

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

speech
441.2(103)
430.43

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HUMAN RIGHTS COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Statement by Mr Elmar BROK, Chairman

on

*'European Security and Defence Identity after the EU Summit in Cologne
and the Transatlantic Link'*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Washington DC – 10 November 1999

Mr Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to address the Congress of the United States and, in particular, the distinguished Members of the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives on the issue of the European Defence and Security Identity after the EU Summit in Cologne and the Transatlantic Link. Everyone knows the enormous contribution made in the past by the US to peace, democracy and freedom in Europe – especially we in Germany – and this is something which shall never be forgotten.

Who could have thought, in the aftermath of World War II, that a Union would emerge out of the ruins of Europe and that this Union would encompass 15 democratic nations with different traditions but united by common values ? Who could have thought that this European Union would be about to welcome, in the near future, 12 new members, 10 of them formerly incorporated in the Soviet empire ? Who could have thought that the mere existence of a European Union would change the whole pattern of inter-state relations on the European continent ?

The European Union is a state under construction. When the founding fathers – Adenauer, De Gasperi, Schuman – of the first European Community decided in 1950 to create a single market for coal and steel products, they had in mind the political unity of Europe, not just the free movement and control of two items which were vital at that time for producing guns and tanks.

This first European Community for Coal and Steel was followed shortly after by the attempt to create, with the support of the US, a European Community for Defence. Unfortunately, the corresponding Treaty was defeated in 1954 before the French National Assembly. In 1957, the European Economic Community was created and in 1987, a European Single Market was established. But the political dimension of the European construction never got forgotten, everything was seen as steps to the final goal: a politically united European Union which makes war between its members impossible.

The European Union – a name first used in the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 – is the implementation of this political project. Launched by Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand, this Treaty put on track the European Monetary Union, the CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy) and a policy for justice and home affairs. The EU possesses state-like features: it has an elected Parliament, a Court of Justice and an executive *sui generis* consisting of the European Council, the Council of Ministers and the European Commission. The Union has the power to make laws – called regulations and directives – applicable in our Member States, just like federal laws: most of them are decided in co-decision by the Council acting by qualified majority, and the European Parliament. This is the two-chamber model of the United States.

The Treaty of Amsterdam, which entered into force earlier this year, is the continuation of the political project set in motion in the 50's. It reinforces the Treaty of Maastricht in many aspects such as co-decision but its main features can be seen in CFSP. The post of High Representative for CFSP as part of a new Troika has been created. The integration of the Western European Union into the European Union is foreseen in order to give the EU an access to a military capacity; the so-called Petersberg tasks¹, which were defined in 1992 by the WEU Council of Ministers, have been included in the European Union; a new EU instrument has also been created: the common strategy which makes the use of majority voting in CFSP possible.

The success of the European Union can best be measured by the reality of the European single currency, the Euro. The European Union is also the first trading power in the world, with the most open market. Finally, the European Union plays an active role in world affairs. The foreign aid of the European Union and its Member States in 1997 amounted to USD 33 billion; that given by the United States amounted to less than USD 7 billion. This is also part of burdensharing.

The success of the EU is not only the success of the Europeans themselves. It is also your success, the success of the United States and of NATO. Isn't it a good sign for our future relationship that our new High Representative for CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy), Mr Javier SOLANA, was very recently Secretary General of NATO ?

NATO is an organisation which has been preserving peace, democracy, freedom and stability in Europe for 50 years and which will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. NATO is a free association of countries on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean which links together Europe (or at least 17 European countries), the United States and Canada.

Conceived in a geopolitical environment characterised by the division between two antagonistic blocks, NATO – unlike the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union itself – survived the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain. One can say that NATO won the Cold War in a peaceful way. In fact, since 1989, NATO has shown a remarkable capacity to adapt to the new geopolitical context prevailing in Europe, wherein cooperation has replaced rivalry. But Europe itself is just on the way to doing so. Since 1990 the classical regional conventional wars are again possible with the danger that the old order of violence will come back to Europe. We cannot expect that the US will continuously do the job for us of preventing or stopping war in Europe.

¹ Named after Petersberg, a place located near Bonn, where the WEU Council of Ministers adopted a Declaration in 1992. In this Declaration, three Petersberg tasks were listed : humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making

The way NATO took military action in and around Kosovo to protect a whole population from ethnic cleansing was one of its greatest achievements. At the same time, this war fought on behalf of common democratic values acted as a catalyst for Europe's consciousness because it became clear to the Europeans that no diplomatic action could ever be successful if it could not be sustained – when necessary – by military action. The Kosovo war will be considered in the future as a milestone in the history of the EU because it was the key factor which led to the Declaration adopted on 4 June 1999 in Cologne by the AEU's 15 Heads of State and Government.

The aim of this declaration was to provide the EU with '*the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces*' in order to implement the Petersberg tasks. This is to be done by incorporating the WEU into the European Union. Collective defence, however, will remain within NATO.

The Cologne Declaration is in line with the decisions taken in 1996 in Berlin by the North Atlantic Council to develop a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within the Alliance. I quote '*Taking full advantage of the approved CJTF¹ concept, this identity will be grounded on sound military principles and supported by appropriate military planning and permit the creation of militarily coherent and effective forces capable of operating under the political control and strategic direction of the WEU*'. This is exactly what we are aiming at in bringing the WEU into the EU.

What the ESDI will involve in the way of action and planning for action has been defined to some extent in Berlin and Washington. There can be European action within NATO, which does not involve all NATO members with, for example, the use of Combined Joint Task Forces. And the Europeans may have a chain of command running down from a European Deputy Supreme Allied Commander – Europe (D-SACEUR).

The other aspect of the ESDI is that of participation. Which countries will be involved? There are 17 European countries in NATO – 11 of them EU Member States and six currently outside the EU (though four have applied for membership). The WEU actually covers some 28 European countries, 10 of them being full members and 18 being associated in one way or another. And recently, in Bosnia or Kosovo for example, other countries, which may be considered European, like Russia and the Ukraine, have worked with NATO/WEU members.

So, where is the ESDI? Is it to be built around the EU, even with its 'neutral' Member States, sometimes called '*non-Allies*', or around the European nations within NATO, or around the WEU – or is it a broader concept which could include Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and beyond?

To my mind, the European Union should be the locus for ESDI for the following reasons:

- i) With the Amsterdam Treaty, we created mechanisms, which will make the CFSP more effective, such as the '*constructive abstention*'. This enables Member States – and those most concerned are likely to be our '*non-Allies*', i.e. the four countries not members of NATO – to abstain on a decision by the EU to take military action without preventing such a decision being taken at all. The abstainers would not be expected to participate in such military action, though all Member States would be able to participate if they so desired;

¹ Combined Joint Task Forces

- ii) We also have established Mr CFSP (the public face of our common foreign and security policy), who will make our foreign policy more visible and coherent; he will be supported by a Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit, a Political and Military Committee and by the relevant instruments of the WEU such as a Military Committee, a Headquarters, a Situation Centre, a Satellite Centre and an Institute for Security Studies, once the WEU has been incorporated into the EU, which may happen by the end of 2000. The European Union will consequently be able to decide and act more quickly;
- iii) If the European Union decides on a military intervention in order to deal with a crisis, the door must remain open for non-EU members to take part, as is the case within the WEU. If the military action is conducted autonomously, the European Union must be able to invite other countries to take part in it, while preserving its autonomy of decision under the CFSP. If the action is conducted by making use of a CJTF, the NATO/WEU arrangements will prevail, which means that after the WEU's incorporation into the EU, the EU and NATO will have to find the best format for their new Cupertino. I am pleased to see that NATO has been adapted in such a way that it enables the Europeans to conduct military operations with the means and capacities of the Alliance, by making use of a European chain of command under the responsibility of the D-SACEUR;
- iv) Finally, we cannot ignore the fact that, whilst NATO's remit (and therefore use of resources) is limited to military matters, the EU can not only be involved in, indeed undertake, military action but also plan and finance post-war rehabilitation. The EU can provide humanitarian aid and economic assistance to reconstruct a war-torn region and it can decide on political measures such as the Stability Pact for South-East Europe in order to bring an entire region closer to Europe and the Euro-Atlantic structures.
- v.) The EU with its common legal order, common market, common currency, common environmental and social policy has created a common interest which is the basis for a credible security and defense policy. The authority for our common trade policy is entirely in the hands of the Union which has its importance for the questions discussed here, too.

Consequently, if we do not want to make a Freudian concept out of ESDI (the search for Identity), we should be pragmatic and consider that the EU will be the basket in which ESDI will take shape. In fact, the EU can take over the responsibility for European-led operations, the sword being provided by the EU Member States and their non-EU partners, a coalition of the willing, and/or by NATO.

We know that some people in the US, without necessarily opposing the construction of a common security and defence policy for the European Union, fear that this could weaken the transatlantic link. I think that this fear is not justified – for three reasons (reasons evoked by the way by your Secretary of State):

- i) decoupling Europe from the US would not be sensible at all, because the strategic link which exists at present between both sides of the Atlantic Ocean is vital for peace and stability in the world;
- ii) discriminating between the European NATO allies on the basis, for instance, of whether they are EU members or not, is not what we have in mind: we should offer everyone the possibility of joining the EU in a military operation if we think that it might be valuable;
- iii) the issue of duplication is a bit more complex: we should avoid unnecessary duplication but extra capacity is needed. During the Kosovo war, the means and capacities of the Atlantic Alliance were used in some fields to their maximum. If the Europeans had been able to put more combat aircraft, more air refuelling tankers, more electronic jamming equipment, more airlift capacity, etc. into the battle, it would have been better for the Atlantic Alliance

as a whole. I do not think that American public opinion would understand if the Europeans, in carrying out Petersberg tasks, were each time to ask the US for help through a CJTF equipped mainly by the US and run by US military personnel. This could even lead to isolationism in the US.

Consequently, Europe must meet the need for burden sharing by being prepared to spend more on its own security and defence policy, in line with the Defence Capabilities Initiative approved in Washington. A strong Europe is in the interest of the US because it would be a viable strategic partner sharing the same values and many interests.

In conclusion, the European Union and the US must work together to secure peace, security and prosperity in the world. A strong European Union, with its economic strength, its own currency and a credible foreign policy backed up by genuine military capacities, will be the partner that the US needs. Our collective responsibilities are immense: we must help Russia to find a new equilibrium after the collapse of its empire; we must help the peace process in the Middle East; we must help Africa to overcome its tribal wars and tackle its problems of underdevelopment; finally we must make every endeavour to divert Asia from getting into a new arms race, above all when nuclear weapons are in play.

As you know, the EU regrets the decision of the US Senate not to ratify the CTBT because this refusal can only foster nuclear competition in Asia and perhaps the Middle East. How can the US be credible when it exhorts both Pakistan and India to renounce any further nuclear tests? How can the US be sure that this vote will not lead other countries in Asia to accelerate the development of their nuclear arsenals? What are the implications for countries such as Libya, Iran, Iraq, etc? After this vote, our world is less secure than it was before. Such an issue must be part of our transatlantic dialogue, not only between our respective executives, but also between elected parliamentarians.

Finally, I am convinced that other countries willing to join us in order to make the world better. Many of the issues we are faced with nowadays are not of a military nature: they are linked with economic development, illegal trafficking of all kinds (drugs, prostitution), threats to the environment, ethnic hatred, etc. On these issues, it is possible to work altogether: Europe, America (both North and South), Russia, China, Japan, Africa, the Mediterranean countries, and so on. In order to achieve this, let us start by consolidating our transatlantic link on the basis of an equal partnership.

A final appeal to you: 'Trust this Europe which is building itself up, and giving itself a security and defence dimension'. I am convinced that President Truman, General Marshall and Dean Acheson, who helped us 50 years ago, would be proud of what they could see nowadays if they were still alive.

Thank you.