

# **"The Development of a Common European Security and Defence Policy - The Integration Project of the Next Decade"**

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**EU-Commission/ Institut für Europäische Politik**

**Conference**

**"The Development of a Common European Security and Defence Policy - The Integration Project of the Next Decade"**

**Berlin, 17 December 1999**

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**Remarks by Dr. Javier Solana**

**High Representative of the EU for Common Foreign and Security Policy**

Ministers, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to participate in this conference, and to see a number of familiar faces here today. I know that C. Patten and many other distinguished speakers before me have provided major contributions to this important debate. I am honoured to conclude your Conference today. But - needless to say - this conclusion will not mean the end of our work, nor indeed of your debate in this delicate field.

You have rightly described in your title the CFSP as the integration project of the next decade. This is ambitious language; but ambition is what we need in this area. The historic decisions taken last weekend in Helsinki have provided us with a roadmap which will help us steer a clear path on this issue over the next few years. I would like to explore with you how I see that path developing, and look in a little more detail at where it will take us. If the current momentum is sustained, we shall need much less than a decade before we begin to see real results.

Since taking up my post almost exactly two months ago, I have been struck by the commitment of Member States to developing an effective Common Foreign and Security Policy. It is a policy which touches at the very heart of the sovereignty of the nation state. It has required considerable vision by many national leaders. And the recognition that collective influence at the European level is the only way to respond to many of the global challenges of our times.

But a Common Foreign and Security Policy can only be effective if it is backed up by effective

instruments. The European Union has a wide range of instruments at its disposal, particularly in the economic sphere. The commitment taken in Helsinki is to complement these with an effective security capability. Let us take a closer look at what this commitment implies.

Firstly, we have reached agreement on a common headline goal on military capabilities. This contains specific objectives, to be reached within agreed deadlines. This is essential if we are to be credible internationally.

Secondly, we have agreed on the structures which will be necessary in order to ensure the political control and strategic direction of these capabilities. These have to respect fully the sovereign right of Member States to decide whether or not to contribute their national assets to an operation, but they have also to provide for the effective and rapid management of operations.

Thirdly, we have agreed on the need for sound and transparent procedures for consultation and cooperation with non-EU countries, and with NATO.

I will dwell in a moment on each of these issues in turn in more detail. But first I wish to elaborate on why the EU is going down this road. Whenever the EU takes forward-looking decisions such as at Helsinki, there are always those who criticise us for going too far, or for going in the wrong direction. Others simply need reassurance. I am convinced that the path we have now embarked upon offers the Union the opportunity of playing a greater role in ensuring that the world as a whole is more stable, more secure and more prosperous. This has to be to everyone's benefit.

The decision at Helsinki has been misrepresented in some quarters as the first step in the establishment of a European army, or else as an unnecessary "militarisation" of the EU. And yet, we could not have been clearer about our objectives.

Most importantly, we have made clear that ESDP is not about collective defence. NATO will remain the foundation of the collective defence of its members. We are in no way attempting to duplicate the work of NATO. In fact the improvements in European military capabilities will be a significant gain for the Alliance. Nor does ESDP attempt to undermine the right of Member States to retain their own specific security and defence policy. The fact that all Member States, including the neutral countries, have been able to endorse the Helsinki decision, should provide sufficient reassurance on this point. So much for what ESDP is not.

What Helsinki has done is to set in train a process which will enable us to assume full responsibility across the whole range of conflict prevention and crisis management tasks. Why is this so important? Over the last forty years, the European Union has become one of the most sophisticated and advanced examples of regional integration in the world. The EU is now the largest trading bloc in the world and a major actor across the whole range of global, financial and economic arena.

But globalisation and growing interdependence mean that we can no longer see the rest of the world purely in terms of economic objectives. Globalisation has brought with it a wide range of transnational challenges, many of which were unheard of a generation ago. The threat of terrorism, international drug dealing, money-laundering, the spread of AIDS: all these present us with new, "globalised" problems and new responsibilities. The uneasy development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy since the Maastricht Treaty had provided us only with limited means to respond to these challenges.

But a CFSP without the tools is a hollow shell. The EU can and does bring its economic weight to bear in support of political objectives. It does so in the course of WTO negotiations; in support of economic reconstruction; as a protagonist of development policies throughout the world. You can argue that the use of these economic instruments can be developed further and be made more efficient - but they undoubtedly constitute a strength for the Union's policies. What we need to do, is to complement them with an effective security capability, if we are to bring our influence to bear in the world. As the Union enlarges, and as we face new challenges in the next century, we have to be prepared to take more responsibility for regional security, particularly in those areas bordering

the Union where we have direct interests at stake. We also have to be prepared, where necessary, to use all legitimate means to project security and stability beyond our borders. And we need to be able to assert our values of humanitarian solidarity and respect for human rights in all areas where peoples' lives depend on relief assistance, because they are the victims of natural catastrophes, or of man-made crises.

What are the tools we need to achieve this? Firstly at Helsinki we have committed ourselves to being able to deploy a corps level military operation within 60 days, and to sustain it for at least a year. This capacity will be coupled with the development of command, control and intelligence capabilities, as well as all the necessary support services to sustain an operation of this scale. This is the first of the basic building blocks of an effective Security and Defence Policy. Our commitment to a viable operational capacity is a sign of our determination to be credible in the eyes of our public, of our partners, and of the international community as a whole.

Secondly, we have endorsed the establishment of new permanent political and military bodies within the Council to ensure both adequate political accountability, and rapid and effective decision-making procedures for the day-to-day management of operations. It is essential that we keep the decision-making process as short and flexible as possible to ensure a quick response in the event of a crisis. We also need to ensure that there is appropriate input from the Member States' Chief of Staff to provide an adequate level of military expertise. This is the objective of the creation of the Military Committee, which will have a key role in the decision-making process. Because these structures will take some time to set up (and may even require amendments to the existing treaties), we agreed at Helsinki to establish as of March next year interim bodies to prepare for the future functioning of the Security and Defence Policy.

Thirdly, we have taken steps to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place for the consultation and cooperation with non-EU European allies, and with NATO.

The relationship between our objectives and NATO's own deserves a comment. This is the one area which seems to have caused the most apprehension. I recognise that sensitivities are at stake here, as highlighted also in the course of the NAC meeting of last Wednesday. But a careful reading of the Helsinki text should help providing reassurance. The message bears repeating: the strengthening of a European Security and Defence identity will not in any way undermine the role of NATO. Last week the British Chief of Defence Staff said that "A Europe that remains allied to the US simply because of its own weakness is of limited value". I fully share this view. It is in everyone's interest, on both sides of the Atlantic, that Europe is stronger and that it develops the means to be more assertive in its reactions to international crises.

We do not intend to duplicate the work of NATO. We do not want to, and do not need to. In any case, in a world of tight defence budgets, we cannot afford unnecessary duplication. Helsinki therefore makes clear that the Union has as its objective the capacity to conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises, but only where NATO as a whole is not engaged. This will remain a guiding principle.

Developing the capacity to achieve this objective will involve increasing cooperation between Member States on very practical issues such as the interoperability of our respective forces. Again, this can only be to the advantage of NATO. It will help strengthen NATO's own capabilities. It will also enhance the ability of those Member States who are members of NATO to play a more effective role in NATO-led operations.

The European Union will have to become an intelligent customer of NATO. When NATO itself is not engaged, but the European Union launches a military operation, it should if necessary have recourse to NATO assets and capabilities. This means that full consultation, cooperation and

transparency between the EU and NATO will have to be developed. I have been mandated jointly with the incoming Portuguese Presidency, by the Helsinki European Council, to carry work forward to this end. I would be forgetting my past if I did not say that this area is a particular priority for me.

We will also be looking specifically at arrangements covering the consultation and possible participation allowing third countries to contribute to EU military crisis management. We cannot afford to be exclusive. We are committed to establishing structures which allow for full and transparent dialogue. If the Union decides to launch an operation using NATO assets, the non-EU members of NATO will have a right to participate. The precise arrangements will need to be looked at carefully, but I am convinced that any EU-led operations can only be enhanced by wider participation, and that this also will in turn help strengthen the effectiveness of NATO.

I will also be examining in more detail how the Union can make better use of WEU assets and know-how. In particular we need to develop a culture of complete transparency between the EU and the WEU. The expertise and specialised resources of the WEU have to be put fully at the disposal of the European Union. My own double-hatted appointment as Secretary-general of the WEU should assist this process. I can at least say that cooperation between the current Secretary-generals of the EU and WEU is beyond reproach! The WEU has also recently completed its own audit of our collective and national force capabilities. This will be an invaluable basis for setting out the package of capabilities which the EU will need to carry out effective operations across the whole Petersberg spectrum. It has also helped us to identify where improvements can be made in decision-making structures. There are lessons here for both the EU and the WEU.

The press have inevitably focussed on the decision at Helsinki on military capabilities. This aspect of crisis management is of course new for the EU. But equally important are the non-military aspects. Many of the tools for this are available and in some cases are already being used in response to crises. Individual Member States, as well as the Union, have developed considerable expertise in this area. Resources and experience already exist in the fields of civilian policing, humanitarian assistance, electoral and human rights monitoring. The list is long. But we need firstly to improve coordination. Helsinki recognises this. We have also agreed that we need to identify, on the basis of the existing work on the inventory of resources, those areas where further efforts are needed. We have established an action plan to ensure that we are able to respond rapidly and more effectively with non-military tools to emerging crisis situations. If crises can be defused through non-military means; so much the better. We will never be looking for an excuse to deploy military forces. But recent experience has shown that there will be situations where they will be necessary. Situations where the European public will expect us to back up our words with actions, where NGOs cannot carry out their humanitarian tasks without adequate protection, where we will be called to fulfil a peace-keeping role. In these cases, we have to have the capacity to act militarily, either with or independent of any civilian action.

The European Union, more so than many international organisations, is already in a strong position to use its longstanding experience and considerable resources on the non-military aspects of crisis management. This is one area in particular where the EU can offer added value. But we still need to strengthen our coordination, responsiveness and efficiency. The Helsinki European Council has asked me to work with the incoming Portuguese Presidency on a study to define concrete targets in order to establish a rapid reaction capability for our collective non-military response to international crises. We will also be moving rapidly, in response to the mandate given by Helsinki, to establish a coordinating mechanism for civilian crisis management. Of course, all this work has to be done in close co-operation with the European Commission. The excellent relations with Chris Patten and his staff will ensure the success of this task.

The Helsinki conclusions are thorough and comprehensive. But you may have looked in vain for a

reference in them to resource implications. In short, how are we to pay for all this. Given that the proposals are largely about the effective use of existing Member State resources, the answer should lie properly with them. But does all this imply an increase of resources? This is a sensitive question to ask, both to our Treasury masters and to our public opinion in "Taxpayer format". In a way, it is too late for Defence budgets to benefit from a post-Cold War peace dividend; and too early to benefit from a CFSP-dividend.

Although the threat of a global and ultimately totally destructive conflict has mercifully receded, we do not live in a trouble-free world. We are witnessing instead a proliferation of more limited and regional security threats. In a world which is increasingly interdependent, we cannot ignore these crises, and we cannot ignore their terrible fall-out in terms of human suffering, and of regional instability. In this new situation we do not necessarily need more resources, but we must adapt our existing ones. The development of a European Security and Defence Policy offers us this opportunity. We each have to adapt at a national level to face these new challenges. But we also have to adapt at a European level in order to rationalise our existing resources. There are certain capabilities which Europe needs but does not yet have - Helsinki made this clear. But there is also considerable scope for much more effective use of existing resources. We need to continue to ensure that European defence industries restructure. We need greater cooperation and harmonisation of our planning requirements and our procurement policy. In short, Europe needs better value for money. If we can achieve this, we shall also go a long way in helping to reinforce NATO's own Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI).

The full realisation of a European Security and Defence Policy requires much further work. Helsinki has set us on track. I am determined to help ensure that the momentum is maintained. In an age of increasing globalisation, many are insecure, feeling threatened by events over which they consider they have little if any control. We cannot respond to this by pretending these problems do not exist. Transnational problems require transnational solutions. The development of an effective ESDP is an important contribution. It will give us the ability, where appropriate and whenever necessary, to show that the Union is not prepared to stand idly by in the face of crises. Nor always to let others shoulder responsibility. It will be a sign that the European integration dreamed by Europe's founding fathers has come of age.

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