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FRASER CAMERON

AND

ANTOINETTE PRIMATAROVA

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ENLARGEMENT, CFSP AND THE CONVENTION: THE ROLE OF THE ACCESSION STATES

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FRASER CAMERON AND ANTOINETTE PRIMATAROVA *

Introduction

The crisis in Iraq has cast a long shadow over the European Union's ambitions for a common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and a European security and defence policy (ESDP). At the end of February 2003, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the President of the Convention on the Future of Europe, postponed discussion of the draft articles on reform of the CFSP until May, stating that it would be impossible to have a rational debate during the Iraqi crisis. The crisis demonstrated the widespread disarray among current EU member states and between some member states and accession countries. At the extraordinary European Council on 28 February, President Chirac of France made an open attack on the accession states for "behaving like children" in signing letters. This was a reference to statements and letters that had been issued by the 'Gang of Eight' and by the 'Vilnius Ten'.¹ There was much talk of 'old Europe' versus 'new Europe' and allegations of US 'Trojan horses' in Central Europe. Poland surprised many with its role in Iraq, including its acceptance of a sector command after the war had ended.

The open disarray over Iraq prompted many to write off the CFSP as an impossible dream. If 15 member states could not agree, how could 25 possibly agree? What would be the common interests in a Union stretching from Finland to Cyprus and from Portugal to Estonia? Some analysts proposed that the EU should only concentrate on its immediate neighbourhood and forget about a global role. Others suggested that reinforced cooperation was the only way forward.

The impression that the new member states would be a hindrance to an effective and coherent CFSP and ESDP was raised long before the Iraq crisis. The candidates are united in rejecting this charge. As Mr Nahtigal from Slovenia argued in the Plenary on 11 July 2002: "The problem of the efficiency of the CFSP has nothing to do with the forthcoming enlargement of the EU. As stressed by Jacques Delors, European foreign policy will be no more difficult with 27 members than it is now with the present 15 members – do not look for excuses, it is not the enlargement which will cause obstacles."

* Dr Fraser Cameron is Director of Studies at the European Policy Centre in Brussels. Antoinette Primatarova is Programme Director of the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia. Both authors have considerable experience on the policy and diplomatic fronts.

¹ The Gang of Eight referred to an open letter backing US policy towards Iraq without consulting France, Germany or the Greek Presidency, which was initiated by the Spanish Premier, José Aznar and signed by the UK, Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland on 30 January 2003. On 7 February 2003, shortly after the United Nations Security Council meeting addressed by US Secretary of State Colin Powell, the Vilnius Ten, composed of Slovakia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Slovenia, Albania, Croatia and Macedonia pledged in a joint letter to support the US position on Iraq.

It is true that much of the concern about the CFSP after enlargement relates to efficient decision-making in an enlarged Union in general. There will be a large increase in the number of member states, from 15 to 25, with more to follow. The new member states will bring greater diversity and limited capabilities to the table. Furthermore, nearly all of the newcomers are small or medium-size countries, so enlargement will lead to an EU with a very different balance between big and small member states. In this respect, institutional and decision-making issues in the Convention's deliberations were closely interlinked with CFSP issues.

This paper examines the interests of the accession states in a CFSP and ESDP. It reviews their role in the Convention and considers the prospects for a CFSP and ESDP in an enlarged Union of 25 states. What new priorities and capabilities will the accession countries bring to the table? What kind of role do they want the EU to play on the world stage? Finally, will the procedures for the CFSP and ESDP agreed at the Convention be adequate to match the Union's ambitions?

Accession states and the CFSP

The accession countries have had several years of shadowing the CFSP and until the Iraq crisis, there were no major difficulties. The International Criminal Court (ICC), however, posed a problem as several accession states were subjected to pressure by the US to sign bilateral agreements that exclude US service personnel from ICC jurisdiction. But this problem was partly caused by the lack of a common position within the EU.

During the period of shadowing the CFSP, the accession states normally gave unqualified and disinterested support to the Union. Their priorities were the accession negotiations and the adoption of the *acquis*. Furthermore, what they were invited to do by the Union was hardly onerous: align themselves with EU declarations and *démarches*; join EU collaborative actions and common positions. In practice, the CFSP meant for the candidate countries mainly rhetoric rather than action.

Some candidates had trouble with the bureaucratic changes required. Regarding the positions of 'political director' and 'European correspondent' needed for participation in different CFSP meetings and working groups, many candidate countries were slow to make the necessary changes and appointments in their Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs). In establishing new positions to deal with the CFSP structures, the candidates were experiencing similar problems to the turf battles of previous years in the MFAs of member states.

Accession states and the ESDP

Concerning the candidates' record with regard to the ESDP, the situation was more complex. Three candidates were already members of NATO, while the others had been accepted for membership and were keen not to do anything to jeopardise their position. All shared a concern that the ESDP might undermine NATO, which would become a constant theme of the candidates' representatives in the Convention.

At the Feira European Council in June 2000, the EU agreed details for the candidate countries' participation in the ESDP's political and military bodies (the Political and Security Committee [PSC], the Military Staff and the Military Committee) when they hold sessions in the EU+15 format, which included non-EU NATO members and EU candidate countries. (For those non-EU member states that are part of NATO, the EU+6 format was introduced.) Once per year non-EU members were invited to take part in defence ministerial meetings. After the Athens Summit in April 2003 the format for these ESDP meetings changed to EU+10

acceding countries +5 NATO/prospective NATO members. The non-NATO candidate countries were not totally happy with the parallel existence of an EU+15 and an EU+6 format. The new NATO member states, especially Poland, were not satisfied with the type of relationship they had been offered within the ESDP.

Furthermore, applicant countries were invited to contribute to the achievement of the EU headline goal of creating a Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) by 2003. They attended successive Capabilities Commitment Conferences and relevant meetings of defence ministers. In early 2003, the candidates were all invited to participate in the first two ESDP operations, the EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the peace stabilisation operation 'Concordia' in Macedonia.

While there is a readiness to become involved in the ESDP operations, NATO remains the top priority. It is interesting to note that until quite recently, with the exception of Slovenia and Malta, the military representatives for the candidate countries all come from their NATO missions in Brussels. Civil representatives were, however, established within the missions to the EU from the very beginning. Websites of the candidates' Ministries of Defence are also quite revealing. All of them have NATO on their front page, but apart from Bulgaria, none have a direct link to the EU. Their involvement in the ESDP is to be found on their websites somewhere under 'International cooperation' or 'International organisations', if mentioned at all.

The above bureaucratic structures reflect the fact that, for all the candidates, NATO is the provider of 'hard' security and this is reflected in their various national strategic doctrines. There is also a widespread conviction that the US is an indispensable actor with regard to European security. Potential differences between new and old member states on the respective roles of the EU and NATO were raised in the Dehaene Working Group Report of December 2001: "In certain cases the understanding of the Western interest will differ between the US and the EU and this may put CEECs into an uncomfortable position. Moreover, if America shifts its strategic priorities towards East Asia and the Middle East, the CEECs will of necessity become more reliant on the EU for security making it difficult for them to pick and choose between NATO and the EU."

These differences were to be brutally exposed during the Iraq crisis.

CFSP and the Convention

The working groups and the plenary sessions

The Convention established two working groups on foreign and security policy, under Jean-Luc Dehaene, and defence policy, under Michel Barnier. Both working groups reported in time for the plenary debate on 21 December 2002. The Dehaene report was rather modest in its recommendations, a reflection on the substantial divisions within the working group. Among the conclusions were proposals for:

- a 'double-hatted' EU foreign minister, with enhanced authority and a foot in both the Council and in the Commission;
- more qualified majority voting (QMV) in the CFSP;
- moves to strengthen the EU's voice in international bodies; and
- the establishment of an EU diplomatic service.

The Barnier working group also revealed significant divisions between the members but it came up with rather more ambitious proposals than the Dehaene report. Specifically it proposed:

- the creation of an EU Armaments and Research Agency;
- a solidarity clause to combat terrorism; and
- enhanced cooperation for those wishing to move faster on the armaments front and on defence policy.

Following debates in the plenary sessions, the Praesidium put forward draft articles on external action in May, which mirrored the main conclusions of the Dehaene and Barnier reports.

Convention – Views of member states

The views of existing member states largely reflected traditional positions. The typically neutral and non-aligned countries (Sweden, Finland, Austria and Ireland, as well as Denmark, which also attached itself to this bloc) were very cautious about any mention of a common defence and armaments policy. The UK, Spain and Portugal were willing to move forward, but on a largely intergovernmental basis. France, Germany, Greece and Belgium were prepared to go even further and accept some community measures such as QMV on the CFSP. Prior to the Iraq war, the UK had been considering accepting an extension of QMV, but its opposition stiffened as a result of the war. The UK also opposed the title of ‘minister’ for the new Solana/Patten figure as well as the proposal for an EU diplomatic service.

Convention – Views of accession states

With a few exceptions, the accession countries adopted a low profile in the Convention, especially in the CFSP and ESDP discussions. Among the most active accession state representatives were Danuta Hübner (Poland), Henrik Hololei (Estonia), Adrian Severin (Romania), Alojz Peterle (Slovenia) and Jan Kohout (Czech Republic). With regard to the ‘defence’ working group, only two government representatives (Estonia and Malta) participated in its deliberations, a clear indication of the candidates’ low degree of interest in an ESDP. The accession states were more active at a later stage both in the plenary discussions and in proposing amendments to the draft articles.

During the first plenary debate on 11-12 July 2002, most government and parliament representatives from the accession countries made interventions that focused mainly on relations between the ESDP and NATO. The twin preoccupations were a possible weakening of ties with the US and a premature creation of an ESDP at the expense of NATO. According to Pavol Hamzik, Slovakia’s parliamentary representative (PR), “any possibility of weakening or questioning the transatlantic bond should be rejected”. Roberts Zile, Latvia’s government representative (GR) stated that it was “too early to speak about creating a common defence system”. Edmund Wittbrodt, Poland’s PR considered that “all the reforms should be undertaken whilst respecting and maintaining the role of NATO”. Juraj Migas, Slovakia’s GR, argued that in the eyes of the applicants, “the ESDP should have a definite Euro-Atlantic dimension”.

Similar preoccupations were raised during the plenary debate on 20 December 2002 with many central Europeans warning of rivalry and unnecessary duplication between the EU and NATO. Rytis Martikonis, Lithuania’s GR stated “We are now newcomers to both NATO and the EU, but I think that poses no dilemma for my country. These two processes, both the transatlantic link and European integration, are complementary, and in that context we can

support the solidarity clause that was discussed in the Working Group”. Jan Figel, Slovakia’s PR, took a similar line, “Slovakia understands and supports the strengthening of the security capability of the Union as a process parallel with and complementary to the security and defence dimensions of the North Atlantic Alliance, leading to a balanced partnership in the transatlantic dimension, and to efficiency and credibility on the part of Europe, while avoiding any duplication”. Jan Kohout, Czech Republic’s GR, said “I warn against a sort of treaty overstretch as regards to a collective defence commitment. To promote stability, we have Berlin Plus in place now. We do not need any rival alliance”. Rihards Pīks, Latvia’s PR was worried about a schism between member states that take either soft or hard core positions in defence. “Creation of a defence Euro-zone might differentiate between those EU member states that are part of the defence Union and those that remain outside it. That would not foster cooperation, mutual trust and solidarity among member states, and would lead de facto to the creation of a two-tier membership of the EU.” An exception was Marta Fogler of Poland who argued, “The geopolitical focus of the USA has moved in the direction of Asia. Therefore the EU needs its own defence capabilities”.

The plenary debate of 16 May saw further concern about the possibility of ‘hard core Europe’ and ‘two-tier Europe’ emerging. Sandra Kalniete, Latvia’s GR warned of the dangers of a two-speed Europe. “Self-selection, especially if based on the criteria of military capabilities, would have a discriminating effect. Such a provision would not unite the member states; it would divide them into first and second-class Europeans. This I cannot accept.” According to Dimitrij Rupel, Slovenia GR, “All 25 countries should take part in formulating the ESDP to avoid a policy of exclusion. Slovenia is in favour of proposals directed towards the strengthening of the ESDP within the entire European Union. A strong EU is in Slovenia’s interest. The EU will be strongest if it is united”.

For most candidates, the ‘flexibility arrangements’ were acceptable but under certain conditions. Józef Oleksy, Poland, PR, stated, “a decision to provide an inclusive character of closer cooperation would be welcome. I have serious doubts about the concept of a structured cooperation among some of the member states that fulfil higher criteria for military capabilities”. Danuta Hübner, Poland GR, took a similar line. “It is essential that such a framework remains inclusive, open and transparent, ensuring that all interested member states have the possibility to join. The requirements of participation should therefore be limited to a declaration of willingness to take part in a given range of operations or to achieve capability commitments adjusted to the level of development of the country concerned. I believe it will be in the interest of all of us to ensure that cohesion is retained and that we do not create pools of security in the enlarged European Union.”

Estonia was the only country to propose that enhanced cooperation should be developed outside the framework of the EU institutions. Henrik Hololei argued that “certainly the member states are free to make their security policy choices but closer cooperation in the military field should not take place within the Union but, rather, outside it. Otherwise our half-hearted attempts will make divisions within Europe plain to see. This will, on the contrary, diminish the influence of the Union in the world instead of improving it”.

When it came to amendments to the Praesidium’s proposals on the ESDP, most candidates, with the exception of Latvia, accepted in principle the rationale behind enhanced cooperation and the progressive framing of a common defence policy. There was little enthusiasm for a mutual defence clause, although none of the candidates objected to the proposed solidarity clause on terrorism and civil disasters. Both the Poles and Czechs proposed that the EU should establish appropriate forms of cooperation with the NATO.

Assessment of candidate countries' attitude towards the ESDP

Overall, the candidates took a supportive position on the CFSP and a more cautious position on the ESDP. Their views, therefore, are not too dissimilar from existing member states. They support the establishment of a European Armaments and Strategic Research Agency and most of them support 'flexibility arrangements' even if under certain conditions. Their concerns are related to preserving the transatlantic link, not duplicating structures and capabilities, avoiding rivalry with NATO and being excluded from cooperation. There are some fine differences – some countries seem to be more concerned about a possible 'exclusion' dimension behind the proposed 'flexibility arrangements' (the Baltic countries, Slovenia). The accession states already in NATO seem to be more self-confident and less defensive on the divisive issue of 'flexibility' in security and defence issues.

After enlargement: Diverse interests and experience

Member states

The 15 member states display considerable heterogeneity in foreign and security policy. France and the UK are both nuclear powers with permanent seats in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). They are both former imperial states with a long tradition of power projection and willingness to accept casualties in warfare. In recent times, the UK sent troops to fight in the Falklands, France sent troops to Africa, and both fought side by side in the first Gulf War and in the Balkans. Germany has a strong pacifist tradition as a result of its twentieth century history, but in the 1990s it began to play a more prominent role in international peacekeeping and is now playing a leading role in the Balkans and in Afghanistan.

Other countries like Spain and Italy have substantial numbers of men in arms but little projection capability. The Nordic countries have commendable experience in mainly UN-led peacekeeping operations. All member states are committed to ensuring that the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) is up and running later this year. This would involve 60,000 soldiers being available at one month's notice for peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations (the Petersberg Tasks). But there is considerable divergence in how much each member state spends on defence. The UK and France, for example, spend almost double the amount per capita than Germany on defence.

The member states also bring divergent interests to the table, often reflecting colonial pasts. The UK ensured that Zimbabwe was always on the EU agenda, Portugal kept up pressure for the EU to support East Timor, Finland highlighted 'the Northern Dimension' during its presidency, the Belgians cited central Africa, while the Greek presidency has sought to focus attention on the Balkans. It is a common critique of the six-monthly rotating presidency that these 'national' interests come to dominate the EU agenda and prevent any long-term strategic thinking or direction.

Accession states

Outside the Euro-Atlantic area the candidates have few special interests, which will not change after enlargement. A number of representatives from the accession states, including Danuta Hübner from Poland, called on the Union to agree "a comprehensive security strategy and establish a mechanism for its regular review and revision". On the subject of security and threat perceptions, the accession states are a rather homogeneous group as was evident from the discussions on the ESDP as well as an assessment of statements by their leaders over the

past year. Malta and Cyprus, as non-aligned countries, may have slightly different views but are likely to act within already existing policy stances in the present EU.

Wider Europe

One clear priority will be the enlarged Union's immediate neighbourhood. During the Convention there were several statements by different accession state representatives outlining their role as a bridge between the EU and its new neighbours. In the south, Malta and Cyprus, as Mediterranean countries and participants in the Barcelona process, have already voiced their special interest in the further development of the EU's southern dimension on several occasions.

Concerning the two countries aiming to join the EU in 2007 – Bulgaria and Romania – it is natural to expect them to become more proactive with regard to their neighbours upon membership. The involvement of the four Visegrad countries in the shaping of the proximity policy of the EU may be quite different. The Czech Republic is in the unique situation where, after accession, it will have as neighbours only EU member states. All Visegrad countries will be interested in the 'Wider Europe' with its Eastern dimension, but the strongest interest and the most active policy can be expected from Poland (which earlier this year put forward its ideas on neighbourhood policy in a non-paper). Poland's interest in the eastern dimension of the EU's policy in the future was also emphasised in the Convention by several of its representatives. Poland has also been the most vocal and active of the accession states in other foreign policy areas. Its involvement in Iraq is one example. Its participation as an equal in the Franco-German-Polish 'Weimar Triangle' is another.

For reasons of geographical location, an interest in the eastern dimension of the EU policy has been expressed in the framework of the Convention by representatives from several other accession countries including Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia.

Western Balkans

After enlargement, there will be increased attention given to the Western Balkans. In particular, Bulgaria and Romania are involved in different types of cooperation with these countries and support their EU membership aims. In the very early stages of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (launched in 1999 in the wake of the Kosovo crisis) there were some concerns in Bulgaria and Romania that the Stability Pact might become an instrument for lumping the two countries together with the Western Balkans in terms of EU membership and even worse – developing the Stability Pact as some kind of alternative to EU membership. The differentiation made on the basis of the Stabilisation and Association process (the so-called Zagreb process) that established the rather artificial concept of 'the Western Balkans' has reduced these fears. Yet, Bulgaria and Romania seem to be preoccupied at the present stage with their own membership in the EU. Compared to Poland's proactive approach to the eastern dimension of the EU they keep a rather low profile in expressing views on the further development and timing of the Stabilisation and Association Process. As they move closer to EU membership, Bulgaria and Romania can be expected to advocate both an individual approach to the countries in the region and an overall speeding up of the process of accession. Romania is more proactive with regard to Moldova and recently advocated Moldova's inclusion in the Stabilisation and Association Process (i.e. in the group of 'potential candidates' for EU membership). Two more countries that are expected to show greater involvement in the Western Balkans are Slovenia and Hungary.

Russia/Ukraine

The desire for NATO membership of the accession countries may reflect lingering worries about Russia. But there is also a recognition of the need to deepen and improve relations with both Russia and Ukraine, as well as Belarus and Moldova. It is likely that the accession states will seek to increase funding for their eastern neighbours once they become members themselves.

Turkey

The EU has given Turkey a roadmap for accession. The next step will be the Commission report on Turkey's progress in meeting the Copenhagen criteria in December 2004. Certainly Turkey's reform progress and its attitude towards a Cyprus settlement will be crucial factors in the EU's assessment of Ankara. Regarding the accession countries, Bulgaria has perhaps the closest ties to Turkey and enjoys friendly relations. But there are concerns, not only in Ankara, that Cyprus might use its veto to defer consideration of the Turkish membership application.

The Black Sea

Another region for developing a proximity policy in an enlarged EU exists through the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organisation, which includes Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania. Launched in June 1992 as a regional economic initiative, the BSEC went through several stages and became an international economic organisation on 1 May 1999. It has 11 members (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine). The BSEC was launched almost simultaneously with two other frameworks of regional cooperation – the Baltic Sea Cooperation and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council. Interestingly, the EU showed much more involvement in the two northern cooperation initiatives. The European Commission is a member of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and is regarded as one of the founding partners of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, even if its status is different from that of the member states. Attempts to get the EU involved in the BSEC in the same way have been unsuccessful. The absence of any reference to the BSEC in the Commission's recent Communication on the Wider Europe was noted by Romania and others.

The Middle East and Mediterranean

Following the Iraq war, the EU has pushed to ensure that there is progress in the roadmap for the Middle East. This is a goal shared by the accession states, although some may harbour concern at the possible diversion of resources to the region to support the Barcelona process. Countries from the south also fear that the EU's attention will remain concentrated on the east for the foreseeable future.

The United States

The US has traditionally been a supporter of a more integrated Europe and pressured the EU to speak with one voice. But as the EU has become a more active and vocal global player, the government in Washington has seemed to have doubts about the benefits of a common EU voice, particularly when the voice may be opposing the US! The US Government was shaken by the strength of EU solidarity on issues such as Kyoto, the ICC, the Middle East Peace Process and various arms control treaties. During the Iraq crisis, there was much speculation about the 'divide and rule' tactics of the US. Examples of this included the enormous pressure placed on Bulgaria as a non-permanent member of the UNSC and the infamous 'Vilnius Ten'

letter that was masterminded by Bruce Jackson, a lobbyist for Lockheed Martin (the US-based defence and space systems company). Commentators alleged that this was proof that the accession states were solidly pro-American and were not interested in the political side of the EU. Yet, his analysis may be too facile. Clearly the accession countries have much for which to thank the US, notably for NATO enlargement and providing considerable support after the end of the Cold War. But no country wants to be placed in the dilemma of choosing between the EU or the US. They all seek good relations with the US, while recognising that their destiny is with the EU. For the foreseeable future, however, there will remain serious scepticism about the hard security capabilities of the EU. NATO will remain the preferred body for military action and some accession states may be invited to host US military bases relocating out of Germany.

Global governance (UN, WTO, ICC, Kyoto, etc)

Global governance has not been a major issue for the accession states. They are likely to go along with the EU mainstream in wishing to strengthen the multilateral institutions. At the same time some are liable to bow to US pressure, as witnessed by the bilateral deal on the ICC between the US and Romania. Most accession states are broadly supportive of an increased global role for the EU, which seems to be understood as a more active participation in international organisations rather than extending the geographical scope of the EU's policy. The candidate countries' support for giving the EU a legal personality may also be seen as support for a stronger EU presence in international organisations. Overall, the accession states have been very active in multilateral cooperation at the regional and global levels. Membership in the Council of Europe was the first major step towards integration for all of them. A non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, Chairmanship of the OSCE, etc. have been considered as very prestigious. Once members of the EU, these countries will continue to see their interests best protected through multilateral cooperation.

The developing world

The accession states are unlikely to devote much attention to the problems of the developing world. They will be too busy concentrating on making a success of their EU membership. This task will require a united effort by all parts of the domestic bureaucracies and there is unlikely to be much sympathy for, nor interest in Third World problems, at least in the initial years of membership.

Capabilities

The accession states will bring a limited amount of military and diplomatic resources to the EU table. Apart from Poland and Romania, few have sizeable military establishments and nearly all face problems of restructuring of their armed forces. Many are facing problems in adapting to NATO requirements and hence their capabilities in the medium term are unlikely to improve significantly. Some do, however, have niche capabilities, such as chemical weapons. Their diplomatic services vary considerably in size and experience. Some have tiny services that did not even exist 15 years ago. Others have larger networks with experienced diplomats and a range of diplomatic missions. In short, the variations mirror the position among the present member states. But the prospect of enlargement opens up a number of important issues including the establishment of an EU diplomatic service that is complementary to national services. It will also increase pressure to reduce the number of European seats around the table at international meetings. On the military side, financial pressures will lead to more sharing and some states may be faced with difficult questions, such as the continuing purpose of their airforce.

Assessment

The short overview above makes it clear that due to their geographical location, the future member states may have some different priorities – the Baltic States and the Visegrad countries may be more interested in the eastern dimension than the southern one. Malta and Cyprus, however, will definitely give preference to the southern dimension. For Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, the Western Balkans will be at the top of their priorities and for Romania, Moldova will be a very special case. Because of these different priorities, the new member states might question the effectiveness of approving one overall ‘Wider Europe’ strategy and not a more differentiated approach towards the different countries and regions.

There will also be different degrees of participation on the world stage. The difference between Poland’s assertiveness on the one hand, and the lower profile of other accession states on the other hand, has a two-fold explanation. First of all, Poland’s assertiveness only increased in the final stages of the accession negotiations, whereas Bulgaria and Romania are at less advanced stages in the accession process. Secondly the EU treats these countries differently. The EU and individual member states have treated Poland as a potential ‘big player’ in an enlarged EU from the initial stages of the accession process.

Institutional aspects

With regard to institutional and decision-making issues in the CFSP and the ESDP, the accession countries do not have the potential nor the power to become an engine for further integration, but they cannot be considered as a brake. What has been reported and perceived as a ‘battle’ between small and large member states on the institutional issues is perhaps better described in terms of a ‘battle’ between supporters of the community method and supporters of the intergovernmental method. Most of the large member states would prefer to see a CFSP develop on an intergovernmental basis and under the leadership of some kind of ‘directorate’. Virtually all new member states – which are rather small and medium size countries with the exception of Poland – support a more coherent CFSP but lean toward the community method. Several accession state representatives even went as far as to draw parallels between the introduction of the single currency and the development of a CFSP. Others speculated about an eventual ‘single’ foreign policy. This explains the high level of support for a double-hatted Foreign Minister, on the one hand, and the strong opposition to a President of the European Council, on the other hand (Poland again being the exception).

The candidate countries’ representative on the Praesidium of the Convention, Mr Peterle from Slovenia, used a good metaphor for the still-unresolved responsibilities of the envisaged double-hatted Foreign Minister: “The question of two hats is not which head will wear them but what they contain. There need to be some rabbits in those hats.” Given the weakening of the draft texts on both the CFSP and the ESDP, especially with regard to QMV, it looks as though there will be fewer ‘rabbits’ than most new member states would have wished.

The opposition to the idea of a President of the Council is also to be seen in connection with the support for the Foreign Minister. A strong President would mean a stronger intergovernmental approach and less power for the Foreign Minister. The changes to the draft treaty text, curtailing the foreign policy part of the job of the ‘Chairman’ of the European Council and leaving open the possibility of a double-hatted President of the EU at some point in the future might be interpreted as an important (if modest) success of the more community-minded representatives on the Convention, including the accession states.

Perhaps the key issue for the accession states in the debate on a CFSP and on institutional reform has been ‘equality of states’. Despite its flirtation with larger powers, Poland’s

Minister of Foreign Affairs Cimoszewicz could have spoken for all accession states when he commented on 12 March 2003 that “the CFSP is built on dialogue of partner states. No state can impose its opinion on other states. Some recent statements could be interpreted as expressions of an underlying belief that ‘all states are equal, but some are more equal than others’. This is certainly far from helpful.”

All accession states had experience of COMECON and the Warsaw Pact where some states were certainly more equal than others. Because of this negative experience, most accession states prefer the community rather than the intergovernmental method, especially when the intergovernmental method goes hand in hand with a ‘directorate’, be it a formal or an informal one. For the accession states, Brussels is a symbol of the community method. Thus, the idea suggested by Peter Hain, the UK Cabinet Minister, for the UK to build an alliance with the accession states against an EU superstate (*The Times*, 7 March 2003) is built on a fallacy. Hain’s argument that “until 14 years ago most of those countries were under Moscow. They don’t have any wish to be under Brussels” simply does not hold true. The new member states do not want superpowers to decide their destiny and it is not the community-oriented Brussels that they perceive as a superpower.

Conclusion

The candidate countries adopted a low profile in the Convention. They were quietly supportive of most proposals on the CFSP front but concerned about the implications of some proposals for the ESDP. These concerns focused on possible duplication with NATO and ensuring that the US was not marginalised by any changes. The Iraq war exposed fault lines within the present member states and caused a rift between ‘old Europe’ and ‘new Europe’. It is unlikely that the diplomatic tensions surrounding the letters signed certain countries during the Iraq crisis will be repeated. Lessons have been learned.

Both the CFSP and the ESDP have always registered high in terms of public opinion approval. The latest research shows that public opinion in the candidate countries is equally supportive. The challenge for the enlarged Union will be to agree on strategic priorities for the Union and to ensure that they make the best use of the new procedures in the constitutional treaty, even though they are adequate in many respects. As opposed to viewing the candidates as a burden, it is possible to argue that the new member states might be part of the solution rather than part of the problems around a CFSP, and a benefit rather than a liability. Time will tell.

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- Complete independence to set its own priorities and freedom from any outside influence.
- Authoritative research by an international staff with a demonstrated capability to analyse policy questions and anticipate trends well before they become topics of general public discussion.
- Formation of seven different research networks, comprising some 140 research institutes from throughout Europe and beyond, to complement and consolidate our research expertise and to greatly extend our reach in a wide range of areas from agricultural and security policy to climate change, JHA and economic analysis.
- An extensive network of external collaborators, including some 35 senior associates with extensive working experience in EU affairs.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

CEPS is a place where creative and authoritative specialists reflect and comment on the problems and opportunities facing Europe today. This is evidenced by the depth and originality of its publications and the talent and prescience of its expanding research staff. The CEPS research programme is organised under two major headings:

Economic Policy

Macroeconomic Policy
European Network of Economic Policy
Research Institutes (ENEPRI)
Financial Markets, Company Law & Taxation
European Credit Research Institute (ECRI)
Trade Developments & Policy
Energy, Environment & Climate Change
Agricultural Policy

Politics, Institutions and Security

The Future of Europe
Justice and Home Affairs
The Wider Europe
South East Europe
Caucasus & Black Sea
EU-Russian/Ukraine Relations
Mediterranean & Middle East
CEPS-IISS European Security Forum

In addition to these two sets of research programmes, the Centre organises a variety of activities within the CEPS Policy Forum. These include CEPS task forces, lunchtime membership meetings, network meetings abroad, board-level briefings for CEPS corporate members, conferences, training seminars, major annual events (e.g. the CEPS International Advisory Council) and internet and media relations.