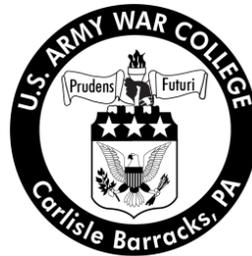


Strategy Research Project International Fellow

The European Union Response to Regional Conflicts

by

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United States Army War College
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Abstract

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The European Union (EU) is a major power on the international scene. Firmly committed to fostering stability and security, it has conceived a creative mixture of civilian and military resources to deal with regional crises using a holistic approach. Throughout the time which has passed since the EU Common Security and Defense was created, EU capabilities in security and defense have improved progressively and become rooted, permitting the EU to carry out more than 25 missions on three continents. The EU's main strength as an actor in conflict resolution relies on a diverse array of tools, normally not accessible to other countries and multinational organizations. The EU's main weaknesses include the difficulty to build consensus between Member States and its incapacity to act quickly and with cohesion. In order to become a real global actor in the security and defense arena the EU must properly improve its aspirations, which should include stronger strategic guidance, policy consistency, credible civilian and military resources, solid political will and a common level of aspiration.

The European Union Response to Regional Conflicts

In December 2003, the European Council adopted and published its first strategic concept in the European Security Strategy (ESS). For the first time, the European Union (EU) determined principles and agreed objectives for progressing the European Union's security priorities.¹ The ESS identified an array of threats and challenges to European security interests. Among the threats, regional conflicts constituted a priority. The EU recognized that instability and conflict in such places as the Balkans, Somalia, Georgia, the Middle East, Afghanistan and the Korean Peninsula could impact on European interests by leading to terrorism, state failure, extremism, and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

The EU is a major actor in the international arena, with a strategic vision conceptualized in the ESS and civilian and military resources, which complement other accessible instruments (diplomatic, economic, commercial, humanitarian and development aid).² The EU has designed a creative mix of civilian and military capabilities that allow it to deal with regional crises using a holistic approach. This organization is present from the initial phases of intervention, through the restoration of normality, and to the implementation of the programs to reconstruct the administrative, security, defense and economic structure.³

In keeping with the ESS, the EU has dealt with regional conflicts and helped to restore failed states. The EU has found reestablishing good governance, promoting human rights, democracy and development, and permitting local authorities to undertake security and defense affairs, is the most useful approach to dealing with such challenges. Given this approach and its proven track record, the EU is one of the most important international actors in conflict resolution today. The aim of this research

project is to describe and explain the evolution of the EU's role in conflict resolution, to review its missions, structure and decision-making process in the area of security and defense, and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the EU's approach to conflict resolution, as well as highlighting areas for future development.

Aims and Evolution of the Common Security and Defense Policy

The adoption of the ESS provided a clear guidance and political framework for the development and implementation of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). In the twelve years which have passed since the ESDP was established, the EU has improved and strengthened its common resources in the area of security and defense. While doing so, the EU has carried out more than 25 missions in three continents with considerable success. In 2010, the EU agreed to substitute the ESDP for the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) in order to address future challenges within the international security arena.⁴ By adapting its tools to the scale of the crisis, the EU is evolving into an effective actor, outfitted to accomplish a wide array of missions and able to act independently.⁵

Through the 1993 Maastricht Treaty, the EU defined - for the first time - its foreign policy objectives. Conflict resolution was emphasized strongly, along with fostering regional security and cooperation, democracy, development and human rights.⁶ But it would not be until the late 1990s, after the outcome of the wars in the Balkans, that specific measures were included to provide the EU with concrete crisis management capabilities. The Bosnian and Kosovo crises demonstrated Europe's lack of ability to resolve conflicts on its borders without NATO support.⁷ These lessons forced the EU, following the 1998 Saint-Malo Declaration on European Defense, to define the framework, common political will and main objectives of the ESDP.

Numerous European Council Summit meetings defined the military and civilian capabilities needed to fulfill the required tasks. For example, the Cologne and Helsinki European Council Meetings in 1999 endorsed the objectives set at Saint-Malo and laid the foundations for ESDP.

In 2003, the ESS unequivocally requested the EU to engage in a whole array of conflict resolution actions such as conflict prevention, crisis management and post-violence rehabilitation.⁸ In the same year, ESDP became operational through the initiation of the first ESDP mission (EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina). The 2009 Lisbon Treaty declared that “the EU’s external action would aim at promoting peace and security, contributing to prevent conflicts and strengthening international security”.⁹

The Lisbon Treaty presented a landmark in the development of the CSDP and officially approved the extension of the so-called “Petersberg Tasks” that now include conflict prevention, peace-keeping, crisis management, peace-making and post-conflict stabilization.¹⁰ The Lisbon Treaty also established the post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR). The HR was designed to be the EU’s single voice in international forums, responsible for conducting the Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).¹¹ The HR was tasked with ensuring consistency and effective coordination between the distinct EU elements for external actions, while enabling the EU to tackle security issues using a holistic approach.

The CSDP constitutes the operational arm of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, having both military and civilian purposes.¹² Today, CSDP is one of the most active policies of the EU. The CSDP seeks peaceful resolution to regional conflicts, the

growth of market economies, the promotion of democratic governance and security sector reforms, and the improvement of local institutions to normalize societies (rule of law, national armies, and parliaments). These are all part of the “package deal” which the EU attempts to promote when it acts overseas.¹³

Missions and Instruments of the Common Security and Defense Policy

The CSDP covers a broad range of possible missions. This range shows the EU’s level of aspiration and ability to get involved in security and defense affairs.

These missions are essentially:¹⁴

- Peace enforcement: peacemaking and tasks of combat forces in crisis management.
- Stabilization and reconstruction: peacekeeping; governance; disarmament; demobilization and demining; security sector reform.
- Conflict prevention: arms control, disarmament, embargos, non-proliferation.
- Assistance of nationals: evacuation of non-combatants, response to terrorist attacks.
- Humanitarian assistance: responsibility to protect, emergencies and disasters.

The EU does not have regional restrictions to its missions. In practice, the EU has been focused on an area that mostly concurs with the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP)¹⁵, including Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia.¹⁶ However, the EU has responded outside of these areas. For example, the EU intervened in response to natural catastrophes during the tsunami in Aceh in 2004 and the Haiti earthquake in 2010.¹⁷

Between 2003 and 2013 the EU has carried out more than 25 missions¹⁸, 8 of them military, 16 civilian and 2 mixed. During these missions, the EU has employed its own civilian and military resources and those of other countries and organizations. These missions contribute to CSDP expertise and to the EU's role as an international security player.¹⁹

EU missions²⁰ are funded by contributions from the participants. Common costs of military operations are divided among Member States through a Council's procedure of sharing known as ATHENA Mechanism. ATHENA determines and covers the joint expenses of the operation (Headquarters, medical services, infrastructure, transport, etc.). Troop Contributing Nations cover their own costs and the Commission covers the administrative charges.²¹ The costs financed jointly account for less than 10% of the total costs for an operation, the rest follows the principle, "costs lie where they fall".

Civilian missions are funded from the general budget of the EU. Title 19 of the budget covers "External Relations", and chapter 3 is expressly devoted to Common Foreign and Security Policy. In 2010, 137 million Euros of this budget was dedicated to conflict resolution and other stabilization measures.²²

Internal CSDP and Crisis Management Structures.

CSDP structures come under the authority of the European Council and the Foreign Affairs Council. They are different from bodies supporting other EU policies because of the requirement for unanimity of decision-making at all levels.²³ All of the EU decision bodies related to CSDP consist of the representatives of the 27 Member States. Every Member State has the same voting power and all decisions taken in these round tables have to be unanimous.

The European Council defines the political direction and priorities of the EU. It is made up of the Heads of State/Government of the 27 Member States, together with the European Council President and the President of the Commission. The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy also takes part in this forum. The European Council meets twice every six months and is convened by its President. It has the authority to task the Foreign Affairs Council on all CSDP related matters.²⁴

The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) consists of the foreign affairs ministers of the 27 Member States together with the FAC President, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR). The FAC deals with all the different aspects related to the EU's external action. Decisions relating to the CSDP, including initiating missions must be adopted by the Council acting unanimously from a proposal from the HR or from an initiative from a Member State.²⁵ The FAC approves CSDP missions. Once approved, the mission is undertaken using resources provided, on a voluntary basis, by Member States. A main problem for the FAC has been to guarantee cohesion in the EU's external action using the array of tools at the European Union's disposal. This is done in cooperation with the Commission. The FAC, which normally meets once a month, is supported on a daily basis by the Political and Security Committee (PSC).

The Political and Security Committee is the CSDP key player. It meets at the ambassadorial level (Member States' representatives) as a preparatory body for the Foreign Affairs Council. Its most important tasks are tracking the international situation, defining policies and monitoring the execution of agreed policies within the CSDP.²⁶ In dealing with crises, the PSC studies the possible options to respond to a crisis and makes recommendations to the Council. When authorized, it exercises political control

and strategic direction of the EU's response to a crisis under the authority of the Council and the High Representative.²⁷

The European Military Committee (EUMC) is the highest military body set up within the Council. The EUMC is composed of the Chiefs of Defense of the Member States, generally represented by their permanent Military Representatives. The EUMC provides the PSC with advice and recommendations on all military matters within the EU. The EUMC is supported by the EU Military Staff.²⁸ In addition to these committees, the EU has developed crisis management structures to deal with a variety of scenarios. The relevant internal services supporting crisis management include the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD), the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) and the EU Military Staff (EUMS).

The CMPD is responsible for the strategic level planning of CSDP civilian and military missions. The aim of the strategic planning is to elaborate feasible options for EU action and prepare a decision by EU Ministers with regard to an international security crisis situation.²⁹ These options are placed jointly in a document named Crisis Management Concept (CMC) which is presented to the Council for endorsement. The CMPD works under the political control and strategic direction of the Member States through the Political and Security Committee, acting under the responsibility of the Council of the EU and the High Representative.³⁰

The CPCC is responsible for planning and conducting civilian CSDP missions under the political control and strategic direction of the Political and Security Committee. It directs, coordinates, advises, supervises and reviews civilian CSDP missions in the areas of police, border assistance, rule of law and security-sector reform.³¹

The EUMS was created to provide military expertise and support to the CSDP, including the conduct of EU-led military operations. Its operational mission is to perform early warning and situation assessment and to participate in strategic planning for military missions and tasks.³² The EUMS is an essential part of the EU crisis management structure and directly attached to the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The EUMS provides the HR with in-house military expertise and operates under the military direction of the EU Military Committee.

In addition to the crisis management organizations and main Council bodies, the European Commission also plays an important role in CSDP matters. The Commission provides significant economic support to crisis-bound countries in the fields of international cooperation, development, rule of law, humanitarian assistance and regional crisis response. The Lisbon Treaty establishes that the HR simultaneously holds the post of Vice-President of the Commission. In doing so, it is expected that the HR guarantees the coherence of the EU external action.

EU Decision Making in the Field of CSDP

In 2003, the EU developed Crisis Management Procedures to further improve the coordination of the different crisis management bodies and tools.³³

The CSDP Handbook³⁴ explains the Crisis Management Procedures and differentiates between the following phases:

- I. Routine phase.
- II. Crisis build-up and elaboration of a crisis management concept.
- III. Approval of the crisis management concept and development of strategic options.
- IV. Formal decision to take action and development of planning documents.

V. Implementation.

VI. Refocusing of EU action and termination of the mission.

During Phase I, the Political and Security Committee as well as relevant and thematic Council Working Groups carry out monitoring, exchange of information and policy-shaping. The relevant services in the European External Service provide monitoring, early warning, and situation assessment at the point of crisis. They also develop policy option papers and advance planning. In the light of input from Member States or other relevant actors with regard to a crisis, the PSC discusses the state of affairs with a view to developing a common political understanding. The Committee continues to analyze the situation with follow up meetings. The planning process begins when the PSC determines that EU action is appropriate.³⁵

At this moment (Phase II), a Crisis Management Concept (CMC) is developed by the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate. The CMC depicts the EU's political interest, the aims and possible options for answering the specific regional crisis. This planning document contributes to the global consistency of the EU action and ensures all agencies are incorporated, using the comprehensive approach.³⁶

Once agreed upon by the PSC, the CMC is approved by the Council (Phase III). This document then serves as the starting point for developing strategic options. Depending on what the conflict context requires, these can be military options (prepared by the EU Military Committee) or civilian options (prepared by the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability). These options provide complementary lines of action for achieving different levels of ambition from which a final aim can be selected. The PSC identifies and selects the option to be pursued.³⁷

The Council can then take a decision to act (Phase IV) adopting a Council Joint Action. This is the official document which sets up the mission, selects the Operation Commander (military missions) or Head of the Mission (civilian mission) and decides on the financial issues. The selected Operation Commander or Head of Mission is then responsible for developing the operational documents, namely the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and the Operation Plan (OPLAN). The first document outlines how the mission is intended to fulfill its objectives and the latter describes in detail how the mission is organized.³⁸

Once the OPLAN has been agreed, the Council can start the mission (Phase V). The PSC exercises political control and strategic direction of the mission. On a regular basis, the PSC assesses whether the mission needs to be refocused or terminated (Phase VI). Once a decision is made by the Council to terminate the mission, the EU begins a lessons-learned process.

The purpose of these procedures is to offer a framework for a consistent and holistic EU crisis management process covering each stage in a developing response. However, these procedures are used in a flexible and pragmatic way. For example, some of the processes may be omitted in total when quick reaction is required. At all times Member States retain political control and exercise supervision over all CSDP action. To this end, the PSC is tasked with providing strategic direction to all missions.³⁹

Cooperation with Other States and International Organizations

“The transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a formidable force for good in the world. Our aim should be an effective and balanced partnership with the USA. This is an additional reason for the EU to build up further its capabilities and increase its coherence”.⁴⁰

This quote from the European Security Strategy shows the EU's desire for cooperation with other states and international organizations in crisis management. In line with this ambition, the EU is cooperating with the US in particular in counter-terrorism and regional crisis management. Both entities share duties and work together on a broad array of external relations issues, such as the Arab Spring, the Middle East Peace Process, Pakistan and Afghanistan, non proliferation and regional conflicts.⁴¹

The EU and the US also work together on varying crisis management and conflict prevention activities.⁴² In May 2011, both entities reinforced collaboration with an accord allowing American citizens to take part in EU CSDP missions.⁴³ Previously, agreements for US participation in CSDP missions, including the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo and EU Security Sector Reform (EUSEC) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, had been negotiated on an ad hoc basis.⁴⁴ EU-US partnership has been crucial to the achievement of the EU Training Mission for Somali troops in Uganda. The EU's objectives of the current mission are to support the local government and to build up Somalia's structures. The US supports the EU mission by covering the cost of air transport, military equipment, and salaries.⁴⁵ The EU's missions in Iraq and Afghanistan support US aims, strengthening both countries' efforts to set up good governance and the rule of law.⁴⁶ Additionally, the EU cooperates with the US under its strategic partnership with NATO (21 of the 27 EU's Member States are also NATO members). Those organizations share the goal of promoting regional stability and peace.⁴⁷

There are specific agreements for the participation of non-EU European allies (Iceland, Montenegro, Norway and Turkey) in EU military operations that conform to EU

decision-making autonomy.⁴⁸ Accords in the area of CSDP are also developing with Canada, Russia and Ukraine. The agreement with Russia includes the development of a roadmap on security issues to identify pragmatic actions for cooperation.⁴⁹ In 2003, Russia participated in the first EU mission (EU Police Mission in BiH).⁵⁰ In 2008, Russia formalized an agreement for its contribution to EUFOR TChad which represented Russian's first participation in an EU military operation.

The strategic partnership between the EU and NATO relies on the Berlin-Plus arrangements. These arrangements permit the EU to use resources and capabilities allocated to NATO for bespoke EU military operations when required. Berlin-Plus also includes assured access to NATO planning capabilities. To support closer cooperation, an EU cell has been established at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) in Mons/Belgium, and a NATO liaison team is situated in the facilities of the EU Military Staff in Brussels. Between the EU and NATO, regular dialogue is developing at different levels, in particular between the Political and Security Committee and the North Atlantic Council (NAC), and between the two Military Committees.⁵¹ To avoid duplication and to guarantee consistency, both organizations meet in the EU-NATO Capability Group to exchange information on capability development processes.⁵²

The EU has also developed useful close cooperation with the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). A common counseling instrument, known as the "EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management" was established in 2003.⁵³ This forum provides a venue for EU and UN senior representatives involved in crisis management to meet. In 2011, the EU initiated a procedure aimed at improving EU CSDP support to UN peacekeeping in response to UN requests. In close partnership with the UN

Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the EU has developed an action plan to improve mutual cooperation.⁵⁴

The partnership with the African Union has three objectives: strengthening political dialogue, supporting the African Peace and Secure Architecture (APSA) and providing funding for the AU's peacekeeping operations.⁵⁵ The objective of political dialogue is to achieve agreement on peace and security issues, such as arm control, removal of anti-personnel mines, gender and children in conflict issues, post-conflict situations and causes of conflict.⁵⁶ The EU has made education of APSA personnel a main effort in order to improve their actions. In doing so, the EU and the AU have identified syllabi, courses and centers of studies linked to military training and the civil element of conflict management. This partnership also aims to establish reliable and secure funding instruments for peacekeeping operations in Africa.⁵⁷

Finally, the EU also maintains a close contact on crisis management with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Association of South-East Asia Nations (ASEAN).⁵⁸

EU Strengths as an Actor in Conflict Resolutions

The EU possesses an important advantage in the area of regional conflict. Regional conflict resolution requires a holistic and multilateral response. This response mixes urgent support with actions to preserve human rights and to set up lasting policies to deal with the causes of the conflict.⁵⁹ In this context, the value added of the EU is double: it has a full variety of tools which can be better aimed towards conflict resolution through a holistic and lasting approach, and it can guarantee an uninterrupted process of support, reconstruction and progress during the different phases.⁶⁰

The EU is also able to provide inducements for peace which are frequently not accessible to other international actors involved in conflict resolutions.⁶¹ It has the ability to present a far more diverse array of positive or negative stimulus in comparison with other international actors. Stimulus or incentives comprise of a large variety of alternatives, which are rooted in the integrationist policy of the EU and in the resulting contractual ties it builds with other states.⁶² EU inducements contain trade grants, membership in aspects of the single market, economic and technological support, collaboration in a broad array of possible areas such as defense, rule of law, infrastructure, education or governance, and participation in EU courses, institutions and agencies.⁶³

The EU is perhaps the only organization with the structure, mandate, tools, and resources needed to comprehensively deal with conflict prevention and resolution⁶⁴. Due to this wider variety of alternatives, EU inducements are frequently higher than other international players are able to provide.⁶⁵ When membership in the EU is an alternative (Turkey, Bosnia and Serbia, for instance) the EU's significant influence on a regional conflict is more relevant than in situations where relationships are focused on cooperation, partnership or economic support.⁶⁶ Even in countries that the EU does not currently wish to incorporate (Moldova, Georgia or Armenia), the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) provides important incentives for conflict resolution.

The EU has also elaborate techniques to deliver its incentives by using benchmarking and monitoring.⁶⁷ During the eastern enlargement process, the EU established goals and monitored the improvement of the candidates during the accession process.⁶⁸ These methods have been repeated in the framework of the ENP.

Under the ENP, EU incentives have been used to support direct conflict resolution efforts, as in the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe⁶⁹, or indirectly by influencing areas connected to the conflict resolution plan.⁷⁰ For example, the EU's demand to Turkey over the abolition of the death penalty had an indirect effect on the Kurdish conflict.⁷¹

The EU also promotes conflict resolution by the enforcement of international norms and legislation.⁷² For instance, when applying for membership, the candidate state is required to put into effect and to observe all the different EU common rights and obligations.⁷³ EU laws demand that all European agreements with other countries are put into effect in accordance with international law. As Nathalie Tocci has stated, "This means that the EU can neither break the rules itself nor assist others in doing so".⁷⁴

The EU's approach to regional conflict resolutions has another important added value in terms of international image and prestige. Normally, international community and third states involved in regional conflicts perceive EU intervention as non-biased and neutral. This EU's image of neutrality and impartiality generally does not constitute a threat to the countries and international organizations with interests in a particular regional crisis; making its presence - on the whole - well accepted.

Another EU approach to conflict resolution is by developing close relationships and dialogue with third countries.⁷⁵ Through partnership with the EU, European players engage with parties in conflict in order to reduce aggression by seeking areas of mutual understanding. In doing so, adversaries can modify their postures, aims and policies in a helpful mode to conflict resolution.⁷⁶ The EU fosters partnership mainly through official conversations with third countries' representatives in the different Association,

Partnership and Cooperation Councils.⁷⁷ In these conferences the EU has debated matters such as the endorsement of international agreements, the death penalty, gender issues and freedom of expression and association.⁷⁸

The EU also lays high value on the legality of its missions. Before initiating any missions, the EU obtains the permission of the host country, and usually is legally underpinned by a UN Security Council Resolution and significant international agreement. This gives legitimacy to the EU, making it easier for the EU to carry out specific missions in regional areas where other countries or international organizations would lack credibility. The current EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia serves as an example on this point. It would have been nearly impossible for a NATO mission or a US operation to solve a security issue in Russian's direct sphere of influence, especially as the US supported Georgia in the conflict.

EU Weakness as an Actor in Conflict Resolutions

Although the EU has a degree of crisis planning flexibility, the EU often lacks the ability to respond quickly and cohesively. Additionally, insufficient resources in the security and defense field represent a further structural weakness during conflict resolution. Underpinning these weaknesses is the difficulty in forging general agreements among EU countries and their reluctance to delegate sovereignty in the foreign policy domain.⁷⁹ As pointed out before, the EU's incapacity to respond to the wars in the Balkans quickly and resolutely emphasized the EU's limitations in impeding and concluding violence close to its borders.⁸⁰

The EU's security and defense decision-making process is complex and laborious because accord relies on concurrence of the national interests of 27 different countries. Agreements on these issues must be approved unanimously and in the past

Member States have been unwilling to participate in military missions agreed by a majority vote.⁸¹ In order to achieve unanimous agreement for decisions, the decision-making process is designed to be as inclusive as possible.⁸² However, EU countries may fail to follow through on these commitments, in which case their participation does not materialize and the decisions approved may become untenable.⁸³

The success of the CSDP also depends on national support to the CSDP. For instance, Denmark, does not participate in CSDP. There are other Member States that traditionally remain impartial. There are also disputes between the Member States most aligned with NATO and those more focused on the EU.⁸⁴ The overlap of identities and loyalties has a lot of influence over the progress and credibility of the CSDP.⁸⁵

In addition to national support, cultural attitudes towards security and defense have a significant effect on the progress of the CSDP. Each Member State's strategic culture determines how it views the use of force as an instrument of policy.⁸⁶ There are some Member States more predisposed to use the force than others. For example, the strategic cultures of the United Kingdom and France allow them use the force more hastily; whereas Germany's strategic culture and legal constraints move it in the contrary way.⁸⁷

During the Libyan crisis in February 2011, the EU proved once more incapable of providing a quick and decisive European response. This crisis reflected again part of the current limitations in CSDP. These limitations included a long and awkward planning process, Member States' reluctance to employ the EU's rapid response mechanisms, coordination difficulties and military gaps.⁸⁸

In contrast to NATO, one of the main EU difficulties is the lack of permanent bodies to develop advanced planning.⁸⁹ During the Libyan conflict, NATO developed four possible military plans within two weeks after the explosion of violence, while EU needed over two months to arrive at the similar planning phase.⁹⁰ The Foreign Affairs Council, in its conclusions on December 1, 2011 urged the importance of improving the EU's planning process for CSDP missions and requested better development of the current structures (including a proposal for a permanent EU Headquarters that had been previously refused by the United Kingdom).⁹¹ Consequently the EU has agreed to allow the EUMS and the CMPD to carry out more efficient advanced planning in order to accelerate decision-making process at the political-strategic level.⁹²

With regards to the employment of the EU's rapid reaction mechanisms, the activation of Battle-Groups (BG) was also taken into consideration during the Libyan crisis. However, this possibility encountered resistance from some of the main troop contributors to the Battle-Groups on stand-by.⁹³ As Nicole Koenig has stated, "Sweden and Finland were wary of blurring the lines between the military and humanitarian spheres, the Netherlands pointed to budgetary constraints, and Germany's contribution would have required a parliamentary vote. In the light of these constraints the deployment of a single coherent Battle-Group seemed unlikely".⁹⁴

The Foreign Affairs Council of December 2011 also emphasized the need of improving the EU's rapid reaction mechanisms and stressed the importance of facilitating the employment of Battle-Groups in security and defense missions.⁹⁵ However, the employment of Battle-Groups continues to be debated and generates dissatisfaction among the Member States. An important impediment to the use of this

military capability is that Member States on stand-by period have to cover the costs of their commitment.⁹⁶

There were also some coordination difficulties during the Libyan crisis. The Council identified some difficulties regarding the demarcation of competences and leadership among the different EU structures. New Lisbon Treaty instruments of coordination were used together with the previous mechanisms, which created misunderstandings in several cases and coordination troubles between the Council and the Commission.⁹⁷

The Libyan intervention also reflected the lack of European military capabilities, mainly focused on smart ammunitions, air refueling, strategic transport, satellite communication, and intelligence assets.⁹⁸ One commentator has even suggested that roughly 90 % of the military actions against the Libyan regime would not have been possible without US support.⁹⁹ The military gap is linked to the constant reduction of Member States' defense spending and the duplication of EU military resources. In order to try to solve this issue, the Foreign Affairs Council of December 2011 declared the EU needs to take full advantage of existing capabilities.¹⁰⁰ To do that, the September 2010 meeting of EU Ministers of Defense approved the Pooling and Sharing (P&S) concept. The European Defense Agency (EDA) was mandated to develop this concept and to bring forward the relevant projects, which include air to air refueling, multinational field medical hospitals, surveillance and reconnaissance, military satellite communications and smart ammunitions.¹⁰¹ These projects cover the majority of the military gaps identified during the Libyan crisis.

The concept of P&S military resources is not novel and there is still some reservation among the European countries. “They fear a loss of independence and sovereignty. Moreover, national armed forces frequently see P&S as a pretext for further defense expending cuts”.¹⁰²

The EU's main weakness is the lack of political determination and common degree of aspiration of the Member States.¹⁰³ To become a credible global player, the EU needs to translate political will and common level of aspiration into clear commitment to combine policies and provide them with enough capabilities to ensure their efficacy.¹⁰⁴ Realistic ambition, determination and commitment are the key factors to ensure the success and credibility of the EU as a global actor in the security and defense realm.

Experience in the Balkans and Libya demonstrates that resources focused only on the soft power are not enough to deal with regional conflicts. To become truly credible and capable, the EU needs to continue to acquire military capabilities that will allow it to carry out the most demanding military missions. In doing so, the EU could have at its disposal a broad array of instruments (both soft and hard power) to deal with regional conflict in a credible comprehensive approach.

Future Prospects for the EU in Conflict Resolutions

One former diplomat liked to compare CSDP in action to a -jazz band-. CSDP contains performers with distinct aptitudes and means taking part in an improvised gathering, “with a basic tune and an overall intention of the type of melody they want to create ... a group which finds it difficult to agree on a specific arrangement, but which can eventually sound harmonious – though not necessarily completely homogeneous”.¹⁰⁵ This quote describes the general achievement of the EU as a global

actor in conflict resolution issues. While the EU has gained important experience working together, there continues to be a shortfall in direction, common will and resources.¹⁰⁶

In the realm of common security and defense, the EU has to improve its global capabilities to become a security and defense actor. It must contain both an improved civilian element and a credible military capability. Furthermore, the EU should not highlight one at the expense of the other.¹⁰⁷ The Common Policy and Security Policy should keep developing the full array of civilian and military resources and should continue to build on its global approach. This is where Europe can, uniquely, add value.¹⁰⁸

Creating a more capable CSDP must be the most important aim of the European countries. However, the EU lacks clear political guidance on how its security and defense policy contributes to achieving the global objectives of the ESS. The CSDP requires a clear framework that sets its final aims, preferences, and instruments for accomplishing them.¹⁰⁹ The objectives and direction provided by the ESS need more clarity in the area of security and defense. For instance, the strategy does not establish guidelines on how CSDP relates to other security actors, such as the UN, US or NATO, in order to fulfill international mandates.¹¹⁰ EU action in this field must establish clear priorities and guidelines in order to respond properly to threats and challenges.¹¹¹ Critically, the EU must establish clear priorities for its CSDP over the next few years, make careful choices about resources and conduct operations that match EU ambitions.¹¹²

EU strategic partnership with NATO and the US in security and defense related matters will therefore continue to be vital in the immediate future. The US continues to be the most important global player, being an indispensably well-resourced nation in nearly every aspect of diplomatic, informational, military and economic power. Continued European engagement with the US should be made in a way to assist European objectives and to provide a forum to continue discussions with the US on different views, perceptions and interests.¹¹³ However, the EU must be able to achieve agreements from a strong, unified position. This has been largely achieved in other areas, but still has a little way to go with regards to military capability.

A close relationship between both NATO and the EU remains indispensable in guaranteeing the security and defense for both communities. As the Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies has stated, “the common threats and challenges, as well as common norms and principles, thus make effective cooperation between the EU and NATO a must”.¹¹⁴ Strategic partnership, comprehensive dialogue and effective cooperation between both organizations must be one of the CSDP priorities for the next few years. Beyond NATO and the US, the EU must continue fostering engagement and partnership with the UN (-as the legality framework of CSDP operations), the OSCE, the AU and ASEAN (-as the most significant regional organizations), and China and Russia (-as potential security and stability providers).¹¹⁵

Regional conflicts must be given the highest priority when identifying EU security and defense priorities. Regional conflicts jeopardize EU interests and common values by increasing instability in the EU’s sphere of influence or directly endangering the civilian population of Member States.¹¹⁶ Conflicts not only put pressure on existing

civilian and military resources, but also reinforce the need for credible military forces that are trained and equipped for the most demanding military missions, such as operations against al Qaeda and its affiliates in Africa and the Middle East. Nonetheless, the EU security and defense capabilities must cover the full spectrum of possible scenarios, including general warfighting. What is more, the more independently Europe can act to ensure its borders and boundaries are secure and its energy sources are accessible the better. This must be a clear military priority for CSDP in the coming years.¹¹⁷

Converging and standardizing EU countries' strategic interests at the CSDP level must also be a high priority for the EU.¹¹⁸ The Lisbon Treaty represents the best opportunity for advancing in this field. The High Representative now has authority to provide more consistency for EU external action and to advance consensus among Member States on common ambitions, priorities, aims, goals and capabilities in security and defense issues. To reach the full potential of the Lisbon Treaty, the CSDP will require clearer direction for the promotion of security and defense policy-making.¹¹⁹ Coherence amongst the different EU agencies involved in security and defense issues, backed by a credible array of civilian and military capabilities, will be vital when continuing to develop a comprehensive approach on security and defense policy. Finally, solid political will and a common level of - realizable - ambition will advance Europe as a major global actor, equipped in every way, and playing to its unique strengths, to face the many security challenges of the future.

Endnotes

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² *Guide to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP)*. (Permanent Representation of France to the EU, November 2006), 5.

³ Enrique Mora, *The European Security and Defense Policy after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty*. (Cuadernos de Estrategia, 145-B. Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies, 2010), 18.

⁴ Felix Arteaga, *The European Security and Defense Policy after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty*. (Cuadernos de Estrategia, 145-B. Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies, 2010), 57.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Nathalie Tocci, *The EU in Conflict Resolutions. Conflict Resolution: Theories and Practice*. (London and New York: Routledge 2011), 6. www.ethnopolitics.org/isa/Tocci.pdf

⁷ *Guide to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP)*. (Permanent Representation of France to the EU, November 2006), 8.

⁸ Nathalie Tocci, *The EU in Conflict Resolutions. Conflict Resolution: Theories and Practice*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 6. www.ethnopolitics.org/isa/Tocci.pdf

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¹⁰ *The Development of CFSP and CSDP*. (Handbook on CSDP. Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2010), 15.

¹¹ Ibid., 30.

¹² *Guide to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP)*. (Permanent Representation of France to the EU, November 2006), 10.

¹³ Joao Reis, *Problematizing the EU as a global actor. Towards a Global Dimension: EU's Conflict Management in the Neighborhood and Beyond*. 2008.

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¹⁵ ENP regulates the EU's relations with countries in the Mediterranean area and the Caucasus, with which it shares common borders or areas, by means of bilateral agreements and action plans.

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¹⁸ Consilium Europa. CSDP missions. www.consilium.europa.eu/eeas/security-defense.

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²⁰ The EU has deployed European military forces on CSDP missions Artemis (Congo, 2003); Concordia (Macedonia, 2003); Althea (Bosnia-Herzegovina, 2004); EUFOR Congo (RDC, 2006); EUFOR TChad (Chad/CAR, 2008); EUNAVFOR (sea off the coast of Somalia, 2008); EUTM Somalia (Uganda, 2010) and EUTM Mali (Mali, 2013). It sent observers to Aceh, Indonesia in 2005 and to Georgia in 2008. The EU has also sent technical assistance for border control in EUBAM missions to Rafah, Palestine and Moldova in 2005; to reinforce the rule of law (EUJUST LEX Iraq in 2005, and EULEX Kosovo in 2008); in support to the local police and rule of law (EUPOL Proxima in Macedonia in 2004, EUPOL COPPS in Palestinian territories in 2006, EUPOL Afghanistan in 2007, EUPOL Congo in 2007, and EUCAP SAHEL Niger in 2012); to support security sector reform (EU SSR Guinea Bissau in 2008); to strengthen aviation security at Juba international airport (EUAVSEC South Sudan, in 2012), and to supervise elections (EUPOL Kinshasa) in Congo in 2005.

²¹ Felix Arteaga, *The European Security and Defense Policy after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty*. (Cuadernos de Estrategia, 145-B. Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies. 2010), 54.

²² *Decision Making in the field of CSDP*. (Handbook on CSDP. Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2012)

²³ *Guide to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP)*. (Permanent Representation of France to the EU, November 2006), 17.

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²⁵ *Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union. Art. 42.4*. (Official Journal of the European Union, March 30, 2010).

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²⁹ *Decision Making in the field of CSDP*. (Handbook on CSDP. Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2012), 42.

³⁰ *Consilium Europa. CMPD*. www.consilium.europa.eu/eeas/security-defense/csdp-structures-and-instrument/cmpd.

³¹ *Consilium Europa. CPCC.* www.consilium.europa.eu/eeas/security-defense/csdp-structures-and-instrument/cpcc.

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³³ *Decision Making in the field of CSDP.* (Handbook on CSDP. Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2012), 57.

³⁴ Handbook on CSDP. (Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2012), 57-59.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ *European Security Strategy, A secure Europe in a better world.* (Council of the European Union, 2009), 42.

⁴¹ *European Union Delegation to the USA.* www.eurunion.org/EU-US-relations-Misc-Pages-Foreign-Affaires.html.

⁴² *The EU's Common Security and Defense Policy.* (EUFOCUS, September 2011). <http://www.eurunion.org/eufocus>

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ *European Union Delegation to the USA.* www.eurunion.org/EU-US-relations-Misc-Pages/Security-and-Defense.html.

⁴⁸ *Cooperation with third states and international organizations.* (Handbook on CSDP. Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2012), 90.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Agreement between the European Union and the Russian Federation on the participation of the Russian Federation in the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Council of the EU. 2003.

⁵¹ *Guide to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP)*. (Permanent Representation of France to the EU, November 2006), 14.

⁵² *Cooperation with third states and international organizations*. (Handbook on CSDP. Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2012), 92.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Antonio Nunez Garcia-Sauco, *Africa: a necessary continent*. (European and African Response to Security Problems in Africa. Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies. Cuadernos de Estrategia 146-B, 2010).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Guide to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP)*. (Permanent Representation of France to the EU, November 2006), 15.

⁵⁹ Cristina Churruga, *The EU CFSP: Strength, Weakness and Prospect*. (Workshop on New Dimensions of Security and Conflict Resolution. European Council, February 14, 2003).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Nathalie Tocci, *The EU in Conflict Resolution. Conflicts Resolution: Theories and Practice*. (London & New York, 2011), 7. www.ethnopolitics.org/isa/Tocci.pdf

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Bryan White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*. (Houndmills, NY. Palgrave, 2001).

⁶⁵ Nathalie Tocci, *The EU in Conflict Resolution. Conflicts Resolution: Theories and Practice*. (London & New York, 2011), 7. www.ethnopolitics.org/isa/Tocci.pdf

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⁶⁹ The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was launched in 1999, at the EU's initiative, as the first comprehensive conflict prevention strategy of the international community, aimed at strengthening the efforts of the countries of South Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and

Macedonia) in fostering peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity. The Stability Pact provided a framework to stimulate regional co-operation and expedite integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. In 2008, the Regional Cooperation Council inherited the mandate of the Stability Pact.

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⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Nathalie Tocci, *The EU in Conflict Resolution. Conflicts Resolution: Theories and Practice*. (London & New York, 2011), 9. www.ethnopolitics.org/isa/Tocci.pdf

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¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Borja Lasheras, Christoph Pohlmann, Christos Katsioulis and Fabio Liberti, *European Security and Defense White paper. A Proposal.* (Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies, 2010), 4.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹¹⁰ Borja Lasheras, *A future agenda for the ESDP.* (Fundacion Alternativas. IRIS, 2009)

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¹¹⁴ Ibid., 31.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 36.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 19.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 6.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 26.