howorth, 2006: 83). The third strategy set out in the Security Strategy is “to promote effective multilateralism by defending and developing international law, in line with the United Nations Charter” (“Brief”, 2005: 12). Unlike the US, the EU is committed to develop and uphold international law, with the United Nations providing the benchmark for international legitimacy.

The next major step for the ESDP was when the member state governments adopted the “Headline Goal 2010” in 2004. This Headline Goal 2010 was an expansion of the the Headline Goal that was established in Helsinki in 1999. It was reflective of the objectives of the European Security Strategy, and thus part of its purpose was to tackle the 5 aforementioned threats from a military standpoint through the establishment of the so-called battle-group concept. The battle-group concept envisages the creation of tactical groups, comprising approximately 1500 troops, including support, to be ready for deployment within 15 days (Watanabe, 2005: 8). Initial operational capability was achieved in 2005, with full capability planned for 2007 (Giegerich, 2006: 387). The EU was no longer only concerned with the objectives set out in the Petersburg tasks, and needed to expand its missions into areas such as disarmament operations, support for third countries in fighting terrorism, and security sector reform missions. This is why these battlegroups are so important, because they “are designed to improve the EU’s rapid response capability and are able to carry out autonomous operations or contribute to the initial phase of a large-scale operation” (“Brief”, 2005: 43). The intention was to eventually be able to deploy two of these battlegroups simultaneously. As of 2006, the EU had “a capacity of 18 battlegroups provided by 21 Member States, plus niche capabilities which provide them with specific elements for added value” (Ibid: 44). If successfully implemented, the battle-group concept will fill an important capability gap (Watanabe, 2005: 8).
3 The ESDP Today

3.1 Relations with NATO

It would be a gross oversight to discuss the ESDP without also covering its relationship with NATO. Indeed, the ESDP was born out of the desire to make a functioning European pillar within NATO. In this section of the paper the US is often mentioned in the same breath as NATO, because it is through NATO that the US exerts much of its influence in Europe. As mentioned earlier, the end of the Cold War brought with it an unwillingness of behalf of the US to continue to shoulder all of the burden of European security. The task of NATO in Europe was and still is the defence of the European territorial space, but the US wanted Europe to be able to manage its own security problems to a greater extent. Beginning in 1993, the United States began giving strong support to the development of a vigorous “European pillar” within the Atlantic Alliance (Hunter, 2002: xiii). But it was not until the operation against Serbian aggression in Kosovo in 1999 that the gap between American (through NATO) and European security capabilities became readily apparent. The Kosovo campaign significantly hastened the process begun at Saint Malo by forcing the Europeans to recognize the growing gap between American and European military capabilities (Hulsman, 2000). The process of establishing the ESDP picked up a large amount of momentum, which eventually led to the ultimate establishment of the ESDP as a functional and viable aspect of EU security policy. But would the establishment of an independent European Security pillar diminish the transatlantic importance of NATO?

The Nice Treaty in 2000 was critical for ESDP/NATO relations. This treaty made it clear that EU military forces are independent from NATO, planning and decision-making for many operations can and will be done outside of NATO, and that the EU will retain full political and strategic control throughout any operation (Jenkin: 2002). What was outlined in the treaty is somewhat out of line with US expectations towards the ESDP, as summed up by George W. Bush: “It is essential that the EU develop capabilities that enable it to act when NATO as a whole is not engaged, in a manner that is fully coordinated, compatible, and transparent with NATO, and to provide for the fullest participation of non-EU European military allies” (Zervoudaki, 8: 2006). The concerns about NATO being threatened has led to a ‘yes, but’ “approach to the ESDP that has in general welcomed a stronger European approach to international security and improved European military capabilities as long as long as it remains assured that NATO
will not be undermined” (Giegerich, 2006: 388) The US (in particular through NATO), has always had a kind of conditional support towards the ESDP. As stated earlier, the US has always supported an increased capacity for European security in order to balance the burden sharing. But this support has always been conditional because the United States remains intent on ESDP not being allowed to impinge on US flexibility nor on NATO as America’s chief instrument for exerting influence in Europe (Peter, 2004: 396). Furthermore, “We [the US] would not want to see and ESDI [ESDP’s predecessor] that comes into being first within NATO but then grows out of NATO and finally grows away from NATO” (Giegerich, 2006: 390).

At times it almost seems as if the US attitude towards the ESDP is schizophrenic in nature. On one hand, the US says that it wants the EU to build up its own security capabilities. On the other hand, when the EU actually does so through such means as the ESDP, the US contradicts itself by becoming anxious and suspicious and says “no you can’t do that”. Such concerns have been encouraged due to the “constructive ambiguity [that] has been built into its [ESDP] construction in order to accommodate continued divergences between member states about the desired relationship between the EU and NATO” (Watanabe, 2005: 5). Different member states have different attitudes towards NATO, so the construction of the ESDP itself is at times unclear in order to accommodate these divergent viewpoints. Those major EU member states with less intense military and defence industrial linkages with the US, namely France and Germany, tend to take a maximal view of what is meant by ‘capacity for autonomous action’ than Britain, which is more intensely integrated with US military and intelligence capabilities, and has significant defence industrial linkages with the US (Ibid: 19). It seems that “the United States’ unilateral impulse and the Europeans striving for autonomy are viewed as two sides of the same coin. They lead to ambiguities and breed mutual suspicion, undermining the credibility of as well as confidence in each partner’s respective readiness to cooperate and compromise” (Peters, 2004: 383). To make matters worse, much of the language contained within both Headline Goals stresses the need for the EU to be able to undertake autonomous action, which obviously creates a dilemma between NATO and its relations with the EU. The ambiguity in regards to where NATO stops and the ESDP starts has led to concerns, in particular from the US.

3.2 The Three D’s

As a response to ESDP/NATO concerns, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright stated what became known as the “three D’s” at the NATO foreign ministers’ meeting in Brussels in December 1998. These three D’s were de-linking, discriminating, and duplicating, with decoupling forming a supplemental “fourth D”. Madeleine Albright’s “three D’s” were not new when formulated in 1998 but but merely resembled the traditional baseline of US policy on this
matter, at least since the early 1980s (Ibid: 396). These “three D’s” continue to outline American expectations towards the ESDP to this day.

3.2.1 De-linking

The first “D” – de-linking – clearly related to the idea of “autonomous” European action introduced in the Saint Malo declaration, along with the absence of the ritual words “seperable but not separate” military capabilities (Hunter, 2002: 34). In order for the US to allocate NATO resources (which were largely US resources) and support to common European security endeavours, it was vital that the guidelines established at Saint Malo were followed. Another concern that fell under the first “D” of de-linking was that of decoupling. The US was concerned that transatlantic security would be decoupled, meaning “that the European allies taking part in the ESDI [European Security and Defence Identity, which became the ESDP] could create circumstances in which they would see their security as somehow decoupled from the Atlantic framework” (Ibid: 35). This has been of great concern to certain US policy makers, with one even going so far as to say "If the Europeans desire and then achieve a separate unified military capacity without recourse to the U.S., they will have eliminated the rationale for NATO as we have known it" (Hulsman, 2000). Others have stated “I look upon it [ESDP] as being virtually an abrogation [abolishment] of European responsibility to NATO” (Gunning, 2001: 13).

However, such statements ignore the fact that if "If Europe takes on more responsibility by building up its military strength, that will contribute to the long-term equilibrium of the alliance" (Hulsman, 2000). In addition to this, “some European military capacity, not solely bound up in NATO could actually reassure Europeans of their ability to take some actions in circumstances in which the United States chose not to become engaged” (Hunter, 2002: 35). And when I talk about equilibrium or balancing here, it is not balancing in the traditional realist sense. The ESDP was never created in the spirit of power politics and it was never intended to replace NATO. All of the historical events mentioned earlier (the dwindling strategic importance of Europe for the US, the Balkan crises, and the need for the EU to have capable military and operational capabilities for crisis management home and abroad) brought about the need for the ESDP, rather than any desire on behalf of the EU to create a counterweight to the US and NATO. Although more recent events, namely the Iraq War, exasperated transatlantic tensions and led certain EU member states (in particular France and Germany) to see the need for a counterbalance to US unilateralism.

3.2.2 Discriminating

The second “D” mentioned by Albright stands for discriminating. There was a concern that the ESDP would “lead to different kinds of discrimination against non-EU members of NATO, perhaps even creating an EU caucus within NATO”
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(Geigerich, 2006: 388). Would these states be able to take part in ESDP military operations? In one form or another, virtually all of the NATO states that do not belong to the EU have made clear their concerns about being sidelined in the event of a military action within the framework of the ESDP (Hunter, 2002: 38). The big issue is being able to participate if they choose to do so, because “traditionally neutral non-NATO members of the EU have no interest in turning the EU into a collective defence organization like NATO” (Gunning, 2001: 25).

This issue has been of particular concern to Turkey. Turkey is a NATO member that at the same time has been trying to gain acceptance into the EU. One needs to keep in mind that “at the beginning of the 21st century institutions become tools of identity building, inclusion, and exclusion. Turkey’s concerns about being included into the new, emergent military architecture in Europe are about belonging to Europe” (Terzi, 2002: 58). To compound the situation further for Turkey, “as ESDI-ESDP has developed beyond the necessary reliance on NATO assets and Turkey’s potential veto [being that Turkey is a NATO member and entitled to veto], the issue by 2000 became whether Turkey would be able to take part in the full range of discussions and decisions within EU institutions” (Hunter, 2002: 38). Not only this, but “most of the regions that the EU crisis-management forces are expected to serve are neighbouring regions to Turkey and thus are of vital importance to Turkey’s security” (Terzi, 2002: 55). If the EU conducts autonomous operations without recourse to NATO in Turkey’s backyard, it puts Turkey in a rather uncomfortable situation (because Turkey would not be able to have any influence on the operations). The Turks have indicated that they will work against ESDP within NATO if they continue to be excluded (Gunning, 2001: 27). The case of Turkey is representative of the dilemma facing other non-EU members of NATO – Canada, Iceland, Norway, United States – whose primary dilemma with the ESDP is the prospect of being left out of the formal decision-making process.

3.2.3 Duplicating

The third “D” – duplicating – is the one that perhaps lies highest on the list of US concerns. There is the fear that the ESDP will duplicate existing NATO assets and capabilities, thus diminishing the importance of NATO. On the face of it, Secretary Albright’s injunction “to avoid duplicating existing efforts” was simply a US plea for the Europeans, in crafting ESDI, not to spend scarce resources on trying to create a second set of capabilities that they could just as easily obtain from NATO (Hunter, 2002: 41). Why try to duplicate what NATO can already do effectively? It seems like overkill to spend unnecessary funds on military hardware when any substantial military conflict the ESDP would be likely to get involved in would likely also engage the United States and NATO, thus making any attempted duplication of NATO capabilities pale in comparison if a large-scale crisis should arise. Many Americans “worry that ESDP will unnecessarily duplicate NATO’s efforts and complicate decision-making without adding much military value” (Gordon, 215: 2004). The problem for Europe, as history and
current levels of expenditure show, is not that it will do too much regarding defense spending, which is the only way ESDP could develop to the point at which it would threaten to make NATO superfluous; it is that Europe consistently does too little (Hulsman, 2000). Despite recent the increases it remains the case that Europe’s comparative lack of military effectiveness has less to do with abstract problems of institutional development, and rather more with the absence of vital, concrete military equipment (Payne, 2003: 18). This is not likely to be remedied anytime soon given the rather small budget that the ESDP is allotted. In reality, “Europe's security and defense policy will continue to be on a much too modest scale to really worry the US” (Hulsman, 2000). However, most EU governments realize that promoting security involves a lot more than just military power. According to Javier Solana, “Threats cannot be tackled by purely military means. Rather, they require a systematic policy of preventive engagement by the Union which must be ready to use the full panoply of tools – economic, political, military – at its disposal to confront threats as they emerge” (Payne, 2003: 14). So even though the EU military capabilities pale in comparison to NATO, it still has powerful trade and development policies that it can use in combination with the civilian and military capabilities of the ESDP in order to provide solutions on a somewhat smaller-scale

3.3 ESDP and Russia

In contrast to the United States, Russia has consistently showed strong support for the ESDP since its inception. This is due to several factors, all of which are influenced by Russia’s changing geopolitical profile since the end of the Cold War. Initial enthusiasm was motivated by a hope that the ESDP should constitute an alternative pole in the global security architecture to the United States and NATO; more recent efforts are the product of worsening EU-Russian relations and Russia’s gradual marginalization from the policing of Europa (Geigerich, 387: 2006). The relationship between Russia and NATO has always been somewhat strained. After all, NATO was established in large part to counter the military might of the Soviet Union. But with the end of the Cold War, the relationship began to thaw somewhat. And now that Europe is seeking responsibility for its own security (through the ESDP) independent of NATO, Russia sees an opportunity to influence European security matters that it was lacking when NATO was the only military alliance in Europe. In this context, the EU is looked upon as a counterweight to a ‘NATO-centric’ European security system and as a prospective key actor (‘pole’) in a multipolar world order (Rontoyanni, 814: 2002). The increasing EU autonomy in foreign and security policy in combination with the development of partnership with Russia would bring new opportunities for the latter to reach its security aims and to strengthen its own voice in Europe. (Danilov: 2001). Indeed, to Russian policy-makers, the ESDP can act as “a new channel for Russia’s inclusion in European policy-making processes” (Rontoyanni, 818: 2002).
From the beginning, Russia has sought to have a bilateral relationship with the ESDP. This has worked out well for Russia, as it has become “the first [and at present remains the only] non-member state to gain monthly consultations with the EU’s Political and Security Committee (COPS), the main decision-making body of the ESDP (Rontoyanni, 814: 2002). This is obviously very important to Russia, especially considering that the EU in continuing to expand into what was formerly the Soviet Union. This EU expansion has consequently led to conflicts of interest from both sides. So if Russia can gain some kind of influence over the the EU policy-making process, then it can perhaps consolidate some of the influence it has lost in the former Soviet Republics. There has also been a sense of urgency from the EU side to establish some kind of coordinated security scheme with Russia, largely as a result of the EU’s neighborhood policy. The intention of this policy was to integrate the nations on the EU border through a range of social and economic incentives. At the same time, Russia has moved to consolidate its influence in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) [an alliance of former Soviet Republics] through an economic integration process, bilateral energy deals, political support, and military operations (Geigerich, 396: 2006). This overlap of interests – particularly in the countries at the EU/Russian border – has inevitably led to a mutual need for both the EU and Russia to cooperate in security matters. This is why cooperation through the ESDP is essential and can be mutually beneficial to both sides.

3.4 ESDP and the Five Key Threats of the ESS

The European Security Strategy (ESS) was born out of the need to establish a European security doctrine. The disappearance of the bipolar order and the reduced threat of state-to-state military confrontations, have altered security policies, which require a new set of capabilities with which to engage in new forms and styles of intervention abroad (Watanabe, 18: 2005). In addition to this alteration of the geopolitical landscape, pivotal events accelerated the need for the creation and implementation of the ESS. Shortly after the terrorist attacks in the US on 11 September 2001 the EU began work on developing a new security strategy that would provide strategic context for its action in Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and ESDP areas (Taylor, 3: 2006). The ESS established 5 key threats that the EU was faced with: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), regional conflicts, state failure, and organized crime. These threats are not unique to the EU, in actuality they are the 5 greatest threats to international security today. So what role does the ESDP play in dealing with each of them? By answering this question one can gain a large amount of insight into how much impact the ESDP is having on the EU’s contemporary international security profile. The role of the ESDP in dealing with each of these threats varies. These threats are oftentimes interconnected in nature, so the actions of the ESDP in one area can also affect outcomes in other areas. The ESS recognizes “the “complex causes behind international terrorism and
recalling the destabilizing effects of regional conflicts such as Kashmir, the Great Lakes, and the Korean Peninsula, all of which feed into the cycle of terrorism, WMD, state failure, and international criminality” (Howorth, 83: 2006). A comprehensive approach involving both the civilian and military crisis management capabilities of the ESDP in combination with other EU institutions is usually the most effective means of dealing with these threats. This makes sense, seeing as how “the possiblity of structural conflict prevention by the EU has been for a long time more successful in comparison with its capacity to achieve actual crisis intervention (Rummel, 470: 2002).

3.4.1 Terrorism

The first of the 5 key threats to Europe as outlined in the ESS is terrorism. The spectre of a potential terrorist attack had always loomed over Europe, but it was not until the events of September 11th that the likelihood of a terrorist attack on European soil gained new urgency. And when the bombings in Madrid and London occurred, those fears were finally confirmed. So given that the threat is real and ever-present, what role has the ESDP had in the “war on terror”? Unlike the US, the EU does not have the collective military capabilities through the ESDP in order to “take the fight to the terrorists”. Due to its relative lack of collective “hard power”, the EU has instead had to primarily rely on means of “soft power” in order to contribute to the “war on terror”. It seems that “the EU structure explains the reliance on the state to diminish the risk of terrorism” (Alvarez-Verdugo, 437: 2006). Given that the terrorist threat cannot always be combated through military means, the role of the ESDP in this matter been somewhat limited. However, it can fit into the larger picture due to the idea that “the EU, with its unique possibility of combining civil and military means, should defuse the political tensions and social injustices that provide the breeding-ground for hatred and terrorism” (“Assembly”: 2002). The ESS recognizes the root causes of terrorism, which “include the pressures of modernisation, cultural, social, and political crises, and the alienation of young people living in foreign societies” (Solana, 3: 2003). Obviously, such problems cannot be solved solely through something like the ESDP.

While efforts above all have focused on police and judicial cooperation, known as Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) or the third pillar of the EU, there is also a need for action under the ESDP since the European Security Strategy identifies terrorism as a threat (“Brief”, 16: 2005). But what kind of action can the ESDP realistically take? The European Union has up until the present day responded “with measures that include the adoption of a European Arrest Warrant, steps to attack terrorist financing and an agreement on mutual legal assistance with the USA” (Solana, 6: 2003). All of these measures fall outside of the reach of the ESDP and its European Rapid Reaction Force. Given this, the role of the ESDP in counter-terrorism activity will likely not grow until sometime in the future. In November 2004, the Council adopted a ‘conceptual framework on the ESDP dimension of the fight against terrorism’, which sets out the points on which the
EU will have to work in the future (interoperability of civil and military capabilities, creation of a European Nuclear, Biological and Chemical centre, etc.)” (“Brief”, 16: 2005).

When discussing this matter the role of the European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) inevitably comes up. One would assume that the 60,000-strong ERRF could be an effective tool in counter-terrorism operations. However, the threat of terrorism is often opaque and hard to pinpoint from a military standpoint. One of the problems that the ERRF faces is the fact that it “is vaguely intended for peacekeeping and peace making – the so-called Petersberg tasks – which were formulated long before September 11th” (Jenkin: 2002). September 11th clearly changed the rules of the game, and the ERRF – the heart of the ESDP – is intended for humanitarian and peacekeeping tasks, both of which have little to do with terrorism. In addition to this, NATO already has its own rapid reaction force called the Allied Rapid Reaction Corp, which is much larger than the ERRF. The announcement in October 2003 of a 9,000 strong [NATO] combat-ready response force, able to be deployed anywhere and reach 21,000 by 2006, puts EU progress in the shade (Hill, 157: 2004). Indeed, ERRF comprises the very same troops, but wearing different hats and without American assistance (Jenkin: 2002). The military emphasis on combating terrorism since 9/11 has been focused entirely on NATO, primarily because “the kind of military effort most likely required to deal with terrorism (more of a “special forces” nature – perhaps backed up with precision airpower – rather than that of a rapid reaction corps nature)” (Hunter, 171: 2002).

Any truly large-scale conflict would stretch ESDP and ERRF capabilities, leading to the need for US and NATO intervention. In reality, “There are few cases left in which conflicting American and European interests could compel the activation of the European rapid reaction force rather than direct NATO involvement” (Hulsman: 2000). However, as happened in Afghanistan (which harboured Al-Qaeda and the Taliban), ”the Europeans could cover for US planes and troops removed from their own theatre, and provide back-up assistance in intelligence, transport, policing, etc. (Hill, 148: 2004). Given all this, it seems as if the ESDP and its ERRF could find a niche in the ‘war on terror’ on a smaller scale by doing what is was intended to do, which is to undertake humanitarian and peacekeeping tasks. By maintaining the peace and helping to rebuild civil society in post-conflict regions, the conditions that breed terrorism (such as political instability and lack of security) would be less likely to develop. However, this could lead to further resentment, with NATO and the US doing the ‘dirty work’ of major military operations and leaving role of peacekeeper to the EU.

3.4.2 WMDs

Another problem outlined in the ESS is the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The EU realizes that this threat is interwoven with terrorism, regional conflicts, failed states, and international criminality to a large extent. Given this, “the EU strategy against WMD proliferation does not reflect
any revolutionary change in European policies or actions but is clearly grounded in the heritage of the rule of law, multilateralism, economic and political pressure on third states, a focus on the political causes of international problems, and international cooperation” (Alvarez-Verdugo, 437: 2006). The EU, with its 60,000-strong ERRF, is certainly not capable of overthrowing any rogue nuclear state by using military means. Direct military intervention is not really an effective strategy against WMD proliferation anyways, so this is a moot point. The ESDP can still play a part in the fight against WMD proliferation by assuming an indirect role somewhat similar to the one it has in the fight against terrorism. By using its civilian and military crisis management capabilities to maintain stability in failed states and post-conflict regions, the ESDP can perhaps aid in the prevention of the conditions inherent in instable regions that can endorse WMD proliferation.

3.4.3 Regional Conflicts

According to the ESS, regional conflicts also form a clear threat to EU security. The list of reasons for this is long: they destroy human lives and social and physical infrastructures, threaten human rights, lead to terrorism, state failure, organised crime, and can fuel the demand for WMD (Solana, 4: 2003). In order to respond to these threats, the EU has developed methods to manage these conflicts. One of the primary reasons for the establishment of the ESDP was the need for the EU to have military and operational capabilities for crisis management both at home and abroad. As mentioned earlier, this has become increasingly important due to the fact that the US is less enthusiastic about defending European security than it was during the Cold War. The goals set out at the Helsinki European Council in 1999 still frame the crisis management responsibilities within the ESDP and CFSP: “a non-military crisis management mechanism will be established to coordinate and make more effective the various civilian means and resources, in parallel with the military ones, at the disposal of the Union and Member States (Hunter, 85: 2002). The stress was on establishing both military and civilian crisis management, as evidenced “by the lessons of the Balkans: the need for civilian tools to complement military crisis management” (Duke, 480: 2006). It was apparent to the EU that military means alone were not effective at crisis management.

The ERRF can be effective in the initial stages of a small-scale conflict when hostilities are still high. But after the crisis becomes manageable from a military standpoint, civilian components to crisis management are also needed. At the Feira European Council in 2000, four civilian intervention areas were identified: the police, the rule of law, civilian administration, and civilian protection (ibid). At this council “it was agreed that EU Member States should be able to provide up to 5000 police officers capable of carrying out police operations ranging from advisory, assistance, and training tasks to substituting for local police forces” (Berenskoetter, 16: 2006). Judges, prosecutors, and penal experts were also supposed to be deployed in such missions in order to help rebuild civil society.
These civilian missions have included monitoring missions, police missions, and advisory missions in the field of rule of law (Geigerich, 387: 2006).

The ESDP is already being implemented on three continents and there are a total of 11 ESDP operations currently underway [as of 2006], involving around 9,000 soldiers and approximately 1,000 policemen and civilian experts (Flechtner, 1: 2006). The vast majority of these operations involve the ESDP intervention in some kind of regional conflict. The ESDP and its ability for crisis management was first put to the test during its initial missions in Macedonia, Bosnia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Darfur (Sudan). These missions differ from others such as those undertaken in Georgia, Indonesia, Iraq, and the Gaza strip (all of which only involved the civilian branch of the ESDP) in that the EU has been militarily involved in all of them. These were all small-scale missions and all could have been easily done without involving the EU, either by a coalition of the willing within NATO or under an EU ‘lead nation’ (Gordon, 216: 2004). However, they provide a good indication of what the ESDP and the EU are capable of in when it comes to dealing with smaller-scale regional conflicts. The EU is perhaps better placed to take on these types of operations: the scale is not too onerous, EU members have a clear national interest in participating, and in time the EU will develop the necessary institutional experience and expertise for such operations (Payne, 29: 2003).

The crisis in Macedonia was of particular concern due to its relatively close proximity to the EU border (in this case Greece). It was the first EU-led military operation. In Macedonia the EU took over from NATO with the “aim of guaranteeing the security and stability in the country in order to facilitate the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement [the peace deal signed by Macedonian and Albanian representatives]” (“Brief”, 31: 2005). Naysayers were quick to point out before the mission in Macedonia that any EU intervention there could be due to “temptation, if the political need for an operation arises, to conduct an EU-led mission for symbolic purposes, before the EU is ready to do so” (Jenkin: 2002). Fortunately for the EU, a small force of about 400 lightly-armed men was able to successfully complete the mission. The EU continues to be active in the region, primarily through civilian means such as the ongoing mentoring of the Macedonian police and assistance in the battle against organized crime.

Unlike the mission in Macedonia, which partly used NATO assets, the operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003 was an entirely autonomous EU operation. It was also the first EU military deployment outside of Europe. The Congo operation, in fact, was really a French mission supported by a handful of other Europeans, onto which an EU role was grafted (Gordon, 216: 2004). Nevertheless, it was a step in the right direction. Unrest in a town within Congo threatened to spread to the surrounding regions, and EU assistance was requested by the United Nations. The amount of troops used was relatively small (about 2,000 and involving 6 EU Member States) but still effective. The mandate of the force was to secure the town, the refugee centers and the airport, and to ensure the safety of the NGOs and United Nations personell (“Brief”, 32: 2005). The mission in Congo was also successful, and was noteworthy for a variety of
reasons. For one, “autonomous action by the EU, with the help of the ESDP, requires military leadership, planning, and practice in all those fields” in addition to requiring coordination between “the Member States, the EU institutions, the High Representative for CFSP and the EU Military Committee” (Rummel, 464: 2002). This mission was also significant because “the lessons learned from this operation led to some new ESDP concepts: battlegroups, rapid response, EU Operations Centre, etc.” (“Brief”, 32: 2005). Both of these missions pale in comparison to any large-scale operations taken by major powers like the US and NATO. But that still does not diminish their importance when considering them in the context of this essay. They were tangible proof that the EU can make a meaningful contribution as an international security actor, even if for the time being that contribution is still on a somewhat smaller scale. These Balkan and Africa missions were none the less good indicators of the kind of contributions the EU could make if continues to develop the will and capability to act militarily (Gordon, 216: 2004). The EU continues to provide support in the ESDP context in the DRC through providing assistance for ongoing security sector reform in addition to continued mentoring of the domestic police forces.

3.4.4 Failed States

The role of the ESDP in dealing with state failure – another one of the threats outlined by the ESS – is interwoven with its role towards regional conflicts. This is hardly surprising, considering how regional conflicts and state failure are oftentimes interconnected. In failed states, military instruments may be needed to restore order, humanitarian means to tackle the immediate crisis (Solana, 7: 2003). In such situations the civilian crisis management capabilities of the ESDP can aid in the establishment or re-establishment of the police, the rule of law, civilian administration, and civilian protection. The relatively recent crisis in Darfur has allowed the the ESDP to show what it can do in such a situation.

The crisis in Darfur is characteristic of many of the conflicts in Africa. The tribal warfare that has persisted in the Darfur region of Sudan has resulted in death on a large scale and threatened to engulf the surrounding regions. More than 350,000 people have been killed and 2 million displaced since the crisis in Darfur, Sudan, erupted in 2003 (Zervoudaki, 3: 2006). The scale of the crisis put Sudan ahead of The Democratic Republic of Congo and the previous poll-topper [on the ‘failed states’ list], Somalia, as well as Iraq (Soares: 2006). The EU realized the gravity of the situation, and utilized the military and civilian aspects of the ESDP in order to bring some stability and relief to the region. The EU has financed diplomatic efforts to bring all sides to the negotiating table and has supported efforts by the African Union (AU) peacekeeping forces, known as AMS I and AMS II, to stabilize the situation (Zervoudaki, 3: 2006). It was in 2005 that the EU decided to provide both military and civilian support through the ESDP. In the form of military support, it provided “equipment and assets; planning and technical assistance to the AMS II command structure; additional military observers; training of AU troops and observers and strategic and tactical support.
However, no EU troops have been deployed on the ground” (Taylor, 56: 2006). As opposed to the missions in Macedonia and DRC, what happened in Darfur has shown that the ESDP can still provide support from a military standpoint without actually putting its own troops on the ground. The civilian component of ESDP support in Darfur involved “support for the police chain of command, support for establishing a police unit within the AU, training, exercises” (“Brief”, 41: 2005) which are among several of the civilian intervention areas established at the Feira European Council in 2000. It has not only been the EU that has intervened in Sudan, NATO has also been involved and offered its support. However, what has happened thus far in Darfur has shown that the ESDP can effectively shoulder some of the burden that would have previously been exclusively within the realm of NATO or the UN.

3.4.5 Organized Crime

The role of the ESDP in the fight against organized crime is largely connected to its civilian capabilities. According to the ESS, “fostering democracy and enabling the governments to tackle organized crime is one of the most effective ways of dealing with crime within the EU” (Solana, 6: 2003). The ESDP can enable these governments to fight crime by “putting pressure on networks and helping to develop and strengthen the capacity of local police and law enforcement agencies” (Berenskoetter, 21: 2006). A perfect example of this is when the EU undertook its first civilian crisis management operation (and first mission overall) in the Western Balkans in 2003. In January 2003, an EU Police Mission (EUPM) was sent to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to upgrade the skills of the country’s police forces and help them fight organized crime (Zervoudaki, 2: 2006). The EU did this by “training specialists and setting up a specialized government agency” (“Brief”, 34: 2005). More specifically, organized crime would be fought by “strengthening BiH operational capacity and assisting and planning in conducting of major and organized crime investigations, and the implementation of police reform, which will create a single structure of policing, improve law-enforcement co-operation and reduce corruption” (Berenskoetter, 20: 2006). What has been done in BiH largely frames the ESDP approach to fighting organized crime, wherein the rebuilding and strengthening of institutions and re-establishment of the rule of law are seen as key ingredients in preventing the spread of organized crime. If the governments and legal institutions of the nations that the ESDP intervenes in are stabilized to a sufficient degree, then it is much more unlikely that the various forms of organized crime – trafficking of drugs, women, weapons, and illegal migrants, among other things – will be able to thrive. It is of particular concern that the EU deal with the aforementioned elements of organized crime, especially in those countries that line its borders. And much like the threats of terrorism, WMDs, regional conflicts, and failed states, combating organized crime is something that requires a comprehensive approach and complete understanding of the factors that give rise to it.
4 The Future of the ESDP

4.1 Capabilities

One of the first obstacles the ESDP must overcome is the capabilities issue. This relates primarily to the issue of generating effective military capacity. Something contributing to this problem is that “defence budgets in most European countries [are] at best static or even declining from levels already low by US standards” (Crowe, 539: 2003). The problem is that the money is spent badly, and disproportionately on large, outmoded military forces (Gordon, 217: 2004). Western Europe's defense budget is almost two-thirds that of America, but it produces less than one-quarter of America's deployable fighting strength (Hulsman: 2000). The fact that the CFSP – the entity and policy of which the ESDP is a part of – receives very little funding does little to help the situation. One one hand, “in 2005, around 80% of the [CFSP] budget was spent on financing ESDP civilian operations”, while on the other hand, “the CFSP budget in 2005 only amounted to a mere 0.05% of EU spending“ (Grevi, 5: 2006). The realization of the full potential and continued growth of a project like the ESDP requires a significant amount of funding to be effective. This matter has not been made any easier by the establishment of the 2010 Headline Goal and Civilian Headline Goal 2008. The 2010 Headline Goal focused specifically on developing the qualitative aspects of capabilities, including interoperability, deployability, and sustainability (Taylor, 30: 2006). “The EU decided to augment its response capabilities by establishing 13 battlegroups by 2010. Each battlegroup will consist of 1,500 highly-trained, high-readiness troops, that can be deployed within 15 days, for up to 4 months, either as a stand-alone force or as a “spearhead” force to prepare for a larger multinational peacekeeping effort” (Zervoudaki, 3: 2006). The establishment of this new headline goal was needed, especially given the different post-9/11 global security environment which no longer merely concerns the objectives laid out in the Petersberg Tasks in 1999. This Headline Goal is meant to help the EU “cover missions envisaged in the ESS: disarmament operations, support for third countries in fighting terrorism, and security sector reform missions” (“Brief”, 43: 2005). Somewhat like the 2010 Headline Goal, the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 focuses on expanding the qualitative and quantitative civilian capabilities of the ESDP. Among the areas it will affect are “conflict prevention, security sector reform, disarmament, border control, and other civilian crisis management capabilities” (Taylor, 31: 2006). In addition to this, this Goal will also establish so-called “civilian crisis response teams”, which
will form a civilian counterpart to the ERRF that can quickly respond and provide humanitarian, political, legal and other non-military support in crisis situations.

It is already known that the EU does not have anywhere near the defence budget of either the US or NATO, so it remains to be seen if the EU will be able to fully realize the 2010 Headline Goal and Civilian Headline Goal 2008 by each of their respective dates. In any case, the main issue is neither defence spending on high-end military capabilities nor overall troop numbers but effective deployability even for stability operations (Gordon, 217: 2004). A more realistic assumption is that it will take some time for the ESDP to realize its capabilities goals, especially given its relatively small budget and the inherent difficulties of getting the various Member States to coordinate their efforts for the realization of such goals. Indeed, the military part of the ESDP will have to be the core of the EU’s effort to advance from weakness to power, but the Europeans are aware that, in this respect, it will take some time (Rummel, 470: 2002). So far, according to many experts, ESDP is only fully operational in the area of peacekeeping missions, that is, in post-conflict situations, during which the stabilization of security and political reconstruction are the primary objectives (Flechtner, 5: 2006). Despite this observation, the ESDP has proven that it can be effective in smaller-scale military intervention operations, such as when the EU intervened in the DRC. And the ESDP has already proven that it can very important contributor in post-conflict situations. If the ESDP continues to develop in the areas that it is currently lacking, then there is every reason to believe that it can be a significant actor in areas such as fighting terrorism, security sector reform, and other crisis management operations in the future.

4.2 ESDP/EU and US/NATO Relations

Another issue that the ESDP must confront is how it will continue to affect the EU relationship to the US and NATO. Even though the international security situation has changed drastically since 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq (among other events), actors on both sides of the Atlantic need to keep some things in perspective. For one, “the ESDP issue should not be dividing the United States and European Allies in any fundamental way” (Hunter, 160: 2002). As mentioned before, the ESDP was not created in order to create an EU counterbalance to the US and NATO. If anything, the creation and ongoing development of the ESDP should be welcomed by both the US and NATO, for a variety of reasons. For one, now that the EU is taking more responsibility for its own security in addition to crisis management and peacekeeping operations abroad, it frees up the US and NATO to focus their attention on areas that are more important to their own security interests. A good example of this is the ongoing “war on terror” and continued US involvement in the Middle East. The US preoccupation both with Middle East-based international terrorism and with potential, perhaps unintended, consequences of the campaign could lead to a significant reduction in US interest in the practical aspects of European security or in other regions nearby, such as
North Africa (Hunter, 172: 2002). In theory the ESDP can fill this gap. As it stands now, the bulk of US military forces, resources, and attention is focused squarely on Iraq and the fight against terrorism. So if the EU is able to shoulder the burden elsewhere and take care of business in its own backyard, why should the ESDP and the continued development of EU security and crisis management be seen as anything other than mutually beneficial for both sides?

However, the intended relationship between the ESDP/EU and US/NATO often depends on who is making the observation. Depending on the viewpoints of the respective EU Member States or various US policy-makers, “making the EU stronger in the security and defence realm either to please or to challenge the United States, or either to strengthen the European contribution to the Western Alliance or to gain autonomy from US influence” (Peters, 395: 2004). One needs to keep in mind that the ESDP was not created to “appease or challenge” the US or to assert EU autonomy. Rather, a comprehensive perspective allow one to understand that the changing geopolitical situation after the end of the Cold War and subsequent crises in the Balkans revealed the need that the EU needed to assume responsibility for its own collective security. And although the US has been adamant about the ESDP not impinging on “US flexibility nor on NATO as America’s chief instrument for exerting influence in Europe” (ibid, 396), this is not likely to occur anytime soon, especially considering how much the capabilities of the ESDP pale in comparison to those of the EU and NATO. And besides, “Washington is more interested in the military capabilities of the European armed forces than in the civil component of the ESDP or in its integrative quality regarding the ‘completion’ of the Union” (Rummel, 468: 2002). Given that 80% of the crisis management operations that the ESDP currently undertakes are civilian missions, the US should not have too much to worry about. So whatever trajectory the ESDP continues to take, it should not continue to create a rift in EU-NATO relations.

Another point that both sides of the Atlantic need to realize it the need to “get the ESDP right”. The intention is to make the ESDP a workable and understood policy and “reduce this irritant to the degree possible and remove it as a complicating factor in addressing other transatlantic problems” (Hunter, 160: 2002). The sometimes perpetual ambiguity as to what the ESDP is meant to do and its relationship to the US and NATO needs to be clear to all involved so that such issues no longer continue to impede its implementation and confound transatlantic relations. The ESDP is not irrelevant, it fills an important security need that arose after the end of the Cold War. It is not a “European army” and will never be on a scale that will challenge US military dominance. It was never intended to replace or undermine NATO. And it is not designed to “balance” US power in any realist sense (as mentioned earlier). It is rather an effective military and civilian crisis management tool that the EU can autonomously use in matters where the US or NATO chooses not to get involved (or it can even be used to support US and NATO missions if the EU so chooses). With ESDP, a compliment also to the range of economic and political tools constituting the Union’s “soft power”, the EU hopes to enhance security both in regions surrounding the Union – including the Balkans, the souther Mediterranean, the Middle East – and
beyond, and to foster multilateral solutions to security challenges (Zervoudaki, 1: 2006).

The events of 9/11 and the subsequent creation of the ESS were quite helpful in creating understanding as to what the expectations and goals of the ESDP were to both EU and US policy-makers. The eventual EU crisis over how to approach the situation in Iraq also brought to light the various foreign policy intentions of the EU Member States that were largely unclear before the crisis. This crisis created a much needed dialogue between the Member States which went a long way towards all of them being clear as to what they expected to get out of the ESDP. The Union has accepted the need for its defence policies to be closely linked to NATO, and has rejected the more ambitious aspirations of some of its member states (Menom, 648: 2004). This dialogue was largely absent before the Iraq crisis, and its continuation helped to reduce the ambiguities that continued to confuse policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic and has contributed to “getting the ESDP right” by creating more mutual understanding as to what the ESDP is for and how to go about achieving its goals. Broad agreement on a more limited ESDP has thus sidestepped the potential for disagreements over ambitions to undermine the policy altogether (ibid).

The last point that the EU and NATO need to keep in mind is that efforts at mutual cooperation favor the interests of both sides. There is no apparent reason why serious efforts by US and EU leaders should not produce the desired results – a mutually reinforcing relationship between the EU, acting through ESDP, and NATO that works for all and for overall security in the transatlantic region (Hunter, 161: 2002). Despite the obstacles encountered during the Iraq crisis, there is a large amount of evidence showing that just such a relationship already exists. More connects the USA and EU than separates them: the convergence of interests towards combating terrorism, the basic parallels between the US democratization project and the EU’s CFSP, and the desire for a stable Africa all suggest mutual cooperation (Giegerich, 403: 2006). It is apparent that neither the US nor the EU are capable of fighting terrorism or helping to stabilize Africa on their own, so mutual cooperation and US/NATO encouragement of ESDP development should be the norm. Americans, with their own plate full in Iraq, Afghanistan, and potentially elsewhere, should want to see more such actions, and if acting under an EU rather than a NATO banner inspires greater European support, then it should be welcomed rather than condemned (Gordon, 219: 2004).

Also, medium-to-large scale missions undertaken by the ESDP will need NATO support for the foreseeable future. In addition to this, “Europe’s development as a military power might serve to alleviate the tension between US and European strategic perspectives” (Giegerich, 403: 2006). The hard/soft power divergence between the two would be likely to diminish if the EU continues to develop its own autonomous defence capabilities, thus actually giving it the option of using hard power in certain situations (and not being primarily dependent on methods of soft power). The development of its own military capabilities should also give the EU Member States a larger say in NATO security policy-making, something which the US should not necessarily fear. As a prominent French diplomat stated, “We simply want a better balance. If Europe
becomes more serious about its own defence, then it will earn the right to greater influence within NATO” (Oakes, 48: 2001).
5 Conclusion

The ESDP has shown a remarkable ability to evolve since its inception in 1999. In the eight short years since its creation, it has certainly come a long way towards realizing its original intention of allowing the “EU to undertake security-related operations, such as peacekeeping and conflict prevention, and to develop a defense strategy and identity outside of, but complementary to, NATO and other international organizations” (Zervoudaki, 1: 2006). There are currently over 11 ESDP missions underway involving both civilian and military capabilities, and this fact alone goes to show that the ESDP is much more than just a “paper tiger”. It is now a vital element of the EU’s CFSP, and will continue to further impact the EU’s global security profile as time goes on. However, there are still some issues that the ESDP must deal with if it is to become something that can truly add much-needed weight to the EU’s security capabilities. If the ESDP can effectively deal with these problems then it can ease a substantial amount of the security burden that has been solely in the hands of the US, NATO, and the UN for far too long. If the ESDP can give the EU the ability to manage crises in its own backyard as well as abroad, then that frees up actors such as the US, NATO, and the UN to focus their energies elsewhere, thereby improving the overall international security situation and even the (at times) strained transatlantic relationship. A fully-realized ESDP can even function as a bridge between EU and Russian security concerns, especially in those areas that constitute the EU-Russian border. These are only some of the reasons why it is so important not only for the EU, but for the international community, to encourage the continued development of the ESDP.
6 Works Cited


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