

Two Contrary Conclusions

CHAPTER 10

Why ESDP is Misguided and Dangerous for the Alliance

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Despite the impact of September 11, the EU has, since that date, continued doggedly in its attempts to equip itself with a defense policy. Whatever the outcome of these efforts, the progress made recently toward that end has been impressive. No longer can critics (the current author included) simply dismiss as mere rhetoric the stated ambitions of Europeans to do more in the military sphere. Space constraints preclude a description of the process of negotiation and bargaining that led from a northern French coastal resort to a southern one, and which has been examined in some detail elsewhere.¹ Between the Anglo-French summit at Saint-Malo in December 1998 and the European Council meeting at Nice in December 2000, a series of practical steps were taken to equip the EU with the structures and military capacities to implement a defense policy of its own. The organization now incorporates structures specifically designed to take decisions relating to defense. Uniformed officers now stroll through the corridors of the Council building, and provide military advice to decision makers occupied with the EU's defense dimension. In addition, the member states have committed themselves to creating, by 2003, a European intervention force of at least 60,000 troops.

Yet all is not as rosy as the above may suggest. This chapter questions some of the prevalent claims and assumptions about the EU's security

and defense policy, arguing that the implications of ESDP are far from benign. It highlights in particular the many ways in which ESDP threatens to weaken rather than strengthen Europe's ability to confront threats to its security. More specifically, at least four potential problems can be identified as inherent in the ESDP undertaking: the risk it poses to transatlantic relations; the possibility that the EU will not manage to act effectively in the defense sphere and, even if it does, that its new competence will slow institutional reactions to security crises; the fear that ESDP represents a dangerous politically inspired initiative that might serve to divert attention from the central question of military resources; and, finally, the real danger that the development of ESDP represents something of a threat to the development of an effective, functioning partnership between NATO and the EU.

Financial Considerations

The first criticism that can be leveled at the ESDP concerns money and, more particularly, the inability, or, rather unwillingness, of the member states adequately to fund their European defense ambitions. In November 2000, the so-called capabilities conference produced a "Headline Goal," which committed EU leaders to creating an intervention force of 60,000 troops deployable within a month for up to a year. The creation of this rapid reaction force in fact remains the major military capability of the EU.

On one reading, such an ambition is hardly excessive, in that the numbers involved are not dissimilar to those announced by President Chirac for France alone.² Yet arming and equipping such a force would not be cheap. The harsh reality is that European defense budgets have been in decline for some time, and there seems little prospect of significant short-term increases. A truly "autonomous" ESDP—that is, one that is not reliant on American military hardware—would necessitate the West Europeans equipping themselves not only with the requisite forces, but also with the means to transport them and provide them with accurate intelligence. A RAND study carried out in 1993 estimated that a force of 50,000 would cost between 18 and 49 billion dollars to equip over twenty-five years, with an additional bill of 9–25 billion dollars for the creation of a satellite intelligence capability.³

ESDP has been portrayed by its supporters as a way of increasing the military preparedness of West European states. There are some for whom this involves more effective use of existing resources.⁴ For most proponents of ESDP, however, its real appeal lies in its alleged potential

for legitimizing higher defense spending. Their argument is simple: ESDP will finally put to rest the long-running debate about burden sharing within NATO because it will impel the Europeans to contribute more to transatlantic security by legitimizing, under the cloak of European integration, higher levels of defense spending in Europe.⁵

Such arguments proved effective in leading to perhaps one of the most striking aspects of ESDP to date—the apparent conversion of traditionally conservative defense ministries, wedded for over fifty years to the principle of the primacy of NATO, into EU enthusiasts. However, there are several reasons to be skeptical about the claim that ESDP will prove as effective in convincing the general public of the need for higher defense budgets. First, with fears of recession growing, with serious fiscal problems affecting both the provision of public services and the payment of pension debts in Europe, and with defense simply not being a high political priority given the absence of any clear threat to West European territories, it is hard to see, in political terms, how such increases can be achieved. More specifically, the validity of the argument that the need for an EU defense capability will help to legitimize increased defense expenditure is highly contingent on national circumstance. While such reasoning may work in more pro-EU states such as Italy, the notion that the EU will make defense more sellable than NATO already does in Britain is, at best, open to doubt. Moreover, given both the rising signs of French Euro-skepticism and the increasing sensitivity of the question of contributions to the EU budget in Berlin and elsewhere, there seems little reason to suppose that national politicians will be anxious to ask electorates to pay more in the way of taxes to support the Union's defense policy ambitions.

Transatlantic Relations

There has always been anxiety in Washington when the Europeans show a desire to increase their own autonomy, or institutional capacities, in the defense sphere. Some of this is unavoidable. There are those, both within and outside the U.S. administration, who, almost instinctively, shy away from the notion of Europe as an equal partner of (and therefore, as they see it, a threat to) the United States. They will never be reconciled to the idea that a strong Europe would be a better ally of the United States than a weak one. If Europeans aspire, as they should, to become stronger, they can do little to win the approval of such people.

The real problems for transatlantic relations⁶ that may result from the ESDP lie elsewhere. First, since the terrorist attacks of

September 11, and dating from dissatisfaction within the Pentagon about the constraints imposed by NATO upon American military strategy in the Balkans, Washington has been reassessing its attitude toward NATO. A fundamental question is whether ESDP will stymie or reinforce such trends. On the one hand, attempts to create alternative structures to perform—apparently—very similar tasks, might encourage opponents of NATO in Washington to feel that, if even the Europeans do not value that institution, it really has no purpose. On the other, in the (unlikely) event that ESDP serves as a means of increasing European contribution to the collective Western defense effort, this might have the consequence of reassuring those in Washington who see the transatlantic relationship as a form of European exploitation of American military spending.

Macedonia will represent an interesting test case as to how the Americans will react to the practical—as opposed to notional—idea of ESDP. The Balkans is increasingly seen as a sideshow by a Bush administration preoccupied, not to say obsessed, by the “war on (Islamic) terrorism.” Should the EU manage to implement its objective of taking over the leading role within Macedonia from the United States, it will become much clearer as to whether ESDP is merely serving to hasten American disengagement or, by illustrating greater European commitment to contributing directly to Western security, simply facilitating a more equitable division of responsibilities within the Western Alliance that, in turn, will serve to strengthen American commitment to it.

Here the financial doubts about ESDP come together with concerns about its implications for transatlantic relations. Unlike previous instances when Europeans have revitalized their own collaborative security efforts—such as the non-event that was the supposed relaunch of the WEU in 1984—the development of the ESDP has been taken seriously in Washington. Having raised expectations so high with their ambitious rhetoric, and at a time when the Americans are, more than ever, looking for military support from their partners and allies, European leaders risk spawning tremendous dissatisfaction across the Atlantic should they fail to deliver, strengthening the hand of those who see the Europeans as selfish, self-interested free riders on American military might. Ironically, therefore, the real danger of ESDP is that it threatens to antagonize and disillusion even those American officials who are generally supportive of European efforts to develop into an effective partner of America, and who have attempted to convince skeptical colleagues that this time Europe really means business.

Defense Decision-Making and the EU

Quite apart from whether the EU will manage to fund ESDP, or whether its defense policies will improve or further strain relations with the United States, is the fundamental issue as to whether the Union will manage to take defense decisions effectively. There are at least three good reasons to suspect that it will prove unable to do so.

The Member States

Process

The member states dominate the decision-making structures created for the ESDP. In contrast to the first pillar of the EU, the European Commission, the European Court of Justice, and the European Parliament enjoy no formal prerogatives over defense. Not only do member states predominate, but decision making between them is based on a system of unanimity, ensuring that each of the fifteen enjoys a veto. Clearly, this is hardly a recipe for decision-making efficiency. Procedural problems, moreover, are compounded by significant and cross-cutting differences of opinion between the member states over matters of substantive importance.

Substantive Issues

France and Britain, the two states who have been at the heart of the drive to create the ESDP, appear to have significantly different ideas on the crucial question of the appropriate relationship between NATO and the EU. Some of these concern only the longer term—the French are keen to see Europe develop one day into a global player that can rival the United States. However, even as far as the short term is concerned, French officials are prone to stress the notion of European autonomy more than their British counterparts, and to argue in favor of the EU being able to carry out missions independently of NATO. London, in contrast, emphasizes the need for the EU to work with NATO in the security sphere. The French went to great lengths to stress the separation between the two institutions during their presidency at the end of last year, insisting that meetings between the EU and NATO be carried out on a “fifteen plus nine” basis, rather than at twenty-three in order to stress the institutional separation between the two (see later). Such divergences of opinion are not of course limited to France and Britain but, rather, permeate the EU, with the various member states allying—implicitly or explicitly—with either camp. Moreover, the fact that divergences still exist over the single most important institutional question in

the area of European defense hardly inspires confidence about the ability of the member states to arrive at consensual opinions concerning the most appropriate form for the EU–NATO relationship.

Defense Policy

A further cleavage dividing the member states stems from the fact that they have very different ideas about what defense policy is actually for. The fifteen have historically adopted very different attitudes toward the concept of defense, ranging from neutrality (Sweden fought its last war in 1813) to an acceptance of military engagement, often far from home, as an integral part of a nation's "mission." Differences of emphasis characterize discussions over, for instance, whether a putative ESDP should be a tool to stabilize Europe's periphery or, rather, something used globally as a means of increasing Europe's political weight. Similarly, there seems to be no consensus over whether priority should be placed on the "soft" or "hard" end of the Petersberg spectrum. Thus, on the one hand, Sweden has insisted on greater priority being given to including a significant police element in any EU reaction force, while Finland will not participate in peace enforcement missions. On the other, Britain and France have focused on the "harder," more military end of the Petersberg spectrum. Such differences will almost certainly complicate future bargaining, not least because the rotation of the presidency of the Council of Ministers every six months allows different states to set the agenda of the institution as they see fit (see later).

The lack of consensus over core issues related to ESDP, along with the unanimity requirement in the Council, do not bode well for the ability of the EU to take defense decisions effectively. More worrying still, the EU, when discussing defense policy, lacks either of the following core elements of any effective decision-making system.

Leadership

Hegemonic Leadership

While one should not exaggerate the influence of the United States, the fact remains that it is, within NATO, the first among equals. This enables it to push decisions through in the face of reluctance, or even opposition from member states which all, on paper at least, enjoy a right of veto. Debates about enlargement or the strategy to be used in the Kosovo conflict are cases in point.

Having a clear leader is clearly one obvious way to overcome potential problems associated with a decision-making system characterized by

reliance upon unanimity. Unlike NATO, the EU contains no single leader. Moreover, the problem of achieving an appropriate balance between the relative weight in decision-making terms between the large and small member states has become particularly acute in recent times. The area of defense policy is one of the most sensitive in this regard, not least because officials from the three largest EU member states—Britain, Germany and France—have on occasion implied that there is a need for them to enjoy special decision-making privileges in the defense sphere given their overriding military superiority over their smaller partners.

The arguments put forward by the larger EU member states for some kind of reweighting of formal influence in their favor are intuitively reasonable: how can Luxembourg, for instance, be allowed to veto decisions about military operations in which it may not even participate? However, unlike NATO, the EU is a law-based system founded upon the principle of equality between its members. The Commission, absent from ESDP, has traditionally been seen as defender of the rights of the small member states who, consequently, feel all the more exposed in this sector because of its absence. And insofar as voting rules do not accurately reflect size, they have traditionally erred on the size of giving undue weight to the smaller states. The smalls are wedded to the notion of formal equality in voting situations based on unanimity. It is hard to see a way in which they can be persuaded to go along with what would, in effect, represent the creation of some kind of formal or informal *directoire* within the Union to manage defense policy. Unlike within NATO, the logic of hegemony is simply not acceptable to them in the context of the EU.

All this raises a stark question: if formal equality is demanded by the smaller member states, while rejected as impractical and unacceptable by the larger ones, and if unanimity is required for any decision to alter current arrangements, is a workable compromise possible? If not, we face the real possibility of deadlock in the Council—particularly as the EU member states remain profoundly divided over the ultimate goals and purpose of the ESDP.

Institutional Leadership

Within pillar one of the EU, the European Commission plays a crucial role not only in its exclusive spheres of competence (such as competition policy), but also via its ability to foster agreement and compromise between the member states, or, in other words, to act as an honest broker and agenda setter. The Commission, however, enjoys no such role in matters pertaining to the ESDP. All ESDP related negotiations

take place between the member states, with the Commission confined to observer status.

In contrast, NATO possesses, in the form of its civilian and military staff, and the office of the secretary-general, important organizational resources able to provide neutral expertise, promote consensus between allies and steer discussions of potentially divisive subjects toward successful conclusions. Their role is in some ways similar to that of the European Commission in traditional areas of EC competence; indeed in some respects it even surpasses that of the Commission, in that the secretary-general is responsible for chairing NATO meetings—a task performed in the EU by the presidency.

Insofar as leadership exists over the overall direction of the ESDP, it is exercised by the member state holding the presidency of the Council. This, however, causes three problems—of weight, consistency and expertise. By weight is meant the ability of particular states to assume the mantle of leader of the external policies of the EU. Officials in Brussels acknowledge that it was hardly a source of profound international influence that the EU was led by Belgium at the time of the attacks on the United States.

In terms of consistency, the fact that the presidency rotates every six months is a cause of profound instability. It is no surprise that, in its dealings with the external world, the EU flits effortlessly from pursuing a northern dimension (Finnish presidency) to agonizing about a Mediterranean strategy (several French presidencies). In defense policy per se, similar inconsistencies are obvious, with the Swedes prioritizing conflict prevention, while the French were more interested in their own hobbyhorse of ensuring a strict separation between NATO and the EU (see later). There is a real possibility that the consistency question will be addressed during the forthcoming IGC. The large member states in particular have expressed dissatisfaction with the six-month rotating mandate. British officials propose an elected head of European Council to provide real strategic direction.

No such solutions are forthcoming however for the final problem—that of expertise. Problems here take two forms. First, some member states have a tendency to rely almost exclusively on national administrative resources when running the presidency. The case of Britain is the most marked in this respect. Commenting on one British presidency, Ludlow remarks:

A self-sufficient [United Kingdom] bureaucracy prepared their ministers as meticulously as ever in an entirely British environment, and on the basis of exclusively British advice about what would or would not work.

As a result, the tendency to parochialism and inflexibility to which many ministers were already too prone was actually exacerbated by the efficiency of the British civil service. As one well-placed player put it. . . . we all sing out of tune from time to time. The trouble with the British is that when they sing out of tune, they do so with such conviction and authority that the dissonance reverberates around the Community.

London, therefore, eschewed drawing upon the resources of the Council secretariat, therefore potentially undermining coherence and consistency in EU action. The flip side of this is that smaller member states find that they lack the resources effectively to run the presidency. France and Britain submitted papers to the Finnish presidency which it submitted in its own name, because the Finns lacked the necessary expertise. Within NATO, by contrast, papers for discussion in NATO meetings are drafted by the international secretariat.

Cultures of Decision Making

Formal decision-making structures aside, there is a third reason to believe that the EU will struggle to take rapid decisions. NATO members have traditionally shared a common belief in the enduring utility of the organization and all are agreed that it provides the only effective tool for carrying out territorial defense functions. This is crucial in that it impels member states to seek consensus in order to preserve an organization whose value none of them questions. The EU, in contrast, does not possess the “glue” that, in NATO, is provided by common recognition of the residual importance of the territorial defense function enshrined in Article V. Indeed, European opinions are divided as to exactly how worthwhile an undertaking the ESDP really is (the traditionally Atlanticist Dutch, to take but one example, have gone along with it only reluctantly). In NATO, there is a sense that, when difficult issues are on the table, compromises must be made as the continued efficiency of the institution—and particularly the continued engagement of the Americans—takes precedence over virtually all other considerations. The fate of the ESDP is simply not considered as fundamentally important, and hence member states will prove more reluctant to compromise.

The Problems of Institutional Complexity

Moreover, even should the EU prove more effective than the above suggests, the very existence of a further institutional layer could serve to slow responses to security crises. The fact that both NATO and the EU

may need to consider the nature and appropriate response to security challenges is hardly a move toward more efficient decision-making. And it raises the question, as to whether the EU and NATO decisions-making systems can be effectively and neatly meshed. This problem is made all the more acute by the fact that the two institutions have different memberships. The inclusion of neutral states in the EU will certainly have some influence over its ability to take defense-related decisions.

Less esoterically, the development of ESDP may well either divert attention from, or fail to address, the question of the military capabilities of the West. European construction has involved more than its fair share of semantic, quasi-theological disputes on matters of post structure and substance. The danger is that discussions about security will fall prey to similar tendencies. And this has already occurred. During the latter part of 2000, capabilities took a back seat in discussions of Western security. Debates have focused on the institutional structures that are most appropriate for guaranteeing that security. At one stage, during the French presidency of the EU at the end of last year, the situation became almost farcical, with bitter disputes separating the allies on questions as crucial to our security as whether the EU and NATO could meet as 23 states, or should, rather, meet as 15 plus 19 and, in the event of this being decided, where the NATO and EU chairmen should sit in relation to each other. This represents a serious distraction from the crucial issue of how to improve the capacities of NATO and the EU to deal with military crises.

It should, however, come as no surprise. For some people at least, ESDP is not primarily about enhancing the defensive military capabilities of Western Europe but, rather, about building a European political union. Indeed, the commander-in-chief of Europe's putative rapid intervention force commented that ESDP is as much a part of creating a European political identity as EMU or the EU flag. More recently, the heated political debates over possible EU intervention in Macedonia have illustrated the curious, and debilitating inversion of priorities that leads at least some European leaders to focus their attention on how best to ensure that ESDP at least looks successful, rather than the optimal way of ensuring security.

Given these extraneous political agendas, it is easy to understand why the rather mundane issue of military capabilities may be forgotten.

Relations with NATO

This brings us to perhaps the most important and simultaneously confusing questions of all: what is the ESDP meant to be, and what will

be its relationship with NATO? There are two aspects to this issue: structures and tasks.

As far as the former is concerned, the institutional relationship between NATO and the EU is clearly of utmost importance given that both aspire to play a role in defense policy. A series of working groups was created to discuss specific aspects of the NATO–EU relationship and discussions within these has been ongoing. A close relationship is increasingly being created between the two institutions—not least because of close and amicable working relationship between George Robertson and Javier Solana. Some tricky institutional problems have also been resolved—thus during the Swedish presidency, Sweden was represented on the North Atlantic Council by Belgium.

However, major stumbling blocks remain because of a lack of clarity concerning the division of labor between the two institutions. For those interested in seeing ESDP as a way of enhancing the overall defensive capabilities of the West, it is not an undertaking that should lead to the Europeans duplicating military competence that NATO (or the Americans) already possess. This seems to be very much the British view, but there are those—including the French—who see ESDP as a way of giving Europe a political and military clout independent of NATO.

Broadly speaking, three kinds of military mission are foreseen by European policy makers. First, normal NATO missions; second, so-called Berlin plus missions, or those undertaken by Europeans in the way foreseen by the Berlin summit, using NATO assets and command structures; finally, European-only missions, separate from NATO and not drawing on any NATO assets. The fundamental uncertainty enshrouding ESDP concerns what kinds of tasks fit into each of the above categories. For those who view ESDP as a way of allowing Europeans to act independently of NATO, the third category will include missions that are now handled solely by NATO and, if some French rhetoric is to be believed, far more ambitious undertakings than the minor peacekeeping and humanitarian missions that most member states see as appropriate tasks for the EU. Interviews in the French defense ministry, for instance, revealed a strong belief that the EU should not be content to deal solely with low intensity conflict, while leaving “sexier,” high-tech tasks to NATO.⁷

Yet the more that the EU, pushed by proponents of European “autonomy,” goes down the road toward creating its own planning capabilities, thereby circumventing the need for reliance on NATO, the more the idea of the European pillar of NATO is being sacrificed, and the more immediate the danger of duplication. As the ESDP process takes on a

momentum of its own, states like Britain, which had promoted it as something to reinforce rather than compete with NATO, seem increasingly to be led down a path that they did not and do not wish to tread. The situation in Macedonia is indicative of this. British officials are more than ever convinced that the EU simply lacks the wherewithal to intervene even in this modest conflict. The logical solution would be to allow NATO to stay and indeed London has increasingly sought to delay a decision about EU involvement in the country. But the foreign office has insisted that, if the EU were to take over responsibility in Macedonia, it is imperative, for political reasons, for the United Kingdom to participate even if it has reservations about the security of its forces. Not only is this a strange way to plan military intervention, but it also, in the event that something goes wrong, is not a method calculated to endear ESDP to European publics.⁸

An EU that competes with NATO is not merely harmful in terms of the duplication and unnecessary competition it implies. It also risks undermining what could have been a highly effective institutional partnership and division of responsibilities between the two institutions. Whatever its shortcoming as a defense institution, the EU is actually quite well adapted to carrying out “soft” security tasks such as crisis prevention and management. It possesses both economic and diplomatic resources and expertise, and has a proven track record of undertaking tasks such as post-crisis rebuilding and policing. NATO has no expertise in such matters (despite the obvious attraction of such a role for the United States, keen to see NATO, and hence their own influence, extend into areas where, among other things, lucrative rebuilding and reconstruction contracts may be on offer). Moreover, one can well imagine areas—such as the former Soviet Union—where an EU role would be politically more palatable than NATO involvement.

In contrast, NATO, despite its obvious flaws, is a relatively effective military organization. It is hard to envisage a purely European force managing the military dimension of the Kosovo affair as effectively as did NATO, not only because the enormous majority of the hardware was American (as were the enabling assets underlying the tangible military effort), but because NATO has systems and procedures in place to deal effectively with crisis situations. A clear division of responsibilities between “hard” and “soft” security between the EU and NATO, therefore, seems an eminently sensible one. It was seen in action in December 2000 when George Robertson wrote to Javier Solana requesting that the EU take action to deal with border skirmishes on the Serbian–Kosovan border with which KFOR was simply not equipped to cope.

The problem now is that, as the EU comes to focus more and more of its attention on developing a military role, not only might the relationship between the two institutions possibly deteriorate, but the EU will fail to devote sufficient time and resources to developing those aspects of its security policy where it enjoys real competence and a real comparative advantage.

Conclusion

Ill-judged and insensitive leadership wielded on one side of the Atlantic has therefore spawned an ill-thought out, precipitative initiative on the other. Indeed, the speed at which ESDP has been developed is no coincidence. The more ambitious European states are coming to realize that, once EU enlargement takes place, the development of ESDP will be made infinitely more difficult as a result of the inclusion of states such as Poland that value NATO above all else.

Whatever the explanation for its rapid development, ESDP carries within it the potential to undermine the ability of the West to respond to security threats. It threatens to cause disillusionment with the EU in the United States, to encumber the EU with a defense capability it may never manage to use effectively, to distract attention away from the crucial issue of Western military capabilities, and possibly to foster competition rather than mutually beneficial collaboration between NATO and the EU. It therefore represents a highly risky undertaking.

The EU’s defense policy has placed both the Americans and Europeans in difficult situations. On the one hand, there is a genuine need for Europeans to be able to do more for themselves in the security sphere. Not only will this help reduce the burden on the United States, but there are areas in which Europeans can (because they must) be more effective and act more decisively than the United States—witness the Balkan conflicts. Moreover, a European counterweight to American global predominance is desirable, not only to act as a check on excessive American power and influence but also to reduce the burden that leadership clearly places on American shoulders. Increasing the political and military weight of Europe is, therefore, a commendable objective. On the other hand, no one doubts the crucial role of NATO not only for Article V purposes but also as the obvious institution to carry out more militarily intensive operations. This being the case, effective cooperation between the two sides of the Atlantic remains crucial, and the question of transatlantic military capabilities remains every bit as important—if not more so—than that of European aspirations in the defense sphere.

Therefore, European attempts to increase their own potential must take place within a cooperative, transatlantic framework.

The most obvious way of mitigating the potential problems that ESDP will pose is to attempt to incorporate it as completely as possible within NATO, thereby effectively foreclosing the possibility of European-only missions except in cases of very low intensity conflict where NATO is not involved. This would both minimize the risk of unnecessary duplication of military competence, and also allow the two institutions to play complementary rather than competing roles. As far as the implications for American policy are concerned, Washington must ensure that NATO is as generous as possible with its European members in order to reduce the incentives they face to go it alone. There are signs that the Americans have finally come to understand this. Since the late spring of 2000, Washington has agreed that Europe's Deputy SACEUR can be double-hatted with the approval of the North Atlantic Council and that the Europeans can enjoy assured access to NATO's operational planning capabilities (something that, of course, could have been achieved immediately after Berlin, without the complication of an EU decision-making role). A softening of the American stance on any kind of European caucusing within NATO would also act as a further incentive for its European allies to concentrate on the Berlin plus agenda as the means of implementing their defense ambitions. In practical terms, the Europeans must ensure that their new intervention force—potentially a highly laudable development if it actually increases Western military capabilities—be closely tied to NATO, and, if possible, developed in such a way as to complement existing NATO capabilities. By contributing more, they would only be strengthening the case for the Americans to accede to a greater European role within the Alliance. In addition, EU member states should not, in their desperation to gain a military capability, forget other, nonmilitary aspects of security. In particular, the expertise of the Commission should be fostered in areas such as crisis management and confidence building. The EU should be encouraged to find a role that complements the purely military capacities of NATO.

The Europeans should not see this course of action as an admission of defeat. The fact is that they are now in a far stronger bargaining position than they were at Berlin in 1996. The Americans believed at the time that what happened at Berlin was the stuff of nightmares. They have subsequently realized that the EU alternative is even worse. Washington, therefore, is more than willing to negotiate on issues it refused to discuss openly in 1996, and to be more forthcoming on

ensuring an effective European pillar within NATO. Moreover, having had the experience of the last few years, the Americans are highly unlikely to attempt to block the launching of European missions from within NATO for fear of undermining the European pillar once again and causing Europeans to look elsewhere for an institutional basis for their military aspirations. ESDP has at least made it clear to the Americans that Berlin was a far more desirable outcome than they thought at the time. In this sense at least, it provides an opportunity for Europe to assert itself in the defense sphere. The EU may, paradoxically, provide the key to Europeanizing NATO.

Notes

1. See in particular, Jolyon Howorth, *European Integration and Defence: The Ultimate Challenge?* (Paris: WEU Institute for Security Studies, 2000), Chaillot Paper 43.
2. See David Yost, chapter 5 in this volume.
3. M.B. Berman and G.M. Carter, *The Independent European Force: Costs of Independence* (Santa Monica, California: RAND, 1993); Philip Gordon, "Europe's Uncommon Foreign Policy," *International Security* 22 (Winter 1997–1998), pp. 93–94; Michael O'Hanlon, "Transforming NATO: The Role of European Forces," *Survival* 39 (Autumn 1997).
4. François Heisbourg, "European Defence takes a Leap Forward," *NATO Review* (Spring/Summer 2000).
5. Interviews, Brussels, June 2000, July 2001.
6. For a full discussion of how the United States has reacted to ESDP, see Stanley R. Sloan, *The United States and European Defence* (Paris: WEU Institute for Security Studies, 2000), Chaillot Paper 39.
7. Interviews, French Ministry of Defence, October 2001.
8. Interviews, FCO, April 2002.