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EUMA

Awakening of the Sleeping Lion

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EUMA

European Union Miami Analysis (**EUMA**) is a by-weekly service of analytical essays on current, trend setting issues and developing news about the European Union.

These short papers (between 2,000 and 2,500 words in length) will be produced by the Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence (a partnership of the University of Miami and Florida International University) as an outreach service for the academic, business and diplomatic communities.

Among the topics to be included in the series, the following are suggested:

- ➢ The collapse of the Constitution and its rescue
- ➢ Turkey: prospects of membership
- ➢ Immigration crisis and cultural challenges
- ➢ Security threats and responses
- ➢ The EU and Latin America
- ➢ The EU as a model and reference in the world
- ➢ The Common Agricultural Policy and other public subsidies
- ➢ The euro and the dollar
- ➢ EU image in the United States

These topics form part of the pressing agenda of the EU and represent the multifaceted and complex nature of the European integration process. These short papers also seek to highlight the internal and external dynamics which influence the workings of the EU and its relationship with the rest the world.

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Awakening of the Sleeping Lion

Introduction

The constitution of the European Union, a common security policy and further enlargement: Three big challenges - if not the largest - to the modern European Union. Challenges that need to be solved and understood, this paper will argue, if the EU is to grow into its full potential as a global political and economical power.

When the founding fathers of the European Union envisioned a strong, peaceful and united Europe, Europe was recovering and healing its wounds from the Second World War. Today, the need for a strong, peaceful and united Europe is just as - if not more - important. The rising threat of terror and cultural challenges highlight the need for a strong and united Europe. Today further complexities are added to the EU grandfathers' vision. The European Union has been expanding geographically as well as culturally during the last two years and with further enlargements *in spe*, which will bring even more nationalities and cultures together to constitute the European Union of the future.

For

"*World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it. The contribution which an organized and living Europe can bring to civilization is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations*" (Schuman Declaration, 9th of May 1950).

How true a prediction, but how difficult is has proven itself to be! Several questions arise when one discusses the future of a strong, peaceful and united Europe. What constitutes Europe? Is it geographical or cultural boundaries? And how can peace be secured when the EU is finding it difficult to demonstrate unification regarding important security decisions?

This paper will seek to go further into these and other questions in a search for a higher understanding of the link between the future of the European Union and a constitution in coma, a security policy with multiple and contradicting faces as well as an enlargement with undefined boundaries and uncertain consequences.

Copenhagen Criteria - soon to be deemed ancient?

In 2004 yet ten more nations joined the European Union after fulfilling the Copenhagen Criteria of 1992: A strong economy, a democratic political system, commitment to human rights as well as a free and competitive market economy amongst others (Dinan 2005). With the 2004 enlargement, warning signs indicated that these criteria were somewhat overdue. Conflicts between the "old" European Unions member states and the new member states surfaced. Many citizens of the European Union held a widespread fear of what was to come. In a Europe where fiscal pressure and rising unemployment rates tend to fill the front pages of many European newspapers, the citizens were uncertain about what this enlargement would bring. One of the fears was that cheap labour from the east would overflow across the borders and take away jobs from already suffering workers (Thiel:2005; Barrysch:2006). So far, these fears have proven unnecessary.

With Turkey courting the European Union the question of whether the Copenhagen criteria are still valid seems inevitable. For example, the Copenhagen Criteria mention nothing about culture and identity. Turkey still has serious trouble regarding living up to human rights standards, respect for democracy and the rule of law as well as guarding the rights of minorities; they are nonetheless still a candidate to become a member of the European Union[1]. One can also reverse this problematic, and ask the question

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/turkey/political_profile_en.htm, 01.12.06

with a positive attitude: should the Copenhagen criteria be deemed outdated, because they exclude potential members, thereby limiting the potential of the European Union?

Turkey –to be or not to be European:

The question of Turkish membership seems to become increasingly difficult as time goes by and fear grows amongst the citizens of the European Union of what a future with not only Turkey, but also other potential EU members such as Croatia and Macedonia, will bring. Turkey's credibility as a European Member *in spe* has recently been challenged not only internally, but also externally. Turkey is not willing to give up their possession of Cyprus, already an EU member. At the same time Cyprus is threatening to use its veto right against further negotiations with Turkey – which in turn is currently refusing to give Cyprus cargo ships access to the harbour of Ankara[2], adding fuel to the fire.

The recent crisis with Turkey, it will be argued, connects well with the need of bringing the European Constitution out of its coma and thereby securing the future of the European Union. When trying to unravel the connection between the Constitution, future enlargements and the question of a common security policy, the question of Turkey's membership is once again brought into the limelight. When speaking about the three topics, the issue of cultural diversity seems inevitable. Turkey can be characterised as the gateway to the Muslim world: 99.8 percent of the Turkish population believes in Islam[3]. This creates one important difference between them and the rest of the members of the European Union: Religion. The question one needs to ask here is whether this gateway should be kept open or closed?

The arguments for keeping the door open are important. The fact that Turkey is a country founded on Islamic values may very well be a force for the European Union in its relationship with the Middle East and strengthening the European Union's position in this region. An even further reaching aspect is the possibility of fulfilling the Schuman declaration and creating a strong and peaceful Europe internally. The public opinion of today might very well be alienating the Islamic society, creating an even larger gap between it and the so called western world, hence endangering peace in Europe.

The reasons to keep this door shut seem obvious. First of all, there is the question of whether Turkey, as a member nation, will accept a constitution where decision about engagement in war and peacekeeping activities, for the future might very well be taken at a supranational level. When discussing this, one must consider that in the world of today, the axiom seems to be that Islam equals terrorism. This argument would first of all be resented by the population of Turkey who secondly might also be suspected to resist further acts of war in Islamic countries. Would a Turkish membership of the European Union then result in an abolition of the ever important deepening of a common security policy?

When the grandfathers of the European Union wished for a strong and peaceful Europe, they did not ponder on the question: what constitutes Europe? The European Union was founded by countries which resembled each other. Today the European Union is expanding beyond the borders that the grandfathers of the European Union first envisioned.

It has already been shown that this question is of immense importance to a further integration and enlargement of the European Union. Where should the geographical borders of the European Union be drawn? Equally importantly is where the cultural borders should be drawn?

A problem or a challenge – creating common ground:

The idea of a common Constitution of the European Union is to create a strong foundation on which the future of the European Union will be safeguarded both internally and externally[4]. Two areas are of particular importance here. The question of a common labour policy and a common security policy. As

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[2] Berlingske Tidende, 1.December 2006

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/turkey/political_profile_en.htm, 21.11.06

[4] http://europa.eu/constitution/download/summ_da.pdf, 01.12.06

indicated earlier, it is a popular view that the question of employment and labour is high on the EU's citizens' agenda - and with good reason. A European Employment Strategy was already initiated in the late 1990s, realising that higher employments rates brings prosperity. However, member countries have been somewhat wary of placing issues such as tax incentives, wage policies and job security on the formal agenda of European Integration (Dinan: 2005).It seems evident that a strong European Union must take advantage of all its employable citizens, a huge labour pool with skills varying from the IT–engineer to the factory-line worker, and the possibility of moving production to where it is both cheapest and most rational. A closer integration of wage policies and work environment will inevitably also lead to the positive effect of teaching and increasing the cultural homogenization and understanding. A good example of this is a country such as Slovenia. Being a new member of the European Union, they have contributed to a successful further enlargement of the European Union which providing education and guidance to potential new member states as well as creating an utterly important understanding for European culture.

Another area of great importance is the question of the former second pillar of the European Union, which incorporates the security policy, both internally and externally (Bomberg:2003). With the ratification of the Constitution of the European Union, the traditional division into three pillars would be abandoned. When discussing the issue of a common security policy in the European Union, one issue in particular seems of immense importance: the European Unions membership with the United Nations. In a time where terror and violence in the Middle East is an everyday event, the European Union needs to act as a uniting force, not dividing. Until now, the European Union is not represented through one common organ in the United Nations, but both individually as member states, through the presidency as well as through other of its institutional organs[5]. The implications of this institutional setting were demonstrated when the USA's proposal to engage in armed conflict in Iraq was met with ambivalence by the member states of the European Union. The member states of the European Union must take into greater consideration, that for the future US interests might not coincide with interest of the European Union and a strong common security policy will provide the EU with the possibility to assert their own wishes. Unfortunately, the new Constitution of the European Union, were it ratified, does not as such imply a stronger corporation among the member states regarding security policy. Nonetheless it implies a brighter future for further cooperation.

Chanona argued that the security issue may be the driving force in reaching ratification and acceptance of a constitution (Chanona, 2004). Unfortunately this prediction has so far not been fulfilled. At a recent meeting between the European Unions Ministers of Justice, an agreement could not be reached regarding a proposal to shift power for policing and counterterrorism from national governments to the European Union as a whole[6]. The resistance to let go of further sovereignty was too great.

The discussion presented above indicates that the European Union currently is finding itself in a form of deadlock. Fear for what the consequences of further enlargement will be (especially regarding Turkey) and resistance to further integration regarding security policy underpins the need of immediately reviving the Constitution of the European Union and working towards a stable foundation for the future of the Union. If the European Union is to become a dominating power, it will require courage and strength from the individual European Union member states to create the power balance between Europe and the USA – a power balance which all citizens of Europe silently wish for. But does the determination to make it happen exist?

Europe- where do we go now?

At this point, it can be argued that a debate of whether a common constitution for the European Union is needed, is obsolete. If the European Union is to become nothing but a toothless tiger in the future, a

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[5] www.europa-eu-un.org, 30.11.06
[6] The International Herald Tribune, September 23, 2006.

greater deepening of the Union, stronger corporation and more homogenisation regarding important issues such as security policy is required.

With Turkey's recent disagreements again towards Cyprus further wrinkles are developing on the foreheads of the leaders of the European Union's member states. As has been demonstrated, the question of Turkey potentially has an influence on the ratification of the constitution, implicitly widening and deepening the common European Union security policy. How can the European Union grant membership to a country which does not recognize its future fellow–member states' sovereignty? And on the other hand, can the peace and stability of the European Union be safeguarded for the future without the acceptance of Turkey as a member? To add to this already critical situation, the Minister of Interior Affairs in France, Friday the 1st of December declared, that Turkey has no role in the European Union[7], thereby creating even greater uncertainty about Turkeys future in the European Union. At the same time, the politicians of Brussels are busy, assuring that the race is not yet over, realizing the connection Turkey holds to the Middle East.

It is crucial to note, that the potential membership of Turkey in the European Union is not the only challenge with respect to the enlargement of the European Union. As earlier noted, great fear exists amongst the various member states regarding how current fiscal pressure and rising unemployment rates can be consistent with the acceptance of new member states who have cheap labour forces, weaker economies and thereby the need for financial as well as moral support. As mentioned, the question is whether maybe the European Union needs to find inspiration from one of its new members, Slovenia and stand up to the challenge to create a stronger European Union.

This paper as shed light on how three of the major challenges for the future of the European Union are inner twined and hence possess great influence on each other. The European Union is additionally facing the ever lurking threat of terror as well as a changing enemy picture, yet its common security policy leaves a lot to be wished for. The constitution of the European Union may very well be one solution to this issue, not only in restructuring institutional settings, but just as much in its symbolic meaning – "European Union": uniting, strengthening and safeguarding the future of it members. One can argue that the mental change following the ratification of the constitution would contribute to a greater sense of European identity, will fertilize the ground for accepting the implications of a stronger cohesion and be a supranational organ- regarding a common security policy.

Additionally, a further enlargement of the European Union holds several important prospects. Not only is Turkey a key player, but the potentials in member states - both politically and economically - will contribute to a stronger European Union in the long run.

The future of the European Union is to be found in a successful enlargement, a ratification of the constitution and implicit a stronger common security policy. In this scenario, the lion will be awaked and fulfil – perhaps even exceed – the expectations and hopes of its grandfathers: strong, unifying and the guardian of peace in Europe.

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[7] Jyllansposten, 01.12.06

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