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# Brothers without Arms

Explaining Iceland's Participation in European Union CSDP  
Operations

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# Abstract

A number of non-EU members – or third states – have chosen to participate in EU CSDP operations. This thesis seeks to answer why one of them, Iceland, has chosen to do so despite not being a member of the Union and not having any armed forces which are traditionally used in such activities. States have various motivations for participating in international crisis management operations and the same applies to the case of Iceland. The effects of the Cold War coming to an end and a completely transformed international arena have forced Iceland to adjust and seek new means to ensure its own security and interests. As Iceland is almost completely dependent on other actors in security terms, it has sought ways to secure its status within international organizations, including the EU, in order to address this new reality. Various other motivations can also be traced to Iceland participating in CSDP operations, but Iceland's somewhat hesitant approach points to a state still finding its place in a changing world.

*Key words:* European Union, Iceland, crisis management, CFSP, CSDP.

*Words:* 19.981.

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# 1 Introduction

For an island initially settled by Nordic Vikings, ordinarily conceived as an antagonistic and intrusive bunch, and the setting of the blood-filled pages of the sagas, some might find it curious to learn that Iceland, in fact, has no army. Despite having no armed forces, Iceland was among the founding members of the intergovernmental military alliance NATO and played an important role during the tension-filled years of the Cold War era. With a population of only 320 thousand people, geographical size and location and the fact that it has no army all contribute to Iceland being a rather special and curious case in international politics. While most states have an army, can mobilize a large number of people and are in possession of necessary technical equipment, the same does not apply to Iceland where an understaffed police force and groups of volunteers are mostly responsible for the capabilities and responding in times of danger and need.

The international system has gone through a great transformation ever since the Cold War came to an end. These changes have had far-reaching effects on the manner in which states scheme their present-day security strategies, which international organizations they prefer to work with and other ways in which they conduct their foreign policy. Modern-day threats do not necessarily respect the borders of the versed nation state and have indirectly pushed states to put ever more emphasis on multilateral cooperation in order to address them. While NATO was forced to review its role in the world after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the European Union (EU) has taken significant and ground-breaking steps in the field of security and defence, Iceland has also been compelled to react to these developments. This new reality has forced Iceland to rethink its position in the world – reassess its relations with the superpower in the west, its Nordic neighbors and the EU in the east, and even other major actors in the world.

In recent years, the EU has increasingly been more active in the management of crisis situations, both within the borders of Europe and further afield. After establishing the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in 1999, the EU is now initiating its own military and civilian operations – operations it is fully in command of – and include police missions, border control, rule-of-law training, peace-monitoring and other kinds of operations. The Union recognizes that there are few if any of the modern-day threats it can deal with on its own. These threats are shared with the EU's closest allies and international cooperation is considered a necessity. Objectives must be pursued both through multilateral cooperation in

international organizations and through partnerships with key actors (Council of the European Union 2003, p. 13). In line with this approach, the EU has welcomed third state contributions to CSDP operations and this vision of multilateral cooperation has been realized.

Iceland is a relatively young and inexperienced player in the field of crisis management. Iceland's participation in international crisis management operations first came about due to pressure from NATO and as an active member in the international community, Iceland found itself compelled to contribute in the quest for a more peaceful world. The country has participated in a number of NATO operations since the mid-1990s. However, its contributions have understandably been considerably different in nature and scale when compared to the other NATO countries, and have mostly consisted of the deployment of 'experts', e.g. in civil aviation, instead of troops. As the EU embarked on the journey of shaping the CSDP and launching its first operations, Iceland was one of the non-member states that decided early on to contribute and has participated in two CSDP operations<sup>1</sup> to date.

Since their respective introductions, Iceland's relationship with the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the CSDP has consistently been a rather delicate one, although not always openly disputed (Bailes and Rafnsson 2012, p. 109). Participation in multilateral crisis management<sup>2</sup> operations is by no means to be taken for granted and the reasons for participation naturally vary between individual states. Depending on their geopolitical agenda and individual strengths, non-EU states contribute to CSDP operations for a number of different reasons which range from security interests and the acquisition of operational experience to wider institutional motives (Tardy 2014, p. 2). The same goes for the small island state of Iceland.

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<sup>1</sup> In the literature on CSDP, there is a tendency to use the term 'operation' for CSDP military operations and 'mission' for operations free of the military component and are purely civilian in nature. Thus, these two kinds of CSDP actions are often combined, especially in the field of civilian-military crisis management in which the EU has specialized (Kuhn 2009, p. 248). Here, the term 'CSDP operations' will generally apply to both civilian and military CSDP operations, unless stated otherwise.

<sup>2</sup> In this thesis, the term 'crisis management' is used as an umbrella term for a variety of activities, both military and civilian. The EU crisis management operations (CSDP operations) have ranged from advisory operations consisting of fewer than a dozen experts to big-scale peacekeeping operations involving several thousands of military personnel.

## 1.1 Aim and Research Question

In most countries, the initiation of and participation in military and civilian operations overseas – whether they are unilateral or multilateral – is generally a controversial subject which is debated domestically. This applies to Iceland as well, a country whose citizens have a very complex relationship with foreign armies and warfare. Ever since 1944, when Iceland declared independence from Danish rule, and throughout its existence as a modern independent state, Iceland has refrained from establishing armed forces of its own. Instead, the country hosted an US military base for more than 60 years. Nations perceive the subjects of security and defence policies in different ways, which may result in them having dissimilar motives for participating in crisis management operations abroad.

The aim of the thesis is to map Icelandic participation in CSDP operations and trace and seek explanations why this non-EU member state with no armed forces would even favor to participate in such operations. In order to do so and paint a more comprehensive picture, attention must also be given to Iceland's reasons for participating in multilateral operations under the aegis of other international actors, such as NATO. As will be explained, the EU welcomes non-member state participation and the CSDP operations are an ideal platform for Iceland to channel their will to contribute within the field of crisis management, while they echo principles and priorities held by Iceland in this policy area. The thesis aspires to contribute to a better understanding of why Iceland has been willing and chosen to contribute to CSDP operations and to integrate – although to a limited extent – into CSDP institutions, in spite of the country's minimal access to the whole decision-making process in this field. This will be done by answering the research question:

*Why would Iceland – a non-EU member state with no armed forces – choose to participate in CSDP operations?*

By looking at the case of Iceland, this study can help us paint a broader picture of the EU's military and civilian crisis management operations abroad and why third parties seek to hop on board and participate in implementing the EU's security and defence strategies and operations. Furthermore, it adds to the literature on Iceland, its foreign and security policy and its links with the EU in general and the CSDP in particular. The fact that third parties – non-EU members, ranging from Russia, Norway, the US, Brazil, South Africa and so forth – participate in CSDP operations is interesting in itself, but the fact that a state with no armed forces should also choose to contribute is especially fascinating.

## 1.2 Previous Research

As Iceland has not been very active in CSDP operations – participating only in two operations and also to quite a limited extent – it is not especially surprising that not much research has been done on the topic at hand, at least in comparison with some other cases. Some research has been done on Iceland and its relationship with the CSDP. Bailes and Þórhallsson contributed to a SIPRI publication in 2006 called *The Nordic Countries and the European Security and Defence Policy* with an article on “Iceland and the European Security and Defence Policy” where they look at Iceland and its CSDP relations. Much has changed since then, both with regards to the EU itself and not least Iceland, where the US military departed the island in 2006, the banking sector collapsed in 2008 and the country applied for EU membership in 2009. In 2012, Bailes and Rafnsson published an article on Iceland and the CSDP. That article centered around Iceland’s EU application and the possible relationship Iceland would have with the CSDP as a future full EU member state and questions about the possible impact of the CSDP on the nation’s non-military status which has been debated as part of the ongoing application. The authors look at the experience of six other small states in the EU which suggest that none of them has been obliged by membership to abandon national preferences in this field, though all have made special efforts to support EU police and civilian operations. Furthermore, Baldvinsson wrote a highly interesting chapter on the history of Iceland’s participation in international peacekeeping efforts and public discourse on the matter in a book on Icelandic foreign policy published in 2008.

## 1.3 Disposition

Following the introductory chapter – which includes the aim and research question of the thesis along with an overview of previous research done on and related to the topic – the theoretical framework of the thesis will be presented in chapter two. Methods and the data selected for the study will be defined in the third chapter, while the fourth includes a historical overview of CSDP operations and an outline of Iceland position in the international arena – how it has reached both east and west in order to ensure its security and economic interests. It also covers Icelandic relations with international crisis management efforts in general, as well as Iceland-CFSP relations. The fifth chapter includes an examination of the empirical data and an analysis where the theoretical framework is applied to the case of Iceland. In the sixth and concluding chapter, the results of the analysis are summed up, while also looking towards the possible future developments of Icelandic participation in CSDP operations.

## 2 Theory

This chapter aims to present the theoretical framework used in this thesis. The framework will be described in order to form a basis for the study and analysis of the empirical material. The application of a theory to certain circumstances or situations can give useful contributions to interpreting and understanding the chain of events. To be clear, this is only possible “if the conditions for applicability [...] are sufficiently well understood, and if the practitioner knows enough history to be able to place them into context” (Keohane 1986, p. 2). This means that in order for the above-stated research question to be suitably answered and give a beneficial contribution to the field, it is both necessary to describe the chosen theoretical framework in an accurate manner, but also to take the historical context in which the events took place into consideration while analyzing the available data. Here, the former requirement will be addressed – that is describing the theoretical framework – while the latter will be addressed later on.

Theoretically, this thesis will be based on Alyson Bailes’ typology which aims to explain states’ motives for sending troops to overseas missions since the end of the Cold War. By using theories, we facilitate the research analysis, produce clearer results and put them into a wider context. Bailes develops a typology with three headings – a similar categorization that has before been used in the literature to help explain states’ foreign policy. For example, Goldmann states it is both possible and useful to subdivide the matter of international questions, falling under the political domain, in substantive terms and distinguish between them (Goldmann 1986, p. 26). He draws up a typology and stresses that the international activities of governments are sometimes concerned neither with national security nor with national welfare – the two traditional international objectives ascribed to governments. A range of terms have been proposed to denote a third concern, much like in Bailes’ typology laid out below. These terms include ‘milieu goals’, ‘other-regarding interests’, ‘normative interests’, ‘value-promotive objectives’ and ‘altruistic goals’ among others (ibid, p. 28). In this case, governments are concerned with the international system as such or the conditions within or the relationship between countries. These matters are thought to be related only indirectly to one’s own national interest – by virtue of the fact that a better world for others is also a better world for us. Disarmament, poverty and a new international economic order are among the concerns falling under this heading. In essence, such international politics revolve around a desire to generally improve conditions by the application of norms thought to be



universally valid, instead of furthering one's own national interests to the best of one's ability (ibid, p. 28).

## 2.1 A Theoretical Framework for Analyzing States' Motives for Overseas Operations

For citizens in a number of states, military action abroad – both in the proximity of their own territory and in more distant lands – has been an unbroken and everyday occurrence ever since the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Bailes 2008, p. 73). Looking back, particularly to the 1950s and 1960s when Europeans were quite active in overseas operations, the motives for the actions were relatively clear and easy to distinguish compared to the reality of the new millennium and its complex dynamic. In her article, “Motives for Overseas Missions: The Good the Bad and the Ugly”, Bailes elaborates on these motives present during the 1950s and 60s under a three-fold heading: national motivations, strategic motivations and altruistic motivations (ibid, pp. 73-74). She points out that the formal institutional framework for military actions of European countries abroad was very limited in those days compared to today and restricted to the UN. NATO had geographical limitations and the EC/EU lacked military competence. Other regional organizations that engage in peace operations today – like the African Union (AU) – were either non-existent or non-operational. Organizations similar to NATO – such as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in the Middle East (and including the United Kingdom) and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) were too short-lived to mature and develop operational traditions, even within their own territories (ibid, p. 74).

Bailes furthers these motives under the same three-folded heading in her article and develops a modern typology of motives for overseas operations – a very useful and pragmatic categorization we can apply to the post-Cold War era. She highlights that the tripartite division still seems to hold good, while the “proportions have shifted and new complications have entered the picture” (ibid, p. 74). The different motivations are not mutually exclusive, but are related to one another in different ways and states can have a number of different motivations for contributing to operations overseas.

### 2.1.1 Direct National Motivations

Bailes lists different types of motives linked directly to national interests, while stressing they are not necessarily listed in order of priority (Bailes 2008, pp. 79-80).

### *Post-colonial connections*

During the 1950s and 60s the largest deployments in terms of troop numbers were linked with the final stage of the European colonial empires. They took the form of direct protection and reinforcement of territories prior to their independence, emergency deployments to deal with ‘wars of independence’, and post-independence assistance, involving training and re-structuring of domestic armed forces. These post-colonial connections still influence European states – which operations to launch (e.g. Operation Serval, the ongoing French military operation in Mali) and who joins in on these multilateral operations. A feeling of responsibility towards the region in question, cultural and ethnic ties (for example the presence of immigrant minorities), history and formal security assurances all contribute to the decision-making process of the former colonial powers. However, now it is not as usual for the former imperial power to deploy troops unilaterally or go it alone. Instead, the state pushing for action encourages rapid multilateral intervention (like France did in Rwanda) or tries to set it up as an institutional intervention from the outset, preferably under the command of a non-imperial nation.

### *Good training and testing national forces*

States are interested in obtaining good training for and testing of national forces. This includes the expected gains in interoperability, and the possibility of trying out, advertise for sale, or to gain a stronger case for acquiring certain types of equipment.

### *‘Quid pro quo’*

This motive circles around the notion that a contribution to an operation aims to please a coalition leading country, or the institution responsible. Hopes of a country or institution being more sympathetic and likely to intervene, should the given country experience national difficulties, can be a driving force and motive when a decision has to be made on whether or not to participate in an operation overseas.

### *Territorial security concerns*

If a crisis situation has actualized in the proximity of national and regional borders, it may lead to migration flows, overflow of fighting/terrorist activity, disruption of valuable trade supplies, mistreatment of related national minorities and so forth. Such developments can raise grave territorial security concerns. These motives were strong ones for a range of European ‘front line states’ throughout the series of actions in the Western Balkans during the 1990s and 2000s.

### *Groups setting up peacekeeping units as a way to regional reconciliation*

Looking at countries within and on the borders of the ‘new Europe’, Bailes explains there have been several cases of pairs and clusters of countries setting up

joint peacekeeping units – and seizing opportunities to use them as a means of highlighting their own local reconciliation, abandonment of local antagonisms and territorial claims. The so-called EU Battlegroups – military units adhering to the CSDP – reflect such a rationale and were even preceded by voluntary groupings during the 1990s, e.g. Poland and Lithuania; Hungary, Italy and Slovenia etc. (Bailes 2008, p. 80).

## 2.1.2 Strategic Motivations

During the Cold War, strategic motivations were clearly based on the East-West dimension. Bailes argues that following the fall of the Berlin Wall and collapse of the Soviet Union, these motivations have taken at least three new forms.

### *Actions in response to 'new threats'*

Countries have participated in operations in response to threats from non-state/transnational actors, in part connected to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), which can be addressed with military means when targets can be geographically localized, such as in the US-led coalition actions in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

### *Motives linked to new institutional frameworks for military intervention*

Motives of this kind are several and complex, “inasmuch as the individual state may be thinking not just of its own position vis-à-vis the proposed action, but of the action’s importance for the strategic interests and development of the institution as a collectivity and the impact of each choice on its own place in that community” (ibid, p. 81). Another type of motive, still under this heading, springs from an almost reversed concern, based on an assumption to remedy the institutions’ perceived weakness or limitations (ibid).

### *Strategic economic motives*

These are operations which are undertaken in part, or allegedly, for economic reasons. The most pronounced example would be the disputed oil connection to a number of Western interventions in the Middle East and surrounding areas from the 1992 Gulf War and onwards. Furthermore, it might not be too far-fetched to envision that continuing developments related to climate change, energy competition or even both in combination (e.g. following the rise in global temperatures and subsequent melting of Arctic ice), could lead to scenarios where a critical mass of European support for using military assets could be formed. This might for example materialize in the rescuing of victims of some natural catastrophe in the proximity of European borders and maintain them in camps to avert migration (Bailes 2008, pp. 82-83).

### 2.1.3 Altruistic Motivations

The third heading mentioned centers around the notion of altruism, describing selfless and other-oriented behavior. This describes the complete opposite of self-interest, and could therefore be considered a motivation entirely detached from traditional rational and realist notions. The idea that political decision-makers and states venture into actions that will neither benefit themselves personally nor the nation at large may seem to be idealistic, but the concept of altruism has still found its way into international relations (Krieg 2013, p. 48). Half a century ago, most European states were found acting under the helm of the UN in traditional peacekeeping operations. These operations were presented as a contribution to global order and humanitarian goals, and usually involved states acting in regions, in which they did not have any historical ties. Bailes stresses that altruistic motivations should, if anything, be even stronger today than in the past (Bailes 2008, p. 83).

#### *Advance of globalization and a more multipolar world*

An ever increasing globalized world and a world power system more multipolar than the bipolar reality of the Cold War, has made Europe more dependent than ever on “global order, restraint, lawfulness and a sense of mutual responsibility in security behavior, as well as on the functioning of long-range economic relationships and communications” (Bailes 2008, p. 83). This development can also be a motivation for deployments overseas.

#### *Popular concern and demand for humanitarian action*

European states sometimes get involved due to widespread concern among the public which demands humanitarian action.

#### *Demonstration of vigilance and strength*

Bailes asks if a seemingly altruistic action can be accompanied by a deterrent function – to demonstrate a state’s vigilance and strength.

By applying Bailes’ typology as a tool, it can help us to identify and explain Iceland’s motives for contributing to CSDP operations when analyzing the empirical data. Even though the typology is formulated with the deployment of troops in mind, it can still be applied to the case of Iceland – not in possession of troops as such. The typology can nevertheless be used as a means to explain the motivations behind states choosing to send personnel to international crisis management operations – whether they are military or not. The thesis’ research design will be explained further in the next chapter.

# 3 Methodology

While theory ideally provides clear and precise explanations of important phenomena, methodology generally refers to systematically structured or codified ways to test theories and is thus critical in facilitating the evaluation of theory and the evolution of research (Sprinz and Wolinsky 2012, p. 10). The methodology used in this thesis will be explained in the following chapter.

## 3.1 Case Study Analysis

This thesis will be an explanatory single case study of third state participation in CSDP operations, analyzing causal explanations and possible motives for Icelandic participation in these operations. This will be done by applying a qualitative research method – an approach to research in which the researcher makes knowledge claims primarily on constructivist perspectives (i.e. the multiple meanings of individual experiences, meanings socially and historically constructed with an intent of developing a theory or pattern) or advocacy/participatory perspectives (i.e. political, issue-oriented, collaborative or change oriented) (Creswell 2003, p. 18). In this kind of research the researcher tends to use open-ended questions and the research process is largely inductive, meaning that the researcher generates meaning from the data collected. In general, the approach aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons behind such behavior. The qualitative method looks into the aspects of *why* and *how* in the decision-making process – not simply *what* happened, *where* and *when*. As stated above, the aim of this thesis is to seek explanations of *why* Iceland has chosen to participate in CSDP operations.

The aspiration is to have a theory consuming approach – characterized by focusing on a case and using a theory to explain it – in order to make use of the theoretical concepts in relation to the empirical data (Esaiasson et al. 2007, p. 42-44). Here, the logic of conformation will be used, testing an already existing theory – Bailes' typology for states' motives for participating in missions overseas. The research question illustrates that this is a study where a deeper look is taken into one specific case – Iceland – even though single case studies usually draw implicit comparisons to wider groups of cases (Bennett 2012, p. 29).

In qualitative research, such as this one, the interpretation of data is at the very core although its importance is seen differently in the various approaches (Flick 2009, p. 306). An essential feature is the use of categories, which are often derived from theoretical models, such as Bailes' typology. These categories are brought to the empirical material and not necessarily developed from it, although they are repeatedly assessed against it and modified if necessary (ibid, p. 323). Bailes' typology, laid out in the previous chapter, forms a sound and rather extensive tool for analysis. The typology will be used as a checklist of sorts, applying the different types of motivations for third state participation in CSDP operations by specifically applying them to the case of Iceland. The choice of method is based on the intention to get a deeper understanding of the case. The method gives the researcher a high level of conceptual validity or allows him to "identify and measure the indicators that best represent the theoretical concepts the researcher intends to measure" (George and Bennett 2005, p. 19). Furthermore, the case study method examines the operation of causal mechanisms in individual cases (ibid, p. 21).

As the research question hints at, the study revolves around seeking explanations and motives for Icelandic participation in CSDP operations. In order to address the question, the method of analyzing texts will be practiced. This aspect of the research will be carried out by analyzing selected and relevant texts and documents (see chapter 3.2), that help explain the reasons or motives for Iceland's contributions in CSDP operations, as well as its stance towards these operations in general. Document analysis, or content analysis, will make it possible to find if, how and to what extent Bailes' typology for states' motives for overseas operations applies to the case of Iceland. The analysis of data will also possibly reveal other motivations, not explicitly part of Bailes' typology. Institutional and organizational documents have been a staple in qualitative research for many years and document analysis is the systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents – whether they are printed or electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted). Much like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that the data is examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen 2009, p. 27). As a research method, document analysis is particularly applicable to qualitative case studies – studies producing rich descriptions of a single phenomenon, event, organization, or program. The method has mostly served as a complement to other research methods, but has also been used as a stand-alone method. Indeed, there are some forms of qualitative research that rely solely on the analysis of documents (ibid, p. 29).

In relation to other qualitative research methods, document analysis, of course, has both advantages and limitations. According to Bowen (2009), the method has the advantage of being efficient and requiring data selection, instead of data collection. Availability is another advantage, where many documents are in the

public domain, especially since the advent of the Internet, and are obtainable without the authors' permission. Cost-effectiveness is also a favorable factor, as document analysis is less costly than other research methods and is often the method of choice when the collection of new data is not feasible. Documents are also 'unobtrusive' and 'non-reactive', meaning they are unaffected by the whole research process. Furthermore, they are stable, exact and can provide broad coverage (Bowen 2009, p. 31). However, there are also certain limitations to the method which will be addressed later on.

## 3.2 Data Selection

Selecting a method for a study depends on what is being studied, but first and foremost on the research question. According to Yin, there are six possible sources of evidence for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts (Yin 2003, pp. 83-96). In fact, a case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence, whether they are documents, artifacts, interviews or mere observations (ibid, p. 8). This research was initiated by the reading of official documents and other material on Iceland and the CSDP. Data was primarily constituted from communications, reports, speeches, national security documents and parliamentary discussions from around the launch of the CSDP and onwards. The data was mostly found from the websites of the Icelandic ministries and parliament as well as official EU websites. Secondary literature was then used to supplement the data acquired.

While aware of its limitations which are described below, data for this kind of study can be retrieved from official documents and secondary literature, and therefore the method of interviews is not used. This rhymes well with Stake's premise that "we try not to disturb the ordinary activity of the case, not to test, not even to interview, if we can get the information we want by discrete observation or examination of records" (Stake 1995, p. 12).

## 3.3 Limitations of the Research

When conducting a study such as this one, we must be aware of its general and methodological limitations. Being a small state with no armed forces, the scope of Iceland's contributions in multilateral crisis management operations is very small compared to other states', which results in many considering Icelandic participation in CSDP operations especially, a peripheral matter. This is reflected

in parliamentary debates on Icelandic participation in these operations which have been limited and official documents related to this subject are quite scarce.

Concerning the theoretical typology presented chapter two, Bailes stresses that separating national, strategic and altruistic motives becomes increasingly difficult and artificial the closer one looks into national policies. This is especially applicable to those states that do not have overseas imperial traditions, like is the case with Iceland. Some states may never completely clarify the real motivations underlying any given decision, whether to join or leave an operation, and for practical and political purposes do not need to. The ‘real’ reasons may therefore not be presented or become accessible to the public, as politicians do not want the underlying motives to be seen as some form of official government policy. Another possibility is that some motives are ‘lighter’ and transient than any motive explored under Bailes’ categorization – motives that may have to do with personal or short-term party-political considerations for example (Bailes 2008, p. 79). Categorization of text, based on theories like Bailes’ typology, may therefore obscure the view of the contents rather than facilitate analyzing the text in its depths and underlying meanings. With the method chosen here, the interpretation of the text – as in other methods – is done rather schematically, especially when the technique of explicative document analysis is used, but perhaps without really reaching the depths of the text in question. Another problem is the use of paraphrases, used not only to explain the basic text, but also to replace it – mainly in summarizing content analysis (Flick 2009, p. 328).

We must also be aware of that, in general, documents are produced for some purpose other than research, meaning they are created independent of a research agenda. This can result in that they usually cannot provide sufficient detail to answer all research questions. One must also keep in mind that documentation is sometimes difficult to retrieve or not retrievable at all. Moreover, access to documents is sometimes deliberately blocked (Bowen 2009, p. 32). However, these limitations are potential flaws rather than major disadvantages. Looking at its efficiency and cost-effectiveness in particular, document analysis offers advantages that clearly outweigh the limitations. There is a need to determine not only the existence and accessibility of the appropriate documents but also their authenticity and usefulness, taking into account the original purpose of each document, the context in which it was produced, and the intended audience (ibid, p. 38).

As the method of choice is analyzing texts, future research might benefit from interviewing Icelandic politicians – former foreign ministers especially – and present and former senior officials working within the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Council of Ministers or the European External Action Service (EEAS). This might benefit and supplement the findings and lead to convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and



methods. By triangulating data – combining methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon – we might reduce the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study (Bowen 2009, p. 28).

## 4 Setting the Scene

When analyzing the available data, the historical context in which events took place, must be taken into consideration. As was stated before, this must be rendered in order to suitably answer the research question and give a profitable contribution to the field (Keohane 1986, p. 2). Of course, events do not take place in a historical vacuum, so setting the scene for the analyzing the relevant events and empirical data is a beneficial step in all research.

### 4.1 Development of CSDP Operations

Aspirations of the EU becoming a global power are a somewhat unforeseen by-product of European integration. Despite national foreign policy activities and the special, intergovernmental nature of the policy area, the Union's external policy now extends to what can largely be described as traditional foreign and security policy. With American power receding and China still uncertain of its role in the world, the EU definitely has potential to exercise strong influence in world affairs. The EU's combined GDP and foreign investments are both comparable to those of the US, its population is 50% larger, it has the largest total development aid budget in the world and it has a combined total of 28 votes in the UN General Assembly and two permanent seats in the UN Security Council (Thomas 2011, p. 3). In recent years, the EU has even taken the leap of displaying a capacity for united military action abroad. Some scholars say that the EU has already achieved 'superpower status' (ibid, p. 3) while others suggest it remains an odd global player, having difficulties living up to its ambitions (Peterson 2012, p. 220). Sceptics of foreign policy as a functional area of EU policy-making point to its failure to achieve a unified position on the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the recognition of Kosovo in 2008 or the Libyan no-fly zone in 2011 as evident indications of impassable divergences in the different member states' foreign policy preferences (Thomas 2011, p. 3). Nevertheless, whichever way you look at the EU in the international arena, it is clear that the Union has come a long way from a humble birth in foreign policy and is now more globally active than ever before.

Although the origins of the European security and defence architecture can be traced back to the circumstances of post-World War II, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) is generally perceived as the foundation on which the CFSP was

formed. The modest aim of the EPC – introduced in 1970 – was to facilitate the consultation process on foreign policy among EC member states, by harmonizing positions, consultation and, when appropriate, common actions (Lindström 2012, p. 14). The dynamism of the newly established single market at the end of the 1980s and the end of the Cold War generated both internal and external anticipation that the Community would assume a more prominent international role. A continuing debate on deepening integration – foremost launched in response to the reunification of Germany in 1990 – expanded to also involve the role and possible reform of the EPC. The body was considered inadequate for the ‘new world order’ and in the Maastricht Treaty, the CFSP replaced the EPC (Smith 2008, p. 32). The CFSP has evolved since Maastricht, but can be viewed as the organized, agreed foreign policy of the EU for security and defence diplomacy and actions. The Lisbon Treaty came into force in December 2009 and was yet another milestone in the continuing development of the CFSP. In Article 42 TEU the Treaty declares that the CSDP ‘shall be an integral part of the common foreign and security policy.’ Furthermore, the CSDP is to provide ‘an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets’, which the Union can then use for crisis-management operations, and ‘shall include the progressive framing of a common Union defence policy.’ The Treaty also includes both a mutual assistance and a solidarity clause and allowed for the creation of the EEAS – serving as a foreign ministry and diplomatic corps for the EU, implementing the CFSP and other areas of the EU’s external representation, under the authority of the High Representative which both chairs and represents the policy field of the Union. Decisions falling under the CFSP require unanimity among member states in the Council but specific features can be decided on by qualified majority voting (QMV).

Even though most EU member states have long accepted the supremacy of NATO on defence matters, the EU has taken small but decisive steps in recent years towards creating a common security and defence policy. In a swiftly changing world, the EU is constantly facing security challenges, both within its own borders, in its immediate neighborhood and even more distant regions. To address these challenges – not least after the EU continued to appear weak and timid during the Kosovo crisis in 1999, much like it had in Bosnia and Herzegovina a few years earlier (Peterson and Lavenex 2012, p. 193) – the EU commenced developing a common security and defence policy in 1999. The Nice Treaty marked the basic EU foreign policy goals – often referred to as the Petersberg tasks – which included humanitarian and rescue missions, peacekeeping, and crisis management (Cornish and Edwards 2001, pp. 588-589). The Treaty also introduced a new Political and Security Committee (PSC) of senior national officials which designated the cornerstone linking the CSDP to the CFSP, establishing it as a kind of operations arm of CFSP (Mix 2013, p. 10). Furthermore, a special EU Military Committee was set up and after 2001 and military officers were for the first time seen working in the EU’s Council building

(Peterson and Lavenex 2012, p. 193). All decisions on issues concerning aspects on common security and defence have to be adopted unanimously within the EU meaning that every member state has to approve of the establishment of a CSDP operation. However, the declaration of consent to launch an operation under the CSDP framework does not necessarily equal the willingness of EU member states to provide staff, i.e. troops. This has led to EU member states' contributions to the conducted CSDP operations being both varied in frequency and force level.

When the EU was first equipped with a military capability at the turn of the new millennium, the Union could develop a security strategy: a set of principles that could guide foreign policy action and specify how the CSDP might be deployed together with other EU policy instruments (Peterson 2012, p. 219). In 2003, the former High Representative Javier Solana put together a long-term European Security Strategy (ESS) – a document entitled 'A Secure Europe in a Better World'. At the heart of the document was the identification of five key threats – terrorism, proliferation of WMDs, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime – as well as the identification of different measures the Union can apply to address these threats. These measures included the achievement of greater capabilities (for instance systemic use of pooled and shared assets, the sharing of intelligence and stronger diplomatic capabilities through a combination of the resources of member states), more coherence (common diplomatic efforts and better coordination), direct intervention in regional conflicts, which could involve the deployment of EU military and civilian expertise, and EU participation in multilateral solutions (Council of the European Union 2003). The implementation of the document was later revised in 2008, where the EU confirmed the validity of the ESS and the need to be 'more capable, more coherent and more active' in order for the 'EU to reach its full potential' (European External Action Service 2014a). Still, one must keep in mind that the CSDP is not a conventional defence policy whose immediate aim is the protection of national territory. Instead, the CSDP is concerned with 'out-of-area' operations which take place outside of the territories of the EU member states. As such it might be more helpful to see it as an international security policy (Chalmers et al. 2010, p. 670).

When the EU member states were shaping the CSDP, it was necessary for all parties concerned to settle on and clarify its relations with NATO. A strategic partnership in crisis management was developed between the EU and NATO, which rests on the so-called Berlin Plus arrangements, adopted in late 2002. The arrangements included allowing the EU to make use of NATO assets and capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations, ensured effective consultation and covered the exchange of classified information under reciprocal security protection rules (European External Action Service 2014b). By concluding the Berlin Plus arrangements, it facilitated the launch of the EU's first ever military operation, Operation Concordia, in the Former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia (FYROM) in March 2003. Originally it was envisaged that crises would lead to Western countries making a choice between the deployment of either the EU or NATO. However, the first two CSDP military operations (EUFOR Concordia and EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina) entailed the EU following on from a NATO force and the EU borrowing NATO assets under the Berlin Plus arrangements (Rees 2011, p. 78).

These operations reinforced the linkage between the two actors, perhaps underlining the EU's role as subordinate to that of NATO. However, focusing solely on the geographical spread and size of CSDP operations would lead to their significance being underestimated. The EU has undertaken a diverse range of complex peace support operations, all of which have necessitated the use of different policy instruments, especially police units to combat crime (ibid, p. 79). Hagman argues that the EU's comparative advantage lies not in the high-intensity warfare, but conflict prevention through the coordinated use of diplomatic and economic measures and crisis management with civilian and military means (Hagman 2002, p. 104).

There is no doubt that the CFSP and the CSDP have developed significantly since their respective launches. Additionally, there are no indications that the trend we have been witnessing over the last years – that is towards more common initiatives and more coordination concerning crisis management and defence issues among EU members in general – will halt and its importance within the Union be any less. Today, the EU has become a rather established international actor that works together with and has set up cooperation processes with a number of international organizations – such as the UN, NATO, OSCE, AU – and individual states, which will be discussed more elaborately later on (Boguslawska 2012, p. 91).

In spite of its military and defence features, it is important to keep in mind that the activities of CSDP are not exclusively military in nature. Ever since the Feira European Council meeting in 2000, member states appreciated that complex interventions designed to prevent the breakout of large-scale conflict necessitate a hybrid range of capabilities, not just military. “This was a logical progression of the civilian power model, using reconstruction, aid, technical assistance, judicial and administrative instruments for a number of different purposes” (Rees 2011, p. 79). These included incentivizing communities in the regions of conflict to eschew violence, policing ceasefires and keeping warring factions separate, rebuilding war-torn areas, and promoting a range of government mechanisms – rather than just winning a military victory (ibid, p. 79). In addition to military security, post-conflict reconstruction necessitates the resumption of a variety of public services. Police officers, lawyers, judges and administrators have all been designated as available for service overseas in CSDP operations in order to enhance capabilities in crisis management. Now, fifteen years after the EU

launched the CSDP, it has become predominantly oriented toward civilian actions, peacekeeping, conflict prevention, post-conflict stabilization, and humanitarian missions, rather than conventional military combat operations (Mix 2013, p. 10).

The EU has gradually expanded their peacekeeping and crisis management efforts over the last decade or so, and as of the end of early 2014, the EU had engaged in over thirty CSDP operations, whereas sixteen of them are still ongoing (European External Action Service 2014c). What these interventions have in common is that they have all been relatively small in scale, with the exception being EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina which amounted to a big-scale deployment of around 7.000 personnel. Also, because of the diversity of views amongst the EU member states, it has been unlikely that the Union would seek to carry out an intensive, high risk operation (Rees 2011, p. 77). Brimmer argues that this fits the US' perception of the EU as an international actor, saying that 'NATO is for hard security in relatively hostile environments,' whereas 'EU forces are for stabilization operations in more permissive settings' (Brimmer 2007, p. 31).

Geographically, the CSDP operations have been clustered in the Western Balkans, Europe's Eastern frontiers, Africa and the Middle East. The Union has taken over operations initiated by other international actors, but also undertaken independent operations at long range overseas, most notably in Africa. Tasks have usually focused on a limited objective and have been conducted under the aegis of a European 'framework nation', performing both the planning and coordination functions. A case in point is Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where France assumed the role of the framework nation.

*Table 1: List of ongoing CSDP operations (ISIS Europe 2014)*

ONGOING OPERATIONS	Africa	Balkans/Caucasus/ Eastern Europe	Asia	Middle East
Military operations	→EUNAVFOR Somalia (Atalanta) →EUFOR RCA	→EUFOR Althea (BiH)		
Military training missions	→EUTM Mali →EUTM Somalia			
Supporting missions (security sector)	→EUCAP Nestor Horn of Africa →EUCAP Sahel Niger →EUSEC DRC			
Other supporting missions				
Monitoring missions		→EUMM Georgia		
Rule of law missions		→EULEX Kosovo		
Police missions	→EUPOL DRC			→EUPOL

				Afghanistan →EUPOL COPPS Palestinian territories
Border missions	→EUBAM Libya	→EUBAM Ukraine- Moldova		→EUBAM Rafah

Table 2: A list of completed CSDP operations (ISIS Europe 2014)

COMPLETED OPERATIONS	Africa	Balkans/Caucasus/ Eastern Europe	Asia	Middle East
Military operations	→Artemis DRC →EUFOR DRC →EUFOR Tchad/RCA →EUFOR Libya	→Concordia FYROM		
Military training missions				
Supporting missions (security sector)	→EUSSR Guinea Bissau →EUNAVCO Somalia →EUAVSEC South Sudan			
Other supporting missions	→Amis Sudan (AU)	→EUSR BST Georgia (border) →EUPAT FYROM (police) →EUPT Kosovo (rule of law)		
Monitoring missions		→EUMM Former Yugoslavia	→AMM Aceh	
Rule of law missions		→EU JUST Themis (Georgia)		→EUJUST LEX Iraq
Police missions		→EUPM BiH →EUPOL Proxima (FYROM) →EUPOL Kinshasa		
Border missions				

## 4.2 Outsiders in CSDP Operations

„There are few if any problems we can deal with on our own. The threats described are common threats, shared with all our closest partners. International co-operation is a necessity. We need to pursue our objectives both through multilateral co-operation in international organizations and through partnerships with key actors.”

These words can be found in the European Security Strategy (Council of the European Union 2003) mentioned earlier, which emphasizes the importance for the EU to cooperate with like-minded states and organizations. This view was reiterated at the European Council meeting in December 2013 where “the European Council emphasize[d] the importance of supporting partner countries and regional organizations” and that “the Union remains fully committed to working in close collaboration with its global, transatlantic and regional partners.” Furthermore, it accented that “such collaboration should be further developed in a spirit of mutual reinforcement and complementarity” (European Council 2013). This view is in line with the Lisbon Treaty (Article 21 TEU) which recalls that multilateralism is at the core of the EU’s external action. “The Union shall promote multilateral solutions to common problems, in particular in the framework of the United Nations.”

In the spirit of these words, the EU has worked towards developing an effective and balanced partnership with a number of states and organizations. Since its first operation, around 45 non-EU states have been engaged in CSDP operations, or around thirty if the states that have joined the Union since 2004 are subtracted. In 2003, the EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM) benefited from the participation of fifteen third states and the first EU military operation in Africa – Operation Artemis in the DRC – saw the contribution of five partner states, including both South Africa and Brazil. Ever since the launch of the first CSDP operation, third states have been engaged in almost all operations and missions, although with uneven levels of participation.

*Table 3: Contributions of third states to CSDP operations (Tardy 2014, p. 3)*

<b>Europe</b>	
Albania *	EUFOR Althea, EUFOR Tchad/RCA
FYROM *	EUFOR Althea
Georgia *	EUCAP Nestor, EUTM Mali, EUBAM Libya, EUFOR RCA
Iceland *	EUPM BiH, Concordia
Moldova *	---
Montenegro *	EUNAVFOR Atalanta
Norway *	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL Afghanistan, EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUPOL COPPS, EUPOL Proxima, Concordia, AMM Aceh, EUJUST LEX, EUCAP Nestor
Russia	EUPM BiH, EUFOR Tchad/RCA
Serbia *	EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUTM
Switzerland	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL Proxima, EUFOR RD Congo, EUPOL RD Congo, AMM Aceh, EUTM Mali
Turkey *	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL Proxima, Concordia, EUFOR RD Congo, EUPOL Kinshasa
Ukraine *	EUPM BiH, EUPOL Proxima, EUNAVFOR Atalanta
<b>North America</b>	
Canada *	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL COPPS, EUPOL



	Kinshasa, EUPOL Afghanistan, Artemis (DRC)
United States *	EULEX Kosovo, EUSEC RD Congo, EUPOL RD Congo
<b>South America</b>	
Argentina	EUFOR Althea
Brazil	Artemis (DRC)
Chile *	EUFOR Althea
Dominican Republic	EUFOR Althea
<b>Africa</b>	
Angola	EUPOL Kinshasa, EUPOL RD Congo
Mali	EUPOL Kinshasa
Morocco	EUFOR Althea
South Africa	Artemis (DRC)
<b>Asia/Oceania</b>	
Brunei	AMM Aceh
Malaysia	AMM Aceh
New Zealand *	EUFOR Althea, EUPOL Afghanistan
Philippines	AMM Aceh
Singapore	AMM Aceh
South Korea *	---
Thailand	AMM Aceh
* States which have signed a Framework Participation Agreement with the EU.	

Cooperation between the Union and third countries must be seen in the broader context of the EU foreign policy. What is being achieved with the partnerships of the EU may not always be visible or viable to the short-term effectiveness of CSDP operations, but it is one of many dimensions of a much broader political environment in which the EU is gradually finding its place.

#### 4.2.1 Framework Participation Agreements

Even though the drafting of policy guidelines regulating cooperation with third states dates back to 2001, the relationship between the EU and partner states within the CSDP was institutionalized in 2004 with the signing of the first Framework Participation Agreements (FPAs). To this day, fifteen such agreements have been finalized and agreements with Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Brazil and Colombia are currently in the making (Tardy 2014, p. 2). All five EU candidate countries – FYROM, Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey – have participated in CSDP operations and signed FPAs, much like all non-EU member states that are members of NATO<sup>3</sup> (see Table 3). Looking at partner states' participation in CSDP operations, we see that Canada, Norway and Turkey are the ones that been especially active.

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<sup>3</sup> Albania, Canada, Norway, the US and the two EU candidate countries mentioned earlier, Iceland and Turkey.

The FPAs provide the legal and political foundation for the third states' involvement in CSDP operations. The agreements address issues relating to the status of personnel and forces, the modalities of information exchange, the involvement of third countries in the decision-making process and conduct of the operations. They also cover financial aspects, both for military and civilian operations. Partner countries that are interested in making a contribution to a CSDP operation are generally kept informed throughout the planning and decision-making process, using the existing structures for political dialogue. At a certain phase, the partners are invited to the relevant force-generation conferences. Following a Council decision to initiate an operation, a Committee of Contributors commences its work as the body responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the operation. The contributing partner countries are then represented in the Committee with the same obligations and rights as the participating EU member states (Boguslawska 2012, p. 91).

By nature, non-member states' participation in CSDP operations requires a certain degree of acceptance of EU practices as well as a degree of subordination (Tardy 2014, p. 4). The agreements state that third state contributions to CSDP operations are 'without prejudice to the decision-making autonomy of the Union'. This is a matter of principle, as it is central to the Union's conception of partnership and a source of tension with partners. Tardy argues that this has for example hindered EU and US cooperation to a certain extent. Although the two parties signed an FPA in 2011, it only covers 'contributions of civilian personnel, units, and assets by the United States to EU crisis management operations', which can be explained by the US' reluctance to place US troops under non-US command (ibid, p. 2).

In addition to EU candidate countries and non-EU NATO members, three regional powers – Russia, Brazil and South Africa – have also contributed to CSDP operations, much like a number of other non-EU participants, including states from South America, Eastern Europe and Asia. Most of these partners have only contributed symbolically – either by very limited commitments or to operations located in their immediate vicinity like Asian states in the 2005 monitoring mission in Aceh, Indonesia. Adding to their participation in CSDP operations, four countries (Norway, Turkey, Ukraine and FYROM) have been involved in the stand-by EU Battlegroups (ibid, p. 2). While a substantial number of third states have already engaged in CSDP operations, the Union also plans to further engage its Eastern and Mediterranean partners on a case-by-case basis, with the purpose to contribute to enhancing regional security and stability (European External Action Service 2013a). Still, the network being constructed remains loosely institutionalized as compared, for example, to NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) (Tardy 2014, p. 2).

#### 4.2.2 What's in it for the EU?

The participation of non-EU member states in CSDP operations is, arguably, beneficial for both parties – that is the EU and its member states on the one hand, and the partner state in question on the other. Potential reasons for the participation of third states in CSDP operations have partly been addressed in chapter two and will be further examined with regards to Iceland in chapter five.

Looking at things from the EU's point of view, cooperation with partner states entails two primary dimensions. First, there is a capacity-related one, meaning that partner countries bring personnel, assets and expertise that the EU may possibly lack. The EU occasionally struggles to staff its operations so the partnerships make it possible for the Union to broaden the pool of potential contributors. Tardy (2014) mentions the contribution of Russia to EUFOR Tchad/RCA as a case in point, while Georgia's contribution to the same operation was also welcomed as it filled a gap in the EU generation process. Also, the type of expertise provided by countries such as the US, Canada, Switzerland or Norway is of great value to the EU's wide-ranging agenda. The second dimension is the political one, which is arguably the more important one of the two. Whether a CSDP operation is considered effective and visible enough or not, partly relies on if the EU can attract non-EU members and institutionalize its relationships with them. Tardy explains that to some extent, "a wide network of partners attest to the growing importance of the of the EU's role in a 'market' where other institutions (such as the UN, NATO or the OSCE) also operate". Moreover, he argues that this is a clear demonstration of the 'soft' power wielded by the EU at work, entailing a tendency to appeal rather than threaten. "The legitimacy of EU operations is partly a function of the size of the community of states that the EU is able to bring together. As for all multilateral organizations, the long-term success of crisis management needs to combine the effectiveness of a limited but reliable number of stakeholders with the legitimacy that stems from collegiality" (Tardy 2014, p. 4).

#### 4.2.3 Limitations of the Cooperation with Third States

In spite of the cooperation between the EU and third states in CSDP operations, the material and political gains of this kind of partnership should not be exaggerated. Looking over third state participation over the last decade, their input have been rather limited, barring the Turkish, Russian and Georgian contributions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR) respectively. Contributions are generally not more than 20 staff and with the relatively small scale of most CSDP operations, it leaves a limited room for maneuver for third states in an operation to disrupt the general balance of personnel (Tardy 2014, p. 4). The management of partnerships can also be both

politically and administratively problematic. From an administrative perspective, the partnership can be disputed if the handful of experts provided by a third country is worth the overall effort. In political terms, the EU insists that the cooperation shall be guided by the 'EU's strategic interests' and that the partner states should 'share with the EU common values and principles'. Meanwhile, the most valuable contributors may have different priorities and therefore become tough to handle and keep in check. The nature of the EU's planning and decision-making processes complicate relations with partner countries even further. Tardy explains that in practice, third states that are invited to contribute to a CSDP operation, are brought on board at a very late stage in the process, and then only given access to EU-issued documents once their participation has been accepted by the PSC. Informal contacts take place between the EEAS and the probable contributors that the EU has identified. However, they are not formally involved in the drafting of the concept of operations or the operation plan, nor do they participate in force generation conferences" (ibid, p. 4). In most cases, third countries are invited to 'fill gaps', but are obliged to accept both the EU's timeline and procedures.

In theory, third states have the 'same rights and obligations in terms of day-to-day management of the operation' as the partaking EU member states. The general principle concerning the aspect of financing, is that aside from those costs that are subject to common funding, third states assume all costs associated with their participation in a given operation. However, Tardy stresses that even once an operation is launched, the various mechanisms in place – such as the Committee of Contributors – limits the involvement of partner countries, effectively reducing them to 'second-class stakeholders'. The result has been a series of complaints, with critics pointing to NATO and its more successful way of including partner countries in its operations. The EEAS has been looking at means to address this dilemma, possibly through privileged cooperation with a selection of third countries. However, it is unlikely that frictions within this kind of cooperation with non-member states will ever completely disappear (ibid, p. 4).

### 4.3 Iceland: Torn between East and West

Situated in the North Atlantic Ocean – both on the Eurasian and North American continental plates – Iceland has throughout its history been somewhat torn between looking towards the east and west.

#### *Economy*

From an economic perspective, Iceland has focused eastwards and is very dependent on European markets with around 70-80% of its exports entering the

EU internal market (Statistics Iceland). Iceland has developed very close ties to the Union and is veritably as close to being an EU member as possible – much like Norway and Liechtenstein. Iceland’s current relations with the EU chiefly take the form of cooperation within three different frameworks: the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) which Iceland became a member of in 1970; the European Economic Area which it joined in 1993; and the Schengen Agreement which Iceland joined in 2001. These relations have mostly been based on economic premises. Iceland joined EFTA to facilitate trade relations with Europe and these relations were strengthened further by Iceland becoming part of the internal market through the EEA Agreement. Furthermore, Iceland’s Schengen participation is partly intended to secure the necessary free movement of goods, services, persons and capital – the core intention of the internal market (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2013a). Though not a member of the EU, Iceland is far from immune to its influence. These close ties mean that Iceland, much like the member states themselves, is affected by most changes in the EU, with Iceland implementing a large portion of EU rules and regulations. According to an official report on Iceland-EU relations from 2007, it is generally estimated that Iceland implements between 70-80% of all EU legislation (Prime Minister’s Office 2007a, p. 45), although the proportion can be very difficult to measure (Jónsdóttir 2013, p. 5).

Still, one difference between a non-member like Iceland and the EU member states is very apparent – the level of political influence on these changes. Being a non-member, Iceland only has very limited access to the EU decision-making process. Icelandic officials are frequently consulted before the EU makes its final decision on issues related to the internal market or Schengen. Therefore, Icelandic officials are in a position to have some influence in the decision-shaping process or the stage where the European Commission or the Council is drawing up new legislative proposals, although this potential for influence varies with the policy area in question. The EEA Agreement contains provisions for input from the EEA/EFTA countries<sup>4</sup> at various stages, prior to new legislation being adopted. This input takes various forms, such as the participation of EEA/EFTA experts in various EU committees or the submission of EEA/EFTA comments and the adaption of resolutions in response to initiatives from the Commission (Rieker 2006a, p. 284). Iceland’s Schengen participation interestingly entails that Iceland has, in fact, gone further in the European integration process in certain policy areas than some full EU member states, like the UK and Ireland. Put differently, the assessment of the standing of full member states versus non-member states in European integration process is not as black and white as first might be expected.

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<sup>4</sup> The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is a free trade organization between four European countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) that operates in parallel with and is linked to the EU. While Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are participants in the EEA, Switzerland is not.

With the country obliged to implement a great portion of EU legislation without proper channels to influence them, one might wonder why Iceland did not apply for full membership prior to 2009. Many explanations have been mentioned, including a dominant domestic discourse on sovereignty and independence, a Euro-sceptical political elite (Kristinsson and Þórhallsson 2004, p. 158) and how influential sectors – such as fisheries and agriculture – have managed to capture the ‘heart of the Icelandic nation’ – successfully convincing the majority of the people that Iceland’s interests would best be served outside of the Union (Einarsson 2007, p. 1). Iceland’s participation in the EEA may also be one of the most salient reasons for a history of a lacking of interest in full membership (Jónsdóttir 2013, p. 3). Until the banking collapse in 2008, the EEA Agreement was considered adequate to serve the country’s interests. While the agreement allowed Iceland access to the internal market, it also allowed Iceland to remain outside less attractive areas, primarily the common fisheries policy (CFP) – a policy field that has been described as one of the Union’s biggest policy failures. The importance of fisheries for the Icelandic economy is big, so many have considered the CFP reason enough for Iceland not to become a full EU member. However, following Iceland’s crash in 2008 and a government change the year after, Iceland did apply for full EU membership. Accession talks were well on their way, but after the 2013 elections and yet another government change, the new foreign minister decided to dissolve the accession team and suspend negotiations.

### *Security and defence*

While having looked east from an economic perspective, Iceland has looked towards the west when addressing its security and defence concerns. In 1940, during World War II, British troops arrived in Iceland but one year later the defence of Iceland was transferred from the British to the US (Björgúlfsdóttir 1989, pp. 73-75). To secure its defence after the war, Iceland became a founding member of NATO, and was (and still is) the only member state to have no army. However, the West welcomed Icelandic membership as its geographical position in the North Atlantic had proven itself to be both strategically and geopolitically important during World War II and would remain so in the Cold War. In 1951, the US and Iceland signed an agreement where the US took responsibility for the defence of the island nation. This resulted in US military presence in Iceland until 2006 when the last US troops and fighter jets left the island as Washington considered them needed to be stationed elsewhere in the world as Iceland’s geopolitical position was not as important to the US as it had been during the Cold War years.

The international system has undergone fundamental changes since the end of the Cold War, with strong implications for a small state such as Iceland. Many small, wealthy states have pursued regional integration to advance their own goals

and influence, but some are now threatened by the expansion of regional institutions, such as the EU. This results in an international system that offers great opportunities and great risks for small states (Hey 2003, pp. 1-2). One can argue that today, small states enjoy more international prestige and visibility than at any other time in history. Their physical security is in most cases ensured, while the rise of transnational efforts, such as the EU and NATO, has put them on a legal and diplomatic footing with larger states (ibid, p. 1). The end of the Cold War meant that smaller states were no longer necessarily pawns in a global competition for superpower. However, in the case of Iceland, the country had grown quite accustomed to its role and place in the Cold War, where it benefited from the presence of the US army – both concerning national security, but also in economic terms. Following the US withdrawal in 2006, Iceland sought defence arrangements based on its NATO membership – involving increased defence and rescue cooperation with the US, UK, Canada, Denmark, Norway, and other NATO members (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2013b) – and the bilateral 1951 Defence Agreement between Iceland and the US. Thus, the two remain the fundamental pillars of Iceland’s security and defence (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014a).

In 2009, a group working under the foreign minister published a national risk assessment report, where it analyzed possible global, societal, and military threats for Iceland. The report was the first of its kind in Icelandic history. The group concluded that Iceland faced no direct military threats from other states or alliances in the short- or medium-term (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2009a, p. 4). Still, if something like that were to happen – for example as a consequence of a conflict between superpowers – Iceland would be totally dependent on others in terms of security. In such an event, it would first and foremost test the US Defence Agreement and the 5<sup>th</sup> article of NATO’s Washington Treaty which stipulates that in an event of an aggression, other nations would come with help to repel the enemy and vice-versa. However, overall, the risk assessment report concludes that Iceland’s greatest security threat stems from potential natural disasters (ibid, p. 68).

#### 4.3.1 Iceland and Crisis Management

Following the Cold War coming to an end and the collapse of its original *raison d’être*, NATO went through a necessary transformation and evolved from being the traditional defence alliance it originally set out to be, to a coalition using its capacity to manage conflict outside its own borders, first in the Balkans and subsequently Afghanistan (Bertram 2006, p. 1). This drastic change had extensive impact on Iceland’s security identity (Ómarsdóttir 2008, p. 58). Almost overnight, a contribution in the form of land was not enough to guarantee Icelandic interests within NATO (Baldvinsson 2008, p. 138). To address the increasing pressure

from other NATO members for Iceland to contribute more to the alliance, Iceland chose to participate in international peacekeeping operations to safeguard its status within the alliance.

The formal launch of Icelandic participation in crisis management operations can be traced to 1994, when three Icelandic peacekeepers joined the Norwegian armed forces in the UN peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNPROFOR). Although the Icelandic government had previously been asked to participate in international peacekeeping operations, they had sidestepped on the grounds of the country having no army (Baldvinsson 2008, p. 139). With an increased number of UN peacekeeping operations and increased awareness among Western leaders that the West had to engage itself seeking a resolution in the Balkan conflicts, there was ever more demand for an Icelandic contribution, much like from other countries. After the signing of the Dayton Accords in 1995, NATO took over a number of tasks in the Balkans, previously held by the UN. The alliance pushed for all member states to contribute, and approached Iceland especially, which could no longer look the other way. Iceland agreed to focus on deploying experts instead of troops to the different regions of conflict where NATO was active. Iceland and NATO initially settled on Iceland sending doctors and other medical staff to work within the armed forces of fellow NATO member states (ibid, p. 139). As the armed forces of NATO members partially included civilian staff, Iceland could partake in the works and functions of armies. Although the Icelandic peacekeepers always had a special status within the armies in which they operated, the Icelandic army doctors and army nurses held ranks, uniforms and in some cases arms (ibid, p. 139).

In 2001, Iceland launched a civilian peacekeeping unit – the Iceland Crisis Response Unit (ICRU) – for the sake of operating within international organizations, especially NATO. It was considered a non-military ‘peacekeeping force’ of individuals (police, doctors and nurses, lawyers, air traffic controllers, administrators, etc.) who were to be available for rapid deployment to regions of conflict (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 334). Iceland had hopes of that the unit would result in attracting greater goodwill from its NATO allies – most importantly the US – and that Washington might be willing to extend its military presence on the island which it had been scaling down ever since the end of the Cold War (Þórhallsson 2013).

The nature of the ICRU is very different compared to its ‘counterparts’ in other countries, as only civilian personnel work within the ICRU (Iceland Crisis Response Unit 2008, p. 5). Ever since the unit was launched, a number of Icelanders have participated in international crisis management operations, functioning under the helm of various international organizations, including NATO, OSCE, the EU and the UN and a few of its agencies, such as UNICEF, UN Women (previously UNIFEM) and the World Food Programme – which has



also been considered part of Iceland's overall contribution to these organizations. In addition to the two CSDP operations mentioned earlier, ICRU has participated in a number of other international crisis management efforts – i.e. Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Kosovo, Serbia, Sudan and Liberia – with the most extensive being the NATO operation in Afghanistan (ISAF) where Icelandic personnel for example temporarily ran the Kabul International Airport. Domestic partners and institutions that have provided the ICRU with staff include the Icelandic Coast Guard, the Fire Department of the Icelandic Capital Area, the office of the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police, the Icelandic Search and Rescue Association (ICE-SAR) and Isavia (national airport and air navigation service provider of Iceland) (Iceland Crisis Response Unit 2008, p. 6). During the first years of its existence, the ICRU deployed on average around twenty-five personnel abroad at any one time, although the number temporarily rose to around forty on occasions when new missions had been established prior to others being finished (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 334).

Following the 2008 banking collapse, the ICRU budget was slashed and has now been reduced to less than 30% of what it was in 2007.<sup>5</sup> This development has naturally had an effect on the scope and functions of the unit. In the last few years, there has been a change in the workings of the ICRU with an ever increasing focus on women activity. Great emphasis has been put on equaling the gender balance within ICRU activities and that the operations in which the ICRU partakes, benefits women as well as men (Iceland Crisis Response Unit 2008, p. 6). In 2010, 45% of all deployed experts of the ICRU were women (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2011, p. 69).

#### 4.3.2 Iceland and the CFSP

A school of thought led by France has seen CSDP operations as a means to bolster the EU's strategic credibility which will gradually lead it in the direction of a full-blown common defence community. These arguments are taken very seriously by smaller countries, viewing and linking their own survival to the efficiency of international institutions (Bailes 2008, p. 81). However, Icelandic governments have not taken the official view that national defence would be supported by taking part in the CFSP and the development of the CSDP, as opposed by Norway's approach where governments have very much been drawn towards the EU for security reasons. In fact, Norwegian political leaders (both the Social Democrats and the Conservatives) pushed for EU membership in the early 1990s as a means to bolster the state's security (Þórhallsson 2008, pp. 126-127).

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<sup>5</sup> The state contribution to the ICRU amounted to 600 million ISK in 2007 (Iceland Crisis Response Unit 2008, pp. 5-6), while it amounted to 173 million ISK in 2014 (Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs 2014).

Historically, Iceland has not been active in the policy-making processes of other security organizations in Europe, such as the OSCE and the former Western European Union (WEU) (Þórhallsson 2013). The Icelandic government currently has a limited opportunity to influence the decision-making process in the CFSP but has, to the best of its ability, tried to express its views and guard its interests whenever an opportunity has arisen (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2004, p. 24). On the basis of the EEA Agreement, Iceland can sign up to EU statements on foreign and security issues, and in most cases there is a clear correlation between the EU policy and the Icelandic one, with both actors generally sharing the same values and interests (Ásgrímsson 2004, p. 24). The formal arrangements concerning the relationship between allied third states and the CFSP were formalized in the early years of the millennium. They came to include meetings between the PSC and the (at the time) six allied non-EU members (15+6 (the EU15 and Norway, Turkey, Iceland, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic)) and would some of them be on ministerial level (Prime Minister's Office 2006, p. 8). Meetings could also take the format where they included the candidate countries (15+15 (the EU15 and 13 candidate countries, and Norway and Iceland)) (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, pp. 332-333). The arrangements included the setup of an *ad hoc* Committee of Contributors in relation to each specific operation (Rieker 2006a, pp. 284, 288). Additionally, when joint NATO-EU meetings took place to develop the cooperation foreseen between the two institutions, Iceland would of course have a full seat at the table on the NATO side (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 333). When the EU created the European Defence Agency (EDA) in 2004, Iceland decided – contrary to Norway – not to take up its option to join in the new agency's activities through an Administrative Agreement. The agency partly aims at armaments and defence technology collaboration but Iceland lacks both armed forces and a defence industry, and “popular feeling is broadly hostile to the global arms trade's ‘merchants of death’” (Bailes and Rafnsson 2012, p. 110). The basis for Icelandic participation in CSDP operations is the FPA signed in 2005, which makes it possible for Iceland to participate in both civilian and military crisis management operations conducted by the EU.

The EU recognizes that with no armed forces, Iceland has “limited resources to contribute to EU military crisis management operations, but it is nevertheless able to offer its expertise in the areas of human rights, gender equality and post-conflict assistance” (European Commission 2011, p. 7). As previously mentioned, Iceland has participated in two CSDP operations so far. First, the police mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM), where Iceland contributed with 25.000 euros per year (Alþingi 2009, p. 3) and deployed two police officers from 2003 until 2009 (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2013c). The aim of that CSDP operation – which is civilian in nature – is to establish sustainable policing arrangements in the country under Bosnian ownership and in accordance with best European and international practice in this area (Europa 2008). All EU members have contributed to the operation, alongside Canada, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey,

Ukraine and Iceland. Secondly, Iceland contributed to the first ever military operation of the EU – Operation Concordia in FYROM in 2003. In that operation – which core aim was, at the explicit request of the FYROM government, to contribute further to a stable, secure environment and to allow the implementation of the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement – Iceland contributed with filling a position of a press officer (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2013c). The operation made use of NATO assets and capabilities, which was made possible by the completion of work on the Berlin Plus arrangements. The operation was launched in March 2003 and completed in December that same year (European External Action Service 2014d). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that prior to the collapse of the banking sector in 2008, Iceland was planning to participate in EULEX – the EU Rule of Law mission in Kosovo launched in 2009. Iceland planned to deploy two experts to that operation (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2008), but the collapse resulted in Iceland calling off its proposed deployments. This means that Iceland is currently not participating in any CSDP operation.

## 5 Analysis

The Icelandic nation has a very special relationship with the concept of European defence. First, it has a history of a reluctant attitude towards the EU, and secondly, it has resisted from establishing armed forces ever since its birth as a modern independent state in 1944 (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 328). This has resulted in Iceland-CSDP relations generally being a rather sensitive subject, although not consistently openly controversial (Bailes and Rafnsson 2012, p. 109).

The end of the Cold War turned out to have strong consequences for Iceland and its security. During the late 1990s and early 2000s the US steadily reduced its troop numbers at its Keflavík military base, leading to questions on the US' commitment to the security of Iceland. The mood in Iceland turned out to evolve similarly to that in Norway after the end of the Cold War – a feeling of a possibility of imminent marginalization (Rieker 2006b, p. 308). When looking at the case of Norway, Archer (2004) argues that marginalization draws on a number of fears. First, Norway did not benefit from the end of the Cold War like, say Denmark or the states in Central Europe. Second, the urgency of the Cold War threat declined, with the US and other allied forces lessening their involvement in the defence of Norway. Third, there was a concern that Norway would disappear off the conceptual map of those making new security arrangements in Europe. “It is a relief not to be talked about as much as Serbia, Cyprus or Georgia, but there is a certain feeling of rejection on being ignored altogether” (Archer 2004, p. 139). A similar argumentation can be applied to the case of Iceland, where the country had grown accustomed to having an US army to secure its national territory. During the 1990s, however, it became clear the US wanted to reduce its military presence on the island, if not leave altogether. Halldór Ásgrímsson, the Icelandic foreign minister (1995-2004), worked under the conditions of a looming US departure from Iceland, so a fear of marginalization can explain Iceland increasingly looking towards Europe at a time when Europe was designing its new security environment. By looking to contribute to CSDP operations, the government sought not to get isolated, even though the EU members would be more self-sufficient in security matters, as Iceland's policy had always been to maintain a balance in its relations with the US on the one hand and Europe on the other (Baldvinsson 2008, p. 143). Furthermore, during the mid-1990s, the Icelandic government had made a conscious decision to increase its participation in the international community and contributions to international organizations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2000a). Þórhallsson (2007) argues that this policy shift can be explained by four different factors: (i) Iceland's interests had changed

and also the way Iceland defined their interests; (ii) increased resources, primarily entailing that Iceland had bolstered its foreign service; (iii) Icelandic politicians had changed their attitude towards international relations; and (iv) Iceland was subject to increased international pressure and impact of international organizations on national issues.

When the EU member states were initially preparing to give the Union a capacity for military action under its own command, Icelandic officials cautioned about the risk of replicating NATO and undermining the trans-Atlantic bond (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2000b, Bailes and Rafnsson 2012, p. 109). Iceland, alongside Turkey, was especially vocal during the formulation stages of the CSDP, and expressed its concerns as it became clear that the EU did not intend to offer the non-EU members of NATO similar access to meetings and opportunities for co-decision that they were granted in the WEU – the IGO whose tasks had been transferred to the CSDP when launched. Bailes and Þórhallsson (2006) trace how the Icelandic delegation – both within NATO and the WEU – called for better treatment during this formulation stage of the CSDP. Iceland had been a low-key but non-problematic participant in the WEU up until the point when EU members opted to absorb the operational aspect of European defence into the framework of the EU. Therefore, the end of the WEU had direct effect on Iceland’s security and defence interests. “In a break with tradition, the Icelanders were on several occasions among the toughest ‘hold-outs’ in the final process of reaching agreement on communiqués that contained allusions to future EU-NATO relations” (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 332). They argue that the reasons for Icelandic politicians’ and officials’ verbal concerns – given the absence of material implications for their national security arrangements – were fear of losing their seat at a ‘security table’ and that an EU-led defence policy would challenge and segregate NATO, leading to the damaging of joint European and US interests and even weakening the trans-Atlantic solidarity, the very basis of Iceland’s own security and safety (ibid, p. 332).

The Icelandic government had also more general reasons, although not openly expressed, for focusing on what was problematic, rather than beneficial with the EU’s new initiative (Bailes and Rafnsson 2012, p. 109). First, the CSDP was designed to restrict the EU’s military role to launch peace operations out of its own area, rather than acting jointly in Europe’s own defence. Over the years, Icelandic political leaders have generally seen security and defence in national and territorial terms. “Their mental map of what has to be defended doesn’t go much beyond their own territorial waters. It is logical that such states will only want to ‘integrate’ in the defence/security field if what they gain in (concrete) national protection seems to outweigh that they lose in national independence” (Bailes 2009, p. 138). Through the years, the Icelandic political elite have considered the US as the only credible protector. Therefore the government could not expect any added value for themselves from the new EU initiative. This view was also

apparent in the Prime Minister's Office 2006 report on European affairs, where it is concluded that at the time of writing, the EU did not provide the necessary structural characteristics necessary in order to be a potential future defence partner for Iceland, in the case of the US terminating the 1951 Defence Agreement (Prime Minister's Office 2006, pp. 12-13). "Today's EU cannot give the direct territorial defence assurances that would fit Nordic, including Icelandic, national needs. It can give security coverage/support in many areas of internal security, but only at a price of standardization and intrusion upon sovereignty which is much greater than anything NATO ever imposed, and which may still seem too high for many Nordic citizens given the rather low level of threats they perceive in their own area from terrorism, organized crime and other internal violence" (Bailes 2009, p. 138). However, unlike Iceland, Norway – another third state participant in CSDP operations – has chosen to contribute greatly and integrate ever more into the EU's security structure. Interestingly, in the case of Norway, their influence in CSDP processes has decreased in parallel with the acceleration of the integration process in this particular policy area (Rieker 2006a, p. 282). The second aspect that Iceland considered problematic with the CSDP was that its objectives and ethos were first and foremost framed by the UK and France – two interventionist and ex-imperial powers. These nations' willingness to deploy troops worldwide, and their evident interventionist defence structures and policies, greatly contrasted Iceland's distinct attachment "to its non-military status and the promotion of peace, and its tendency to identify with small state 'underdogs' in world affairs" (Bailes and Rafnsson 2012, p. 110).

In 2000, foreign minister Ásgrímsson stated that it was especially important that both the EU and NATO would be willing to be flexible in order for the two to reach an agreement on cooperation. Likewise, it was of utmost importance to secure the European non-EU members a right to participate in the consultation stages of EU-led operations and the operations themselves (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2000c). The minister even made it clear that Iceland had made and had to make "every effort not to have to choose between Europe and North America in its cooperation on security and defence" (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 332). "The Icelandic government has always supported any initiative of European states in the field of security and defence. We have always been understanding of the EU members' will to shape a common security and defence policy. Of course, it is not our task to tell EU member states what to do concerning their own matters. However, it is the obligation of the Icelandic government to engage itself when decisions taken within the EU concern Icelandic interests" (Ásgrímsson 2000a, see also Ásgrímsson 2000b<sup>6</sup>). The minister stressed that consultation was of great importance, especially in times of crisis. NATO's experience showed that even

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<sup>6</sup> All translations from speeches or documents in Icelandic are made by the thesis' author.

though military contributions are a fundamental prerequisite for action, comprehensive political unity is of no less importance. Such unity cannot be achieved hastily in times of crisis, but is obtained by regular consultations and cooperation in times of peace (Ásgrímsson 2000a).

Analyzing the minister's speech (Ásgrímsson 2000a) – held at conference in Reykjavík on Western cooperation and the development of European security and defence matters around the time of the Nice European Council meeting in late 2000 – one cannot but get the feeling the minister is concerned with that there is a train leaving so to speak, and Iceland might miss it and get left behind on the platform. Ásgrímsson stresses that whatever would be decided on concerning the participation of the six non-EU NATO members in future CSDP operations, it is clear that four of them (Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland and Turkey) had already applied for EU membership. “When the time comes that two or three states in the six state group the consultation arrangements are directed towards, stand outside the EU, I fear that the importance of the consultations will inevitably dwindle, similar to what happened to the political dialogue of the EEA when three EFTA/EEA states<sup>7</sup> joined the EU. This is a reality we have to face up to” (Ásgrímsson 2000a). He concludes by saying, that it is a certainty that the security and defence developments in Europe can have great effect on Iceland's position in the international community. With increasing European cooperation, NATO will change. However, it does not mean that it will weaken. “With increased European cooperation in the field of security and defence, we must partake as much as possible, if we want to maintain the status we have had in the cooperation of Western democratic states over the last half a century” (ibid).

Once Turkey's chief concerns about future EU-NATO relations had been addressed in a political deal of late 2002, and NATO as a whole was ready to support the first CSDP operations, Iceland had no basis for further obstruction (Bailes and Rafnsson 2012, p. 110). Indeed, Iceland chose to contribute police and other civilian personnel to two of the first CSDP operations in the Balkans – in FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Still, even prior to the Turkish impasse, Iceland had followed the example of Norway and a number of other non-EU members in using direct contributions to CSDP activities as a way of ‘buying’ influence and status in the process (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 334). The stress and challenges caused for Iceland at the broader political and institutional level by the emergence of the CSDP seemed to have been largely laid to rest by 2005. The successful set up of two successive EU operations with NATO planning support showed that the institutions could work together in a complementary fashion (ibid, p. 341).

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<sup>7</sup> The three EFTA states Ásgrímsson is referring to are Austria, Finland and Sweden. They joined the EU in 1995.

Generally speaking, Iceland considers the EU's peacekeeping and crisis management efforts to be consistent with its own policy and the ICRU's activities (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2013d and 2014c, p. 2). "Iceland shares the objectives of the EU in crisis management and conflict prevention. It has aligned itself with major EU policy declarations. The main objectives of the Icelandic policy include promotion of peace and stability, human rights and gender equality, post conflict assistance and support to civil society" (European Commission 2011, p. 5). However, former foreign ministers have clearly stated that it is in Iceland's best interest that NATO continues to be the foundation on which the continent's security and defence cooperation is grounded upon (Sverrisdóttir 2006). Ásgrímsson shared a similar view back in 2002, saying that a fundamental aspect of all policy-making concerning Icelandic participation in crisis management operations is that all commitments made to the EU in this field, shall always take the country's commitments to NATO into account, and that NATO should take precedence whenever participation in operations is being considered (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2002a, p. 34; Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2002b, p. 9 and Ingimundarson 2007, p. 159). This has also been reflected in the fact that until 2006, an overwhelming majority, around 70%, of all Icelandic peacekeeping deployments were sent abroad on NATO operations (Baldvinsson 2008, p. 173). However, foreign minister Valgerður Sverrisdóttir (2006-2007) stated that Iceland must also look at how it can strengthen its cooperation with the EU in the field of security and defence. "Iceland's geographic position in Europe, must make the EU a logical partner in the fight against many of the threats which we can be faced with in the future – like terrorism and transnational, organized crime such as drug and human trafficking" (Sverrisdóttir 2006).

Looking specifically at Bailes' typology we see how some of the different motivations apply to the case of Iceland. Of course, the trouble with all these different motivations and justifications for participating in operations overseas – which can be quite convincing – is that they make more sense to politicians, strategists and other parts of the expert security establishment. Meanwhile, with ever more of these operations overseas, these same motivations and justifications may seem confusing and perhaps contradictory to the general public (Bailes 2008, p. 85).

## 5.1 Direct National Motivations

Iceland has, much like other small states, sought to exercise what control it could over the broader set of opportunities offered to it by the international environment. During the last years, there has been a propensity to engage with partners and to exercise influence with them. While the fear of marginalization, as described



earlier, might be categorized under the heading of ‘direct national motivations’ in Bailes’ typology, there are also other motivations for Iceland’s CSDP participation that fall under the same heading.

#### *Post-colonial connections*

Iceland does not have a history of colonialism, except itself being a former colony of Denmark and Norway. Therefore, this motivation, as described by Bailes, does not apply to the case of Iceland.

#### *Good training and testing national forces*

Compared to other states, Icelandic politicians, civil servants and other domestic actors have generally had very limited knowledge in the field of defence and security. Of course, this is primarily due to the fact that Iceland has no army and its defence policy has entirely relied on policy-making in Washington and NATO (Þórhallsson 2013, p. 11). In the late 1990s, when Iceland had decided to increase its participation in international peacekeeping operations, a group working on behalf of the foreign minister concluded that Iceland and neighboring states would both benefit from cooperating together concerning preparation and training response to imminent threats. “Looking to the future, Iceland’s participation in international cooperation concerning immigration and the fight against terrorism, the activities of international police and peacekeeping operations, and territorial and civil protection training, must be seen as an investment in Iceland’s own security” (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 1999). According to official documents, Iceland contributes in a tangible way by participating in international crisis management operations and the training and experience the relevant experts gather involves significant long-term benefits for the state and nation (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 1999 and 2014b). Iceland’s participation in CSDP operations was therefore clearly motivated in part by seeking to train nationals, creating a better national knowledge base, acquiring particular inside knowledge or improving interoperability. This view – that participating generated good training and experience for Icelandic nationals – was reiterated in the 2009 Risk Assessment Report (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2009a, p. 43).

#### *‘Quid quo pro’*

The motivation or reasoning whereby a contribution has been provided in order to please another actor – so as to increase the likelihood of that actor being more supportive and intervene, should it fall into difficulties – has been quite blatant in the choices of a number of small-to-medium sized states in Europe in the last few decades (Bailes 2008, p. 79). These countries cannot realistically expect to defend their territories with their own armed forces. Bailes says it becomes more compelling in proportion as it becomes harder to have faith in the automatic execution of NATO collective defence commitments, which in turn, requires ‘extra protection money’ to be paid for favored treatment (ibid, p. 79).

This motivation is very applicable to Iceland, which especially established the ICRU and increased its crisis management participation to appease international organizations and support the government's constant aim of maintaining the US military presence on the island (Þórhallsson 2013, p. 11). A similar logic can be applied to Iceland and the CSDP, where a new European security community was being designed and Iceland wanted to maintain its good relations with the Union (Þórhallsson 2009).

#### *Territorial security concerns*

Looking through the available documents, no direct mention is given to territorial security concerns as a motivation for Icelandic participation in CSDP operations.

#### *Groups setting up peacekeeping units as a way to regional reconciliation*

As elaborated on in Bailes' typology, this motivation for participation in overseas operations is not applicable to Iceland.

## 5.2 Strategic Motivations

States which are preoccupied with their own influence within international institutions and organizations may sometimes seek to leverage their own operational contributions for a general improvement of status. This approach may even take the form of countries seeking recognition or trade-offs in other policy fields where it is generally not as easy for them to gain credit. Perhaps this is especially prevalent in institutions such as the EU. Medium-size or bigger powers, like Turkey and Russia, may hope that they can influence the EU's policies through their presence in CSDP operations (Tardy 2014, p. 3). Furthermore, Bailes argues that non-member states working as partners of either the EU or NATO respectively, such as Iceland and Norway in the first case or Finland or Sweden in the second, are clearly motivated to join in institutional operations as a 'back door' route to influence (Bailes 2008, p. 82). Although not a full member, Iceland is very dependent on negotiations and the development of EU policy as an EEA member. Much like Norway – which has been described to have sought to 'trade troops for increased influence' in the EU (Græger 2002) – Iceland can attempt to affect the EU policy process in areas that fall under the EEA Agreement. Lack of resources in order to effectively lobby in the early stages of the policy process is of course a big hindrance, but participation in CSDP operations might give Iceland more leverage within the EU as a whole (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2009a, p. 43).

Another apparent strategic motivation for Iceland's increased international peacekeeping efforts, including CSDP operations, is the country's decision to run

for a seat in the UN Security Council for the period 2009-2010 (Sigurðsson 2007). In an attempt of increasing its activities in the international arena, Iceland announced its decision to campaign in 1998. Although the decision did not have public support in Iceland, it was a milestone in the development of a small state, seeking to increase its international presence. Critics of the campaign pointed at Iceland's inexperience in security and defence issues, the campaign's great financial cost, and that if elected, Iceland would simply become a 'puppet' of the US in the Security Council (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2009b). At the time of the foreign minister's announcement of Iceland running, there were still ten years until the vote in the UN General Assembly on which countries would get the seats<sup>8</sup>. The UN Security Council has a big role concerning international peacekeeping and crisis management efforts, so in order to gain credibility and try to secure as many votes as possible, Iceland was in dire need to step up its own international crisis management efforts. Prime minister Geir Haarde stated in 2007 that by campaigning, Iceland's new vision and increased participation in the international community was emphasized and that "Iceland was not an incapable micro state, but a powerful small state" (Haarde 2007).

#### *Actions in response to 'new threats'*

Bailes underlines that a response to 'new threats', such as the proliferation of WMDs, has not yet sparked a European-led collective military action in recent years and is unlikely to do so (Bailes 2008, p. 80). Rather, Europeans have been faced with a choice of whether or not to join US-led interventions of such a type. Motives for going along with military action on these grounds can take various forms, not just agreeing with the need for action. One motive has been to get 'on the inside' of US' plans – to get a seat at the table – in order to have some prospects of guiding or moderating the US, and even working towards a trade-off in some other foreign policy areas. Concerning smaller states, the hope of gaining a pay-off in terms of direct national favor from the strategic leader can come into play (ibid, p. 80). Over the years, this approach has been prevalent in Icelandic foreign policy, where the objective was to maintain US military presence on the island, but in the case of Iceland and its participation in CSDP operations, this motivation does not seem to be especially applicable.

#### *Motives linked to new institutional frameworks for military intervention*

Here, the most obvious possible reasoning is linked to the utility of the given institution taking on the task in question. NATO might sometimes be viewed as the sole good option for intervention due to its "professional military capabilities

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<sup>8</sup> Iceland ended up running against Austria and Turkey for the two seats in the Security Council allotted to the WEOG Group (Western European and Others Group). On election day, in October 2008, both Austria and Turkey got the two thirds of the votes required to secure a seat in the first round of voting. Therefore, Iceland did not get a seat in the Security Council (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2009b).

and ‘toughness’”, or the EU because of its capacity to coordinate multi-functional inputs, such as police and humanitarian contingents, aid and other economic resources (Bailes 2008, p. 81). Furthermore, the EU might sometimes be in a unique position to carry on a process following a crisis in the Balkans or the Western part of the former Soviet Union, perhaps unlike the UN or the OSCE. The EU can encourage and support the general transformation of affected states to the point of opening a window of them being considered for joining the Union – a carrot that has been craved by many states since the end of the Cold War. However, looking at the case of Iceland and the CSDP, this motivation has very limited, if any, explanatory power.

#### *Strategic economic motives*

Bailes highlights that this sort of motivation has surely been overrated in popular conspiracy theories which claim that every Western intervention in the Middle East, and even in countries like Sudan, has been grounded on oil. Even though considerations to do with oil have been prominent in US thinking throughout modern times, both on general strategy as well as specific actions, Bailes considers it unlikely that any group of Europeans would contemplate ‘saving oil’ as a sufficient reason on its own, to push for military action overseas (Bailes 2008, p. 82). Nevertheless, looking at Iceland’s participation in CSDP operations, this motivation does not seem to have been a reason for CSDP participation.

### 5.3 Altruistic Motivations

As elaborated on in chapter two, this kind of motive is considered the opposite of something characterized by pure self-interest. It is detached from traditional rational and realist notions and involves political decision-makers and states initiating actions that will not benefit themselves personally nor the nation at large. Of course, it is difficult to assess to what extent proclaimed altruistic motivations have driven decision-makers to participate in operations overseas. Do altruistic motivations have real explanatory power or are they perhaps really a Trojan horse of sorts – a well sounding cover for the states’ real motivations? In any case, the Icelandic government has stressed that the country’s participation in international crisis management efforts is important and is looked upon as a big part in Iceland’s contribution to international cooperation. “The Crisis Response Unit is to a very large extent, part of Iceland’s development assistance. It is viewed as Iceland’s duty as a prosperous nation to participate and contribute to peacebuilding efforts in the world” (Iceland Crisis Response Unit 2007, p. 4). Prime minister Haarde (2006-2009), argued that while Iceland had previously been criticized for non-participation in international crisis management efforts, both internal and external conditions had changed after the Cold War –

sociological and economical. “Now, Iceland has moral and political obligations to publically voice the values the nation had agreed upon” (Haarde 2007).

In the case of Iceland, the ICRU is part of the country’s development assistance. Iceland states it is committed to the UN target where developed countries have pledged to allocate 0,7% of their gross national income (GNI) to official development assistance (ODA). Countries’ proximity to the target and their commitment to achieve it is widely regarded by the international community as being an indicator of the generosity of individual countries’ aid policy. However, Iceland has been far away from reaching this target, with the percentage rocking between 0,09 in 1999, 0,37 in 2008, and down to 0,22 in 2012 (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2006 and 2013e). If one were to use the UN 0,7% target as an indicator of altruism, Iceland would not score high.

#### *Advance of globalization and a more multipolar world*

The world has transformed greatly over the last quarter of a century. It is a world considered more multipolar, compared to the bipolar world of the Cold War era. People’s perception of armed conflict has changed and our understanding of armed conflict dynamics is more complex. It accentuates the way that fighting in faraway regions can drive transnational dangers such as terrorism and proliferation, but even a wide spread of drugs, human trafficking and disease. “If looked at from this perspective, altruistic interventions can probably be seen as less purely altruistic, but more rewarding in most cases today. Here, states may act on the basis of self-interest, at least in indirect terms” (Bailes 2008, p. 83).

In 2004, Ásgrímsson stated very clearly that Icelandic contributions to international crisis management efforts had an altruistic dimension. “In recent years, the concept of security has become more extensive in scope than before and it is clear that there is causality between matters of security, human rights, development, resources and environment to name a few. Tangible contributions or deployments by Iceland in the field of conflict and crisis, can lead to local or regional security, respect for human rights, economic and social development and a sustainable utilization of natural resources. [...] There are selfless motives behind the Icelandic government’s focus on the aforementioned matters” (Ásgrímsson 2004).

#### *Popular concern and demand for humanitarian action*

Demands that prosperous states can and should aid in especially difficult regions are frequently heard. Sometimes ‘the public’ reasons that certain states should act as they have ‘clean hands’ and can rather be accepted in the conflict region, where neighbors and larger powers with suspect motives would not be well received. Another scenario would be a reasoning which applies in states that have increased their exposure in more self-interested interventions and want to show its citizens and the world that they are still very much capable and concerned with doing

something good for mankind (Bailes 2008, p. 83). This idea can be transferred to the institutional level when European states support the odd humanitarian action by NATO – such as following the earthquake in the Kashmir region in 2005 – or when EU member states readily agreed to add disarmament and humanitarian tasks to the list of generic CSDP operations (Bailes 2008, p. 83).

Iceland is fully aware of its limitations as a small state with no armed forces. However, looking at the public debate on Iceland's role in the field of crisis management is interesting. Baldvinsson (2008) has researched the public discourse in Iceland on the country's relationship with international crisis management efforts and concludes that Icelandic participation has generally been viewed positively in Icelandic public debate, and up until 2002 there was a parliamentary consensus on bolstering the ICRU and Icelandic peacekeeping participation (Baldvinsson 2008, p. 157). In 2002, some concerns were raised in parliament, but they were directed more at plans of Iceland increasing its activity in and subsequently secure its status within NATO, not the policy itself and functioning of the ICRU (ibid).

An incident in Kabul in 2004 turned out to be a watershed moment in the public debate concerning Iceland and its crisis management activities. Pictures of Icelandic peacekeepers bearing arms at the Kabul Airport made the news in Iceland and stirred up heated debates in parliament and the media. It was also reported that the peacekeepers were granted military status and wore military uniforms (Bailes and Þórhallsson 2006, p. 337). Members of parliament criticized that the ICRU was beginning to move into the sphere of military activities and thereby going against the Icelanders' fundamental non-military policy. Adding to that, some Icelandic peacekeepers got injured in a bomb attack in downtown Kabul, which greatly intensified the debate. Here, the Icelanders' national identity came into play and was much debated. In 2006, Iceland got a new foreign minister – Valgerður Sverrisdóttir – which put great emphasis on 'softening' the image of the ICRU. She implemented a different approach to Icelandic peacekeeping – choosing operations free of military elements and seeking to increase female participation in the ICRU (Sverrisdóttir 2007, Vísir 2006). Following this policy shift and the plummeting of funds for the ICRU after the banking collapse, public debate on Iceland and crisis management participation has settled and not been dominant if speeches in parliament and Internet media coverage on the issue are used as indicators (Alþingi.is and Icelandic Internet media).

#### *Demonstration of vigilance and strength*

This particular motivation for initiating and participating in operations overseas revolves around sending a message to other actors. Bailes (2008) states that it might be argued that particular genuinely humanitarian tasks, such as the provision of aid after devastating hurricanes in the Caribbean, might simultaneously send messages to Cuba or "other possible regional mischief-

makers” that the West could and might also intervene in a more strategically protective mode. Another example could be the West’s involvement in UN actions in Lebanon, which were possibly meant to send concealed signals to Syria or Iran (Bailes 2008, p. 83-84). This motivation, as elaborated in Bailes’ typology, does not apply to the case of Iceland. With no army and limited resources, Iceland is in no position to demonstrate vigilance or strength by participating in crisis management operations.

## 6 Conclusions and Discussion

The motivations for states participating in international crisis management operations vary between individual states and can partly depend on their individual strengths and geopolitical and security agenda. Contributions of non-EU members to CSDP operations is an interesting development in international security politics in itself, but the fact that a nation without armed forces has chosen to do the same is especially intriguing. This thesis aimed to map Iceland's participation in CSDP operations and trace and seek explanations why this island nation, which has opted not to establish armed forces, would even choose to contribute to these operations. This has been done by answering the research question: *Why would Iceland – a non-EU member state with no armed forces – choose to participate in CSDP operations?*

Iceland has taken part in international crisis management operations under the auspices of international organizations such as NATO, the UN, and the EU. International crisis management has become a very multidimensional activity, serving a number of different purposes. The motives behind such operations are rarely based on pure humanitarian considerations, but rather safeguarding interests connected to changed attitudes towards Western security. Looking at the case of Iceland, it seems their participation in such operations primarily stem from securing its status or interests within the international organizations or institutions it is a member of or is otherwise very reliant on. Concerning security and defence specifically, Iceland's NATO membership is undoubtedly the most important in this regard. It seems that pure security interests has been the main explanation for which international crisis management operations Iceland has chosen to participate in. In light of this, the launch of the ICRU and international crisis management participation should not primarily be seen as a contribution to international humanitarian efforts, but most importantly as a contribution to Iceland's own security and defence. Moreover, Iceland's contributions can be viewed as an extraterritorial means to compensate for the lack of territorial defence.

Historically, Iceland's security has coincided with the security of Europe and as a NATO member, the country is currently bound by mutual defence commitments with 22 of the EU member states. Ever since the end of World War II and throughout Iceland's history as an independent state, its defence policy has almost entirely relied on policy-making within the US administration and NATO. As a member of NATO, Iceland has always been part of the decision-making of



the security of Europe. This changed following the EU treading steadily into the sphere of foreign and security policy and with the launch of the CSDP. Now, Iceland does not have the same possibilities of getting involved in the dialogue on European security issues and the preparations of Petersberg tasks – the military and security priorities incorporated within the CSDP – as despite the country being a member of NATO, it is not a member of the EU. With the respective launches of the CFSP and the CSDP, and also the first looming and then actual departure of the US military base in Keflavík, Iceland was forced to put its foreign and security policy in a much wider Nordic and European context than before. Uncertainty and a feeling of possible marginalization seem to have had an effect in Iceland deciding to participate in two early CSDP operations – in FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina – which remain the only CSDP operations the country has contributed to. Also, there may have been a possibility of the reason being to make an early and symbolic stand – showing that the CSDP was something Iceland supported and intended to partake in. Overall, however, the Icelandic political elite does not seem to have had high ambitions in trying to try to affect the shaping of Europe’s new security environment, unlike Norway for example. So far, Iceland has not seen any reason to get under the wing of the EU concerning security and defence, as they have generally considered the 1951 Defence Agreement and NATO membership (and the Keflavík US military base during its existence) pillars enough to protect the country’s security. Being a part of the CFSP and the CSDP has not been considered as a feasible option, as the political elite have generally not deemed EU membership to give any added value, beyond past and current security arrangements.

Even though security interests seem to have been the main driver behind Iceland’s increased participation in international crisis management efforts – including CSDP operations – other national motivations also seem to have laid behind it. With no armed forces, Iceland looks at this sort of international cooperation as a means to train Icelandic nationals, create a knowledge base and acquire inside knowledge – something which will be useful in the future and regarded as an investment in Iceland’s own security. Although not openly stated, territorial security concerns may very well also been a motivation for Iceland’s participation. Despite being a faraway island state in the middle of the North Atlantic, Iceland is not immune to possible consequences of crisis situations in and around the borders of Europe. In 2001, Iceland became a part of the Schengen area – the area now comprising of 26 European states that have abolished passport or any other type of border control in-between their common border. Icelandic support of CSDP operations in the proximity of the Schengen border might partly be explained by fears of migrations flows, disruption of trade supplies and other potential repercussions of crisis situations close to the Schengen border. Looking at the CSDP operations Iceland has chosen to participate in – or intended to participate in – we see that they are clustered in the Balkans, meaning the very vicinity of the Schengen area, not, say, in Africa or even further afield.

Strategic motivations also seem to have contributed to Iceland's increased activity in international peacekeeping efforts. Contributions may have been provided in order to please the Union – an actor Iceland is economically very dependent on and may have been intended to increase the country's status and influence therein. Moreover, Iceland's decision to run for a seat in the UN Security Council cannot be overlooked, where the country was during a ten year period trying to secure as many votes as possible. In order to gain credibility and status and as international crisis management efforts are such an integral part of the Security Council daily work, Iceland's was forced to step up its own game so to speak. Looking at the heading of altruistic motivations, which are often put forth as a reason for crisis management participation – including in the case of Iceland – the fact remains that, although officially stated, it is difficult to assess to what extent such motivations really lay behind contributions.

This thesis partly aimed at contributing to the research and knowledge of why third states decide to partake in CSDP operations. Even though this type of partnership generally remains limited in scope and has consequently been given little visibility, it is an interesting aspect of the EU's relations with the outside world. As previously mentioned, these contributions can bolster legitimacy and provide responses to shortfalls within the EU structures and activities, but they can also be problematic for a number of different reasons. Still, plenty of states have chosen to contribute, although the motivations naturally vary. While national interests and a means of gaining influence within the Union seem to be the main motivations behind third state participation (Rieker 2008, Tardy 2014, Blockmans 2010 and more), the same seems to apply to the case of Iceland, despite not having any armed forces which are usually regarded as an integral part of national security. Therefore, this thesis supports the view that these motivations primarily lay behind third state participation in CSDP operations. Of course, other motivations also partly explain Iceland's participation – some of which are universal, while others might only be applicable to that certain actor, at a certain time in history.

Over the years, Iceland has put much emphasis on being perceived as a peaceful country and has tried to adjust its international crisis management participation in order not to jeopardize that image. Being a state with no traditional defence forces, Iceland is not likely to contribute with military expertise to CSDP operations. Instead, Iceland's contributions have mostly been channeled through civilian operations, administered by the ICRU, a civilian peacekeeping unit which emphasizes social construction and economic development in its operations. Iceland's participation seems to have been taken on a case-by-case basis. Ideally, a more long-term and more comprehensive strategy might be needed, a strategy that does not radically change every time a new minister enters the ministry, but is based on Iceland contributing with something useful to multilateral crisis management operations. Such an approach might

consolidate and strengthen Iceland's negotiating position within international organizations.

Looking to the future, a group working under the foreign minister handed in their recommendations concerning the development of a national security strategy in March 2014 where it stresses that Iceland should do everything in its power to contribute to the support of economic and social development by taking part in international development cooperation and civilian peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014c, p. 6). Iceland is a small state and there is a constant debate on how much such actors really matter and if they can make a real difference in the global arena. During the last few years, Iceland has had politicians aware of this. In 2007, prime minister Haarde warned that Iceland had to resist displaying "vainglorious arrogance" concerning the country's position in the international community (Prime Minister's Office 2007b). Foreign minister Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir (2007-2009) seconded that and argued that an "appropriate mix of confidence, optimism and pragmatism [would be] most effective" (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2007).

The future of Iceland's contributions to CSDP operations is subject to a number of factors – most of them political and financial. The composition of government and especially who fills the position of foreign minister is most likely to shape future developments. On paper, the policy of Iceland and the EU on crisis management coincide and the two should make ideal partners. In the national 2009 Risk Assessment Report mentioned earlier, the group highlights that the EU has focused on member state cooperation in dealing with threats such as organized crime, epidemics, natural disasters, and terrorism and recommends that Iceland should strengthen its cooperation with the EU in these areas and others such as peacekeeping (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2009b, p. 25). However, national politics come into play and we have a nation divided in its attitude towards the EU and potential Icelandic EU membership. Following the 2013 election, a very Euro-sceptical government came into power, dissolving the EU accession team and suspending negotiations. Moreover, in March 2014, the foreign minister presented the government's new European policy, where no mention is given to CSDP operations or Icelandic contributions to such operations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014d). Another factor that will influence the possibility of Iceland contributing to future CSDP operations is the development of how Iceland will recover from the effects of the 2008 banking collapse, the repercussions of which are still being dealt with. The ICRU has been subject to relatively huge budget cuts since 'the Crash' and not much seems to suggest that anything other than NATO operations will continue to take precedence as the recovery continues and the potential willingness to devote more financial resources to the ICRU and its activities increases. However, as participation in international operations can have adverse effects, Iceland must periodically assess the security implications of political ties with the countries and organizations they work with and regularly

reassess its national security needs in view of the rapid changes in the global security environment.

Although Iceland has participated in two CSDP operations to date, it cannot be ignored that the contributions have been very limited in scope – even for Icelandic standards. Iceland is currently not contributing to any CSDP operation and political and financial provisions make it uncertain when it will next time occur. Iceland's somewhat hesitant approach towards the EU – highlighted by the limited participation in CSDP operations and applying for full EU membership in 2009 and then suspending accession talks in 2013 – illustrates a small state uncertain of its place in the world, still finding its feet following the end of the Cold War and in a world transformed.

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