

# “Balancing or Burden Sharing?” Settling the Ambiguity around the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)

“Dengeleme mi yoksa Sorumluluk Paylaşımı mı?”  
Avrupa Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası (AGSP)  
ile ilgili Belirsizliği Giderme

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## **Abstract**

*One of the most interesting phenomena of the past decade in the field of international relations has been the gradual emergence of collective effort of 27 sovereign states to construct and implement a collective European Union (EU) security and defence policy (ESDP). The overall question that this study seeks to answer is that how could the emergence and rise of the ESDP be interpreted: as an act of burden sharing that seeks to support US-led defence initiatives in its neighbourhood in terms of finance of operations, military capabilities and personnel? Or as an act of balancing that is assumed by the traditional wisdom in the IR as the primary instinct of any state when faced with the greater power in its area of influence? Since the ESDP has emerged overwhelmingly as a series of empirical reactions to historical events, the ESDP as a variable can be traceable over the course of history. The positioning of the EU member states (specifically Germany, France and the UK) in critical junctures such as Afghanistan War under the guise of NATO, the Iraq War that have been carried out by the*

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*US-led “coalition of willing,” 2008 Russo-Georgian War and recent Libya Crisis would highlight the possible venues in the evolution of the ESDP. By picking these four cases, the aim of the study is to pinpoint the promises and pitfalls of the ESDP and the positioning of EU member states (specifically European trio) vis-à-vis the US. Furthermore, this study hopes that these four cases could help provide sufficient insights to the evolution of the ESDP.*

**Key Words:** *European Security and Defence Policy, European security.*

### **Öz**

*Uluslararası ilişkiler alanında son on yılın en ilginç olaylarından biri 27 egemen Avrupa ülkesinin savunma ve güvenlik alanında Avrupa Birliği Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası (AGSP) adında ortak bir kimlik inşa etme çabasıdır. Bu çalışmanın cevap aradığı temel soru AGSP kimliğinin doğuşu ve evriminin nasıl yorumlanabileceğidir. Acaba, AGSP Avrupa mücaviri bölgede ABD'nin operatif askeri yeteneklerini özellikle finansman, askeri yetenekler ve kaynak temini alanlarında desteklemek maksadıyla bir “sorumluluk paylaşımı” stratejisi olarak mı yorumlanmalıdır? Yoksa AGSP geleneksel realist yaklaşım ışığında etki alanında ABD gibi “hegemonik” bir güçle karşı karşıya gelen bir grup devletin bu hegemonik gücü “dengeleme” stratejisi olarak mı kabul edilmelidir? AGSP tarihsel olaylara reaksiyon olarak kabul edilebilecek bir dizi adım olarak doğup geliştiğinden, bir değişken olarak AGSP'nin tarihsel bir analizle izi sürülebilir ve bir değişken olarak AGSP'nin evrimi tarih boyunca izlenebilir. Bu çalışmada, AGSP'nin Irak Savaşı, Afganistan Savaşı, 2008 Rus-Gürcü Savaşı ve son olarak Libya Krizi örnek olayları üzerinden AB üyesi devletlerin kendilerini konumlandırması (özellikle Almanya, Fransa ve İngiltere) ve bu konumlandırmaların AGSP'nin evrimine verdiği yön incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın temel amacı, AGSP'nin tarihi arka planı ile bu dört örnek olayın analizi üzerinden AB üyesi devletlerin (özellikle Almanya, Fransa ve İngiltere) ABD'ye göre kendilerini*

*stratejik pozisyonlaması ile bu pozisyonlamaların AGSP’na etkilerini aydınlatarak, AGSP’nin evrimi konusunda yeterli bir akademik altyapı sağlamaktır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Avrupa Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası, Avrupa Güvenliği.*

### **Introduction**

One of the most interesting phenomena of the past decade in the field of international relations (IR) has been the gradual emergence of collective effort of 27 sovereign states to construct and implement a collective EU security and defence policy (ESDP).<sup>1</sup> It is interesting because traditional wisdom in IR suggests that only states or alliances of states can engage in security and defence activities,<sup>2</sup> yet the EU is less than a state and more than an alliance. For the first time in modern history, some sovereign states have decided, of their own violation and with no imminent external threats forcing them to do so, to structure an alliance, to manage their activities in the field of defence. Since the Franco-British Summit in Saint Malo in December 1998, the historic event that gave rise to opinions on the development of an *autonomous* military capacity for the EU, the EU has mounted several missions. These missions could be defined as a narrow range of peacekeeping (‘Petersburg’) tasks<sup>3</sup> such as Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia that

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<sup>1</sup> The Treaty of Lisbon in 2007 renamed the ESDP to *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP). This study, however, will use the acronym ESDP first to better emphasize the “Europeanness” of the policy and to better distinguish the discussions on the EU’s defence policy from broader security-related debate.

<sup>2</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, New York, McGraw-Hill Inc, 1993, pp. 5-14.

<sup>3</sup> The Petersburg tasks that were identified in 1992 are still seen as the strongest guide to the EU’s specific roles in security and defence. They are primarily humanitarian and rescue tasks, conflict prevention and peacekeeping, providing combat forces for crisis management, including peacemaking and post-conflict stabilization.

involves 7000 troops and EUFOR RD in Congo with 2000 troops. In these mostly humanitarian and peace keeping missions, any deployment can take place only with the consent of each home country –a coalition of the willing approach that makes current efforts create joint European military forces as intergovernmental commitments as consistent with NATO as with the EU.

However, these developments have not been without controversy. Many, both in Europe and in the US, have deplored the advent of ESDP as a step in the wrong direction that would eventually erode the transatlantic ties. Many have seen in this emerging force a threat to the monopoly of NATO that constitutes the primary actor in the western defence structure. Specifically, traditional neorealist camp in the IR field for whom only states or alliance of states can engage in defence activities, have scratched their heads in disbelief as this new actor has taken the stage. They suggest that as the EU endeavours to develop its military muscle will rival the US in global military force protection. Some from the US worry that ESDP is a “strategy” to balance against US power or that is, in some way, designed to undermine, subvert or even maybe one day replace the transatlantic alliance. Robert Kagan, for instance, in his book that reputed with the famous quote of “*Americans are from Mars, Europeans are from Venus*”, asserts that Cold War was the era that held the West together. After the collapse of Soviet Union, however, since American and Europeans have different moods, psychologies and material resources, the post-Cold War era has witnessed (and will witness) a profound rift in the alliance between Americans and Europeans.<sup>4</sup>

During the Cold War years, indeed, it was widely accepted that every official in Europe and the US stressed territorial defence of the European land mass and its neighbourhood remained under

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: American and Europe in the New World Order*, New York, Knopf, 2003.

the responsibility and strict control of NATO. No European policy maker ever dared to suggest (or was willing to suggest) that the European states should themselves assume responsibility for the territorial defence of Europe by rejecting the security net provided by “the ally,” the US. In those years that were mainly shaped by bipolar world order, European land mass was the most valuable “asset” of the Alliance that should be defended collectively and at all cost, which meant a close cooperation between the US and European states.

Since the disappearance of Red Army threat, however, many things have changed. One thing is crystal clear in this period that 9/11 terrorist attacks and following global war on terror campaign, the rise of the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China), the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, prolonged turmoil in the wider Middle East, Iran’s nuclear program, Israel’s security, energy security, the safety of worldwide oil transportation routes, the growing importance of Africa and East Asia, and lastly the continuing global financial crisis have been among those numerous reasons that led to the US’s disengagement from her 50-year role as a guarantor of European security. Specifically for four years after the onset of global financial crisis, the US could be stated as a “withdrawing” power from continental Europe and Europe’s immediate neighbourhood not only in economic terms but also military terms. The contemporary global security environment has been making the US concentrate its available resources and military forces elsewhere. The departure of 12,000 US soldiers from Europe including legendary US 173rd Airborne Brigade from Germany (an elite force that had been in Germany since 1942) could be a “symbolic” example of this strategic disengagement.<sup>5</sup>

What would be the impact of the fact that US’s being the withdrawing power in wider European region stretching from Caucasus to North Africa, from Eastern Europe to Balkans in

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<sup>5</sup> BBC News, “US to withdraw two Europe combat Brigades”, January 13, 2012.

military terms on the development of the ESDP? Would this mean an opportunity for the EU to balance or a burden to carry?

Beginning with some interesting numbers; in the economic realm, the European Security Strategy states that “as a union of 25 member states with over 450 million people generating a quarter of the world’s Gross National Product (GNP), and with a wide range of instruments at its disposal, the European Union is inevitably a global player”.<sup>6</sup> Turning to the sphere of defence, as of 2009, roughly the sum of national defence budgets of the EU member states in Europe is roughly \$260 billion that makes the EU the second defence spender in the globe after the US. This amount still serves to maintain 10,000 tanks, 2500 fighter planes, and 1.8 million soldiers, a fact that makes the EU as the second global defence actor after the US in terms of military capabilities.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, over the past nine years, although the EU has not have a standing army, it deployed more than 80,000 personnel in 24 such missions in Europe, Africa and Asia. According to the official numbers, currently the EU has 8000 personnel (both civilian and military) in 13 different ESDP missions around the globe.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Catherine Ashton, current High Representative of the EU, asserts that “*We [the EU] need to be able to respond to the complex threats of today (violent crises, cyber threats, energy security), and assume our global responsibilities*”.<sup>9</sup> Only these numbers and this highly ambitious quote from the current High Representative are enough to show the “potentiality” of the EU’s military capacity and “eagerness” of European elites to

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<sup>6</sup> Please for the full document: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/reports/104630.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/reports/104630.pdf) (accessed May 12, 2012)

<sup>7</sup> UK Parliament Report, “European Defence Capabilities: lessons from the past, signposts for the future”, April 24, 2012. Please see for the full report: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201012/ldselect/lducom/292/29202.htm> (accessed May 05, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> EUfocus, Special Advertising Section in Foreign Policy Magazine, May 2012.

<sup>9</sup> EUfocus, Special Advertising Section in Foreign Policy Magazine, May 2012.

assume global roles in the realm of defence.

One should also note that UK, France and Germany (the European trio) all together account for some 70% of European military capability, and the sum of their annual defence spending constitute 65% of the EU’s total annual defence spending. In this sense, they would be stated as the “locomotives” of the EU wagon. This study will, therefore, focus on the preferences of those leading states when examining the ESDP and the EU’s positioning in defence matters vis-à-vis the US’s.

The overall question that this study seeks to answer is then that how could the emergence and rise of the ESDP be interpreted: as an act of **burden sharing** that seeks to support US-led defence initiatives in its neighbourhood in terms of finance of operations, military capabilities and personnel, or as an act of **balancing** that is assumed by the traditional wisdom in the IR as the primary instinct of any state when faced with the greater power in its area of influence? To reformulate, will the EU sooner or later attempt to develop its military muscle and eventually rival the US in defence matters within the European context and its neighbourhood or “the things” happening between the EU and the US are simply bargaining strategies with many interests in common but some conflicting ones as well?

To answer this question:

a. “Methodology” section provides insights on how this study seeks to answer the research question.

b. “Theoretical Framework” section first provides explanations of the ESDP by the neorealist and neoliberal schools and constructivists approaches. Besides addressing the promises and pitfalls of all theoretical approaches seeking to explain the ESDP, this section lays out a hybrid concept, “soft balancing” that aims to bridge realist and liberal schools.

c. “Historical Background” section presents a brief summary of the emergence and the development of the ESDP by specifically emphasizing the four critical junctures to be analyzed.

These are the international crisis involving armed conflicts that have a direct impact on contemporary global security environment. The Afghanistan War in 2001, the Iraq War in 2002-2003, 2008 Russo-Georgian War and recent crisis in Libya. By picking these four cases, the aim of the study is to pinpoint the promises and pitfalls of the ESDP and the positioning of EU member states (specifically European trio) vis-à-vis the US. More importantly, this study hopes that these four cases could help provide sufficient insights to the evolution of the ESDP.

d. Conclusion is the last section that provides insights derived from the findings.

### **Methodology**

The ESDP has emerged overwhelmingly as a series of empirical reactions to historical events; that makes the phenomenon of ESDP as a variable the process of which can be traceable over the course of history. The analysis of important events in the evolution of the ESDP or the critical junctures that have an impact on the transformation of the ESDP could tell us a lot. To seek for an answer to the occurrence of the Saint Malo Summit in 1998, for instance, the event that gave birth to the ESDP could provide sufficient insights for us to better understand the rationale behind the emergence of the ESDP. Similarly, the positioning of the EU member states (specifically European trio) in critical junctures such as Afghanistan War under the guise of NATO and the Iraq War that have been carried out by the US-led “coalition of willing”, 2008 Russo-Georgian War and recent Libya Crisis would highlight the possible venues in the evolution of the ESDP. This approach is inherently inductive that seeks to observe the “facts” on the ground and then to generalize the common patterns in each case. Why is it then an inductive analysis that seeks to generalize observable facts on the ground? It is because, as the theoretical section will clearly indicate that, existing academic theories have had enormous difficulty in explaining the existence and evolution of the ESDP. That is why this study seeks to turn to historical events and historical comparative analysis, instead of turning to overarching

theories, first to explain the evolution of the ESDP and then to elucidate whether the ESDP is an act of balancing or burden shifting in general vis-à-vis the US.

It is worth mentioning that as the US funds roughly one third of NATO’s total budget and 73% of operational budget,<sup>10</sup> this study tends to consider NATO as a US-led actor in the equation. One should also note that since a new conceptualization of security has gained multi-dimensional character with the inclusion of global security and human security that address basic human rights, fundamental freedoms, economic and environmental cooperation as well as peace and stability. The security-related issues will, therefore, be out of the scope of this study which is solely looking for answers in the defence (military) dimension of the debate.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Neorealists, who argue that states, as the primary actors in the international system, alone are able to engage in security and defence activities either individually or as a part of military alliance<sup>11</sup> have some deficiencies to explain the “ESDP effect.” ESDP is a phenomenon whereby member states in the EU pool their sovereignty and apparently ignore the rules of Westphalian system. From the perspective of neorealists, an entity like the EU in this conceptualization, theoretically, is quite incapable of engaging in security and defence policy. John Mearsheimer, for instance, who gives little credibility to the European integration in the field of defence, suggests that sooner or later the EU project will go “back to the future” and revert to a nationalist jostling for the position that we witnessed in 19th and 20th century.<sup>12</sup> In contrast to this

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<sup>10</sup> Carl Ek, “NATO Common Funds Burden Sharing”, CRS Report for Congress, February 15, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories”, *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1998, pp. 29-46.

<sup>12</sup> John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York, Norton, 2001, p. 392.

pessimist camp in the neorealist tradition that suggests that the ESDP is doomed to “die” sooner or later, the optimists in the neorealist tradition on the survival of the ESDP have only one explanation. This explanation that neorealists can propose for EU integration in defence and security comes from Barry Posen<sup>13</sup> and Stephen Walt<sup>14</sup> who contend that the EU’s rise in the realm of defence and security could only be explained by her “balancing” against US dominance in contemporary global security environment. According to Barry Posen, the EU has, since the Saint Malo Summit in 1998, moved deliberately, if slowly, to develop the capability to undertake autonomously a range of demanding political military operations beyond Europe’s borders. This effort, for Posen, the ESDP, is a puzzle in so far as post-Cold War Europe is exceptionally secure, and most European nations are members of an established alliance, the US-led NATO. Though, for Posen, European states are not motivated by a perception of an imminent threat from the US, they are balancing and will continue to balance US power. Nonetheless, Posen suggests that the most powerful member states thereby have different motives: the UK for the sake of her own influence and to prove transatlantic commitments, France for a greater influence of Europe in the world, and “Germany’s motives seem to lie somewhere in between”.<sup>15</sup> Then Posen concludes that the concentration of global power in the US, unipolarity, is uncomfortable even for its friends who fear the US’s freedom of action and who wish to influence the global political environment the US could create.<sup>16</sup> For the neorealist camp, the most evident example of this balancing act would be to

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<sup>13</sup> Barry Posen, “ESDP and the Structure of World Power”, *The International Spectator*, 2004, Vol. XXXIX/1.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Walt, “The Ties that Fray: Why Europe and America Are Drifting Apart” *The National Interest*, Winter, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Barry Posen, “European Union Security and Defense Policy: Respond to Unipolarity”, *Security Studies*, 15, No. 2 (April–June 2006): pp. 149–186.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

undermine or weaken NATO.<sup>17</sup> This theme in the literature that has never been satisfactorily refuted or has never gone away could be states as the Damocles’ sword hanging over the “hyphen” between the EU and NATO. Robert Hunter notes that the “risk” of the EU coming to rival the US “should have appeared to be minimal. But as a political matter, it gained greater currency in Washington and, rightly or wrongly, has been a source of concern for ever since”.<sup>18</sup> Even Strobe Talbott, for instance, the prominent profile of liberal camp in the US, articulates in his speech at Chatham House in 1999 that:

“We would not want to see an ESDI [the previous version of ESDP] that comes into being first within NATO but then grows out of NATO since that would lead to an ESDI that initially duplicates NATO and could eventually compete with NATO.”<sup>19</sup>

To sum, what the neorealist camp worries about “balancing”. Balance of power theory is a central pillar of realism. Throughout history, it is argued that, whenever a great power rises significantly above its rivals, second-tier states will try to “balance against” it, either by developing their internal resources or by forming balancing coalitions. Realists understand balancing as threatening.

For intergovernmentalist school, in the same vein, which tends to see the EU integration as a standard process of inter- state bargaining with a view to promote national interests, the integration in the realm of defence and security is highly unlikely in the EU case. Stanley Hoffman, for instance, argued forty years ago that integration in the EU could only take place in policy areas where state gains constantly outweigh loses. Thus, he predicts that

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<sup>17</sup> Anand Menon, “Why ESDP is Misguided and Dangerous for the Alliance?” in Jolyon Howorth ed. *Defending Europe: the EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy*, New York, Palgrave Macmillian, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Robert E. Hunter, *The European Security and Defense Policy: NATO’s Companion or Competitor?*, Monterey, RAND Publication, 2000, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup> Strobe Talbott, from his speech in Chatham House in 1999.

integration would not be the case in the area of “high politics”.<sup>20</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, in the same vein, argues that although non-state social and political actors can bargain at the international level for more rational policy coordination, ultimately decision are taken by states specifically on the defence policies where coordination is less and integration will not happen.<sup>21</sup>

There is, however, a central puzzle in the contemporary security environment that neorealists have difficulties when explaining: that is, with Stephen Walt’s words “balancing tendencies have been comparatively mild,”<sup>22</sup> recently. At this point neoliberalism, with its emphasis on trade and economics as the twin pillars of interdependence and soft power<sup>23</sup> comes to surface. Neoliberal school would explain why the EU has now chosen not to go solely military fashion.<sup>24</sup> The focus of neoliberal approaches on soft power is informed by a belief that military instruments have been overemphasized in the IR and the significant aspects of the present are the features of attractiveness and exemplary of which the EU is a model.<sup>25</sup>

This theoretical dilemma for neorealists is called “soft balancing that would be defined as a “looser type of resistance to the hegemonic power”.<sup>26</sup> Instead of applying “direct” hard

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<sup>20</sup> Stanley Hoffman, “Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation State and the Case of Western Europe”, *Daedalus*, 1966, Vol.95/2, pp. 862-915.

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1998, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> Stephen Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to US Primacy*, New York, Norton, 2005, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph S. Nye, “Soft Power”, New York, Public Affairs, 2004, pp.18-22.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Jervis, “Neoliberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate”, *International Security*, Vol:24 No:1, pp. 42-63.

<sup>25</sup> Robert O. Keohane ve Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Glenview, Foresman, 1989, pp. 20-27.

<sup>26</sup> Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, “Hard Times for Soft Balancing”, *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Summer 2005), pp. 72–10.

balancing means to an adversary through the impose of military and economic power, soft balancing is more like a *de facto* method preferred between friends. Samuel Huntington, for instance, describes “European Integration” in the realm of security and defence as a “soft balancing” tool for the European states to balance US’s hegemonic power in the long run. He asserts that:

“Undoubtedly, the single most important move toward an anti-hegemonic coalition is the formation of European Union and the creation of common European currency. Clearly the Euro could pose an important challenge to the hegemony of the dollar in global finance”.<sup>27</sup>

Then it would be argued that the EU integration constitutes a *de facto* soft balancing more recently through the claim for an autonomous EU security role. Specifically, during the George W. Bush administration, theorists in the balancing camp began detecting different forms of balancing, one of which is the ESDP and the EU integration in the larger context. Since it was difficult to portray this behaviour a classical “hard” balancing, that is preparation for a potentially warlike show down between the EU and the US, the notion of “soft balancing” came to surface to categorize “looser” types of resistance to the hegemonic power.

The primary profile in the balancing camp, Barry Posen, argues that the ESDP is, to a considerable extent, driven by European concern over the “hegemonic position of the US” and concludes that “in the light of this, ESDP is a form of balance of power behaviour, albeit a weak form”.<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting that he is careful not using the traditional “hard” balancing against a perceived military threat. He states that:

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<sup>27</sup> Samuel Huntington, “The Lonely Superpower” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 2, March/April 1999, p. 45.

<sup>28</sup> Barry Posen, “ESDP and the Structure of World Power” *The International Spectator*, Vol. XXXIX/1, 2005, p. 25.

“The EU is balancing against US power, regardless of the comparatively low European awareness of an actual direct threat originating from the US. The Europeans are helpful to the US, but if current trends continue, they will have to decamp, and they could even possibly cause some mischief”.<sup>29</sup>

Robert Art, in the same vein, sees the ESDP as a form of soft balancing:

“ESDP represents the institutional mechanism to achieve the following aims: a degree of autonomy in defence matters; a hedge against either American military departure from Europe or an American unwillingness to solve all Europe’s security problems if it remains in Europe; a mechanism to show the US that Europe will bear more of the defence burden; and ultimately a vehicle to help further progress in the European Union project.”<sup>30</sup>

Stephen Walt agrees with the assessment that ESDP is a case of “soft” balancing and continues that:

“A more unified European defence force would also increase Europe’s bargaining power within existing transatlantic institutions, which is why US officials have always been ambivalent about European efforts to build autonomous capabilities.”<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, for constructivists, the international relations can be understood in more value-based or normative terms

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<sup>29</sup> Barry Posen, “The Unipolar Moment and ESDP”, Draft, unpublished paper given to Yale Seminar Series, November 2004.

<sup>30</sup> Robert Art, “Western Europe Hedges its Bets”, Chapter in Paul J.J. Wirtz and M. Fortman (eds), *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2004, p.4.

<sup>31</sup> Stephen Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to US Primacy*, New York, Norton, 2005, p. 129.

rather than simply clash of national interests,<sup>32</sup> and that in this sense, EU integration in the defence sector is theoretically unproblematic. Where neorealists and neoliberals insist that states have more or less fixed preferences dictated by unchanging factors such as the international system or self-centred national interests, constructivists have insisted that those preferences are, in fact, socially constructed through forces such as identity, ideas, normative beliefs and socialization which are in an everlasting state of evolution.<sup>33</sup> For constructivists, knowledge, culture, ideology may also be the dominant sources of power.<sup>34</sup> The real power of social practices for this approach lies in the efficiency and rapidity of their meaning making capacity to deconstruct the conventional intersubjective meanings first and then to reconstruct new meanings in the socially constructed community.<sup>35</sup> In this sense, the constructivist camp may seem to provide valuable insights on the emergence and the development of the ESDP and the EU’s being an actor in the defence matter. Jolyon Howorth, for instance, pursuing a constructivist analysis, criticizes the insistence of national leaders in the EU member states still to perceive matters of war, peace, security and defence through national lens.<sup>36</sup> He suggests the need for a “European strategic culture” that could overcome long and bloody European history, accidents of geography and national mythologies to nurture a “European identity” and then emphasizes the prospective role of a “European military” when constructing

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<sup>32</sup> Ted Hopf, “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory”, *International Security*, Vol: 23 No: 1, pp. 171-200.

<sup>33</sup> Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics”, *International Organizations*, 46:2, pp. 391-425.

<sup>34</sup> Joseph S. Nye, “Soft Power”, New York, Public Affairs, 2004, pp.18-22.

<sup>35</sup> Ted Hopf, “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory”, *International Security*, Vol:23 No:1, pp. 171-200.

<sup>36</sup> Jolyon Howort, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, New York, Palgrave Macmillian, 2004, p. 179.

European strategic culture and European identity.<sup>37</sup> Although he implicitly states, for him, unless Europe can construct a strategic atmosphere in which European soldiers are being asked to die for the “Idea of Europe” a “European Identity,” it is merely possible to talk about a European strategic culture.<sup>38</sup> Then “the creation of a European Army, for use and only on behalf of the EU, using exclusively European military assets, under a European commander, flying the European flag”<sup>39</sup> necessities not a coordination and cooperation but “integration” of policy and force planning, and more integrated set of arrangements in defence matters.

### **Historical Background**

The date birth of the EU as a military actor from the Franco-British summit in Saint Malo is December 1998. This influential event gave rise to deep discussions on the expansion of an *autonomous* institutional and defence capacity for the EU (the world “autonomous” implies relative freedom from American leadership). For Jolyon Howorth, the first reason behind this Summit was the recognition of the European decision makers, during the Gulf War in 1991, and the following years, just how dependent their militaries were on the US military and how ineffective their own armed force were.<sup>40</sup> The second reason or a wakeup call for all Europe that overwhelmingly indicated the capability deficiency of European militaries to cease a crisis even in Europe was the violence at the heart of Europe which engulfed former Yugoslavia between 1992 and 1995. The reappearance of military conflict and the incompetency of the European militaries to handle this crisis in Balkans was an emergency call for European decision makers. To handle this capacity problem, Article 2 of the Joint Declaration of the Summit states that:

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 180.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>40</sup> Jolyon Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, New York, Palgrave Macmillian, 2004, p. 6.

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Settling the Ambiguity around the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)

“The Union must have the ability for autonomous act, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises.”<sup>41</sup>

It is worth mentioning that the Saint Malo Summit declaration speaks explicitly of the need to forge “a strong and competitive European defence industry and technology”.<sup>42</sup> Just after the Summit, the EU Military Committee (EUMC)<sup>43</sup> as the highest military body in the Union that provides a domain for the meeting of the Chief of Staffs of member states annually and the EU Military Staff were formed.

Both US officials and academics, however, have feared something similar just after the signing of the declaration: a Franco-British initiative that could lead to the emergence of a “distinct” European defence identity. Saint Malo Summit was, therefore, revolutionary in two ways. Firstly, this attempt removed the blockage which, for decades, had prevented the EU from embracing security and defence as a policy area and, therefore, from evolving or getting mature as a global actor in this area. Secondly, this attempt was the break of “exclusive” prerogative of NATO. That is why in an article in *the Financial Times*, three days after Saint Malo, then US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright enunciated what soon became to be known as “three Ds”:

“As European look at the best way to organize their foreign and security policy cooperation, the key is to make sure that any institutional change is consistent with basic principles that have served the Atlantic partnership

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<sup>41</sup> Please see for the full text of the declaration: <http://www.atlanticcommunity.org/Saint-Malo%20Declaration%20Text.html> (accessed 20 March, 2012).

<sup>42</sup> Please see for the full text of the declaration: <http://www.atlanticcommunity.org/Saint-Malo%20Declaration%20Text.html> (accessed 20 March, 2012).

<sup>43</sup> Please see the official website of the EUMC: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/eeas/security-defence/csdp-structures-and-instruments/eu-military-committee-\(eumc\)](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/eeas/security-defence/csdp-structures-and-instruments/eu-military-committee-(eumc)).

well for 50 years. This means avoiding what I would call the Three Ds: **decoupling, duplication, and discrimination.**

First, we want to avoid decoupling: NATO is the expression of the indispensable transatlantic link. It should remain an organization of sovereign allies, where European decision-making is not unhooked from broader alliance decision-making. Second, we want to avoid duplication: defence resources are too scarce for allies to conduct force planning, operate command structures, and make procurement decisions twice (once at NATO and once more at the EU). And third, we want to avoid any discrimination against NATO members who are not EU members.”<sup>44</sup>

As these remarks above clearly indicate, this Summit that would pave the way for denouncing NATO was regarded as a “balancing” attempt to the detriment of transatlantic ties for the US decision makers. Simply put, Washington feared ESDP moving away from the US norms. The worries of the US decision makers about the motivations of their European counterparts never entirely disappear in the following years. That is why the initial framework for EU-NATO cooperation established in 1999 with the “Berlin Plus Arrangement,” which first granted the EU access to NATO’s operational planning and strategic assets such as strategic air lifting and air-to-air refuelling and medical support. Although Berlin Plus remains complicated by Turkey’s position on Cyprus, this initiative has functioned as an “anchor” that connects the EU to NATO in areas such as pooling and sharing defence capabilities, smart defence planning, crisis management and humanitarian missions.

Nevertheless, the developments that may undermine Berlin

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<sup>44</sup> Madeleine Albright, 'The Right Balance Will Secure NATO's Future', *Financial Times*, 7 December 1998.

Plus arrangement happened. The Quadripartite Summit between France, Belgium and Luxembourg on April 29, 2003 at the height of the European crisis over the 2003 Iraq War is a good example of those developments. This summit was, in fact, France’s attempt which implied the *exclusion* of the UK, and transatlantic ties the UK always being sensitive to, from the ESDP mainstream. Since a European defence policy without the UK is only a dream, Paris and Berlin flirt had lasted remarkably short but worked well for emergency calls both in London and Washington.

With the return of the UK to the ESDP with the “cold shower” of the Quadripartite Summit, the postponed Franco-British summit took place at Le Touquet in February 2003. With the agreement at Le Touquet; a commitment to expand the scope of EU peacekeeping missions in the Balkans and a special agreement on cooperation in Africa were announced. The possibilities for the development of military capacity and more effective rapid reaction capabilities were also discussed in this summit.<sup>45</sup>

The real progress on ESDP was witnessed in 2004. The British suggestion to focus on military capability through *quality* (Headline Goal 2010) rather than *quantity* (Helsinki Headline Goal) focused on the formation of *battlegroups*.<sup>46</sup> France and Germany instantly endorsed this project. UK, France and Germany emissaries networked Central and Eastern Europe in the spring and summer of 2004 persuading the new accession member states that this was a project they could contribute in either as a national or part of a multinational formation. The aim was to make best use of European quality capacity in military deployments. For Jolyon Howorth, with the formation of battlegroups, British objectives (pragmatic assumption

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<sup>45</sup> BBC News, “UK and France boost Defense Ties”, February 5, 2003.

<sup>46</sup> The newly projected 15 battalion-size Battlegroups that comprise the main body of the EU Rapid Reaction Force are intis of 1500 troops prepared for combat in jungle, desert or mountain conditions, deployable with 15 days and sustainable in the field for 30 days.

of necessary missions in Europe's near-abroad) complemented French objectives (the principled build-up of Europe's strength).<sup>47</sup> Similarly, the 2004 decision to create a European Defence Agency (EDA), which initially brought on significant competition between France and the UK over the appointment of the CEO, was seen as a major new landmark in the EU's move towards rationalization of capacity. The rationale behind the formation of this agency was the affirmation of pressing problems: forging relations between the varied EU defence outlines; acting as a channel and a creator of new thinking; providing input to the weaponry transformation process; stress on the "-ilities": sustainability, interoperability, elasticity, deployability; bringing military and civilian activities together and research.<sup>48</sup> Headed by the High Representative, the European Defence Agency's prime mission is simply to improve the EU's defence capabilities for ESDP missions around the globe. One should note that the European Defence Agency is located in Paris, neither in London nor in Berlin.

The Treaty of Lisbon in 2007 came with the structural reforms in the ESDP-related issues the prime of which was to rename the ESDP to *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP). Furthermore, it was agreed in this Summit to create the post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The head of Military Committee also become the top military advisor to this post.<sup>49</sup> The EU Military Committee, which consists of the member states' Defence Chiefs represented by permanent envoys, was decided to assume the top advisory role to the EU in this summit. Furthermore, it was decided that the Political and Security Committee monitors the international situation and

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<sup>47</sup> Jolyon Howorth, "The Euro-Atlantic Security Dilemma: France, Britain, and the ESDP", *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 2005/1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Please see the official website of the EU Institute for Security Studies: [www.iss.europa.eu/](http://www.iss.europa.eu/) (accessed January 13, 2013).

help the High Representative to define ESDP.

Although European defence budgets have been steadily declining over the past decade and recent financial crisis specifically hit the defence spending, above stated ambitious efforts to institutionalize the ESDP prove EU’s commitment to achieve enhanced operational effectiveness first in Europe and Europe’s neighbourhood, and maybe on the long term at the global scale.

It is also worth mentioning that as the Cold War began to fade, the transatlantic relationship also shifted, both in its underpinnings and in its objectives. As Europe ceased to be the epicentre of the US defence policy, the ties began to weaken.<sup>50</sup> The period after the Saint Malo Summit witnessed many significant developments that enhanced divisions not only between the EU and the US but also among EU member states. These events that dissolved the “optimistic mood” in defence integration in the EU loomed after the Saint Malo included:

- Growing tension between the US and the EU over missile defence initiative in Europe,
- The 2000 presidential elections in the US and the advent of a new less “Euro-friendly” George W. Bush administration in Washington,
- The 9/11 attacks in the US, and London and Madrid bombings in Europe that made it clear that it was no longer possible to frame the ESDP project within such narrow parameters,
- The war in Afghanistan and debates over the initiation and conduct of this war,
- The call of the US to form a “coalition of willing” in the war on global terrorism and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 with this coalition of willing and the concomitant crises on United Nation’s legitimacy,

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<sup>50</sup> Stephen Walt, “The Ties that Fray: Why Europe and America Are Drifting Apart” *The National Interest*, Winter, 1999.

- The Prague Summit in 2002 that gave the EU global remit and enabled her to build a new rapid reaction force,
- The 2003 launch of the first European Union military mission and the drafting of the EU's first strategy document,
- The 2003 Convention on the Future of Europe and the Intergovernmental Conference on a European Constitution followed in 2005 by the negative referendum resulted in France and Netherlands,
- The massive increase in US military capacity mainly due to the long war against global extremist networks,
- A radical renewal of NATO's membership, structures and missions and the expansion of NATO's missions both in geographical and functional terms,
  - 2008 Russo-Georgian War,
  - France's decision to return to NATO's military wing in 2009,
  - Nuclear alerts from Iran and North Korea, and
  - Arap Spring and the crisis in Libya.

Rarely can a decade have been marked by so many significant events that directly affected the nature of debates on the ESDP. For Jolyon Howorth, prior to 9/11, the EU's attempts to forge a common ESDP faced two major internal challenges. First was on the institutional front between the brand-new Brussels-based agencies such as Military Committee and Political and Security Committee, and the more long-standing ones (COREPER, Council Secretariat, Commission); between foreign ministries and defence ministries. The second was between national capitals and "Brusselisation".<sup>51</sup> He then asserts that the above mentioned course of events that mainly shaped by the 9/11 attacks and US's responses to those attacks, has led to the "*renationalization*" of security and defence

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<sup>51</sup> Jolyon Howorth, "CSDP After 11 September: From Short Term Confusion to Long Term Cohesion", *EUSA Review* (15: 1), Winter 2002, pp. 1, 3-4.

reflexes among European states. While the first camp led by UK, “allies (Italy, Poland, and Portugal)”, pledged their *national* military assets to the US administration; the second camp, “neutrals,” in this division, led by France and Germany were careful to insist the global campaign against el-Qaida was not a war. This was the general landscape in the Europe just before the invasion of Afghanistan.

That is why, instead of analyzing all these above listed incidents, this study picks four of them. Afghanistan War, 2003 Iraq War, 2008 Russo-Georgian War and recent Libya Crisis, four critical junctures, or international crises involving armed conflicts that could deliver some reflections when analyzing the ‘What’s and ‘Why’s of the evolution of the ESDP.

### **2001 Afghanistan War**

In October 2001, the Afghanistan war began in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Immediately following the attacks, the EU herself and its member states declared solidarity with the US, vowing that the EU “stands firmly and fully behind the US”.<sup>52</sup> It was agreed by European leaders that the attacks were not just an aggression toward the US, but toward all democratic regimes in the globe.<sup>53</sup>

Some scholars wrote on the EU involvement in the Afghanistan War argue that the EU has made considerable political and economic contributions to the international efforts.<sup>54</sup> At the initial phase of the Afghanistan War, economically, the EU took the lead on the humanitarian mission, becoming the second largest donor to the humanitarian aid and economic development in Afghanistan after the US. Politically, the EU utilized its expertise in multilateralism by playing a significant role in the organization of

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<sup>52</sup> Akan Malici, *The Search for a Common Foreign and Security Policy: Leaders, Cognitions and Question of Institutional Viability*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 76.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

the crucial international coalition sought to find a solution to the turmoil in Afghanistan.<sup>55</sup>

Nonetheless, with the emergence of strategic exhaustion in the following years, it is likely to assert that the initial spirit of the EU for Afghanistan has dissolved. European foreign policymaking that initially pro-US, has been exposed decisive retreats in the following years. The emergence of three camps in the following years; that is, “devout allies”, “fence sitters” and “dissenters” among EU member states has in the long run weakened coherence and unity in the ESDP. According to the European Council of Foreign Relations Report on Afghanistan,<sup>56</sup> for instance, as of 2008, Europe’s military contribution in Afghanistan can be divided into three groups:

1. UK and the Netherlands, and followed by Germany, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania. These countries contribute significant troops either in absolute terms or as a proportion of their national capability (devout allies).

2. Belgium, Hungary, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden have made significant contributions, but could do better (fence sitters).

3. Austria, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, and Portugal have made minimal deployments well below their capabilities (Dissenters).<sup>57</sup>

The Afghanistan War shows to what extent member states have fallen back on their own resources, and to what extent there

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<sup>55</sup> Eva Gross, “Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan: the EU’s Contribution,” Occasional Paper (April 2009), p. 21.

<sup>56</sup> Please see for the full text of the report: [http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-04\\_AFGHANISTAN\\_-\\_EUROPES\\_FORGOTTEN\\_WAR.pdf](http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR-04_AFGHANISTAN_-_EUROPES_FORGOTTEN_WAR.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Christopher Hill, “Renationalizing or Regrouping? EU Foreign Policy since 11 September 2001”, *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, Volume 42, Issue 1, February 2004., pp. 143–163.

are signs of heterogeneity and lack of unified stance on Afghanistan. Even, a number of critics have argued that these contributions are not sizeable and that the EU is not a real actor in the efforts in Afghanistan. These critics have focused on shortfalls of the EU’s contribution to the international effort. Joanna Buckley, former political advisor for the Office of the Special Representative for the EU for Afghanistan, characterizes EU efforts as “poorly organized” and argues that the EU member states “lack a clear vision of the role they want the European institutions to play”.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, Daniel Korski, Senior Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, asserts that European support for the Afghan mission is “limited”, and cooperation between the leading EU member states and the European Commission “remains inadequate”.<sup>59</sup> Korski further criticizes the EU’s military contributions, arguing that most EU countries are “unwilling” to operate in the dangerous areas of southern and eastern Afghanistan where troops are most needed. As a result, the number of troops from EU countries is “completely inadequate” for the need demonstrated.<sup>60</sup>

In this sense, the Afghanistan experience clearly implies that the EU lacked the necessary coherence to be a viable player globally on Afghanistan. This experience proves that the ESDP is still maintained as an intergovernmental governing structure and the limitations that come with it. Therefore, it is likely to assert that there may be little faith from the international community that the EU has the capability to respond to a crisis quickly and as one unit.

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<sup>58</sup> Joanna Buckley, “Can the EU be more effective in Afghanistan?” Centre for European Reform (April 2010): p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> Daniel Korski, “The EU is missing in action in Afghanistan,” *Today’s Zaman*, January 28, 2008, accessed March 21, 2011. [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=132932](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=132932).

<sup>60</sup> Daniel Korski, “Afghanistan: Europe’s forgotten war,” European Council on Foreign Relations, January 21, 2008, p. 16.

### 2003 Iraq War

The wage of Iraq invasion in March 2003 led to a worse crisis in the EU than the Afghanistan invasion. Although there was more or less settled unity on Afghanistan among member states, this was not the case for Iraq. That is why the crisis surrendering Iraq created an enormous internal structural debate within the EU and EU-NATO relations about the usage of military capability of NATO and the legal framework as regards to the constitutive principles of NATO. While the European members led by the France was arguing that the link between Iraq and the terrorist in charge of the 9/11 attacks had not sufficiently proved and Iraq was not in position of imminent attack on its neighbours or the US, which eroded the claims of self-defence.<sup>61</sup> Besides, the reluctance of the UN Security Council to justify the invasion was promoting the tension in NATO. On the other hand, the US asserted its willingness to use pre-emptive force, as an inherently unilateral approach, to prevent future attacks of the terrorists. Consequently, when Turkey invoked Article 4 of the Washington Treaty<sup>62</sup> in February 2003 and asked for protection against the prospective military strike of Iraq, this issue turned out to be a credibility crisis for NATO. The rapid response of the US to this request was to list several military options such as using AWACS, deploying Patriot systems, using naval force to guard Mediterranean. Nonetheless, some member states such as France, Germany and Belgium saw such a move would be too sympathetic to the unilateral policies of the Bush Administration and openly criticized this proposal. Lord Robertson, then Secretary General, implemented “*silence procedure*,” as a diplomatic tool which proved its efficiency in Javier Solana’s tenure, to get through the crisis. Those three above mentioned

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<sup>61</sup> Alexandra Gheciu, “NATO in the New Europe”, Stanford University Press, 2005, p. 241.

<sup>62</sup> This article recognizes the right to ask for consultation for any member state when its territorial integrity is threatened.

European member states, however, broke silence immediately by publicly denouncing the American foreign policy toward Iraq and the UN. The crisis could not get through the utilization of NATO’s Defence Planning Committee, from which France had withdrawn in 1966, and pressuring to the Germans and Belgians. The opposition of the Belgians was neutralized by the big pressure. Besides, Germany offered to Turkey Patriot systems and AWACS as bilateral defence assistance. Also, the strong support of the US to then NATO Secretary Lord Robertson enabled him to control the crisis without serious political damage to NATO.<sup>63</sup>

For Andrew Cottey, the 2003 invasion of Iraq demonstrates that the US hegemony could provoke emergence of a countervailing coalition; states are far from being united in order to form an anti-USA coalition.<sup>64</sup> In fact, this suggestion confirms Posen’s argumentation that the EU is divided on its relations with the United States, as some see the EU as an alliance of US hegemony (Euro-Atlanticism) and others as a counterweight with the aim of an autonomous force (Euro-Gaullism).<sup>65</sup>

Judith Kelley, on the other hand, asserts that the crisis on Iraq War resurfaced the transatlantic rifts by pointing to diverging norms, interests and geopolitical preferences. She adds that, non-cooperation in Iraq War may be a strategic form of soft balancing.<sup>66</sup> That is, if they believe that they are being short-changed in terms of influence and payoffs, EU member states may deliberately reject possible cooperation in the short run to improve their influence vis-à-vis the US in the long run. Simply put, some European states

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<sup>63</sup> Hendrickson reading, pp. 134

<sup>64</sup> Andrew Cottey, *Security in the new Europe*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p.53.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 55.

<sup>66</sup> Judith Kelly, “Strategic non-cooperation as a Soft Balancing Tool: Why Iraq War was not just about Iraq?”, *International Politics*, Volume 42, Number 2, June 2005 , p. 153-173.

developed the concept of strategic noncooperation as a soft balancing tool and applied it to the Iraqi case in 2002–2003.<sup>67</sup>

The EU's reaction during and after the Iraq War, indeed, may symbolize the same story of powerlessness and incapacity that has traditionally plagued the EU when trying to speak with a single voice and act with a united front during a major world crisis involving armed conflicts. Despite some accomplishments with the ESDP in the late 1990s, the Iraq War possibly best reflects the endless concerns about the EU's effectiveness and unity when handling serious political crises, especially those involving armed conflict.

### **2008 Russia-Georgia War**

The short war between Georgia and Russia in August 2008 provoked vigorous international reactions in the globe. After the EU's intervention in the August 2008 Russo-Georgian war, the EU has increased the visibility of its participation in the South Caucasian state. The role that the EU played in the negotiation of the truce agreement between Russia and Georgia showed the EU's ability to tackle an issue in her neighbourhood of then global importance. French President Nicholas Sarkozy, whose country then held the EU Council presidency, brought to bear the weight of the EU, France and himself in the negotiations. The EU finds itself one of the primary players in Georgia's conflict negotiations, it has to stay the course and accomplish its potential. Despite representing the EU's first political intervention in the tensions between Georgia and Russia, the EU and its member states had been slowly more active in the preceding months. German efforts in the summer of 2008 to revive the stalled Georgian-Abkhaz negotiation process reflected growing agitation over Russian rhetoric, after the recognition of Kosovo's independence and NATO's Bucharest declaration promising Georgia and Ukraine future membership.

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p.172.

As a European marks just after the war, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the EU’s policy to organize relations with bordering states, was extended to Georgia. Georgia’s ENP Action Plan was signed in 2006 as well, for execution over five years.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, the Eastern Partnership Initiative was launched in May 2009, and this initiative has become a further signal of the EU’s commitment to the countries on its Eastern borders. These are indicators that show to what extent the EU was sensitive to a crisis in her neighbourhood.

When focusing on the European trio, France, Germany and Britain in the EU as crucial actors for understanding the global policy positioning of the EU, one may easily notice the complexity and confusion in the 2008 Russo-Georgian War. For Henrik Boesen and Lindbo Larsen, in this war, France oriented towards the creation of a strong EU as a global actor, Germany influenced by her self-imposed restraint in foreign affairs and Britain influenced by Atlanticist commitments in her balancing behaviour. Beyond the Russo-Georgia war, Boesen and Larsen point to an interest-based foreign policy approach towards Russia in the longer term driven by a great power concert with the Franco-German axis as stable element but increasingly with backing from Britain, thus contributing to transatlantic foreign policy convergence on the issue.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in 2004, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and our neighbours and instead strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all. This ENP framework is proposed to the 16 of EU’s closest neighbours (Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine). Please see for the official web site of the ENP: [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm)

<sup>69</sup> Henrik Boesen, Lindbo Larsen, “The Russian-Georgian War and beyond: Towards a European Great Power Concert”, *European Security*, Vol: 21, Issue:1, March 2012, p. 102-121.

For Florent Parmentier, similarly, the 2008 Russo-Georgian War conflict proved to be a useful case in order to realize the functioning of the EU as a normative power in times of crisis, which is not supposed to be its major assets because of the decentralized nature of the decision-making process. In this sense, by highlighting the preferences of six EU major countries (Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Poland, and Spain), Parmentier asserts that the EU should be conceived as a pluralist actor composed of political and administrative elites, as well as of interest groups, economic and nongovernmental actors originating from member states with sometimes remarkably different preferences.<sup>70</sup>

It is worth mentioning that after seeing the incompetency of the EU and NATO to prevent the Russo-Georgian War in 2008, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary formed an alliance named the Visegrad Group, or V4. The Visegrad Group announced the creation of a “battlegroup” under the command of Poland. The battlegroup would be in place by 2016 as an independent force and would not be part of NATO command. In addition, starting in 2013, the four countries would start military exercises together under the patronage of the NATO Response Force.

### **Libya Crisis**

Nicole Koenig starts her article examining the EU’s response to the Libya Crisis with these words:

“The EU’s reaction is slow; the EU is divided; the EU is not capable to deliver: time and time again, newspapers portray the image of an incoherent and uncoordinated EU foreign policy. This time, the topic under discussion was the EU’s response to the Libyan crisis. Many have compared the EU’s internal divisions over Libya with

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<sup>70</sup> Florent Parmentier, “Normative Power, EU Preferences and Russia. Lessons from the Russian-Georgian War”, *European Political Economy Review*, No. 9, (Summer 2009), pp. 49-61.

those over the Iraq war, an often used example to exemplify the limits of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).”<sup>71</sup>

For Koeing, who analyzes the horizontal, vertical, inter-institutional, and multilateral dimensions of EU coherence in the Libya crisis, asserts that unilateral actions or inactions of the member states mainly account for the EU’s confused response. Similarly important, she suggests that the post-Lisbon institutional structure has done little to recompense for these internal divisions. Anand Menon agrees that the Libya Crisis has shown the ineffectiveness of the reform package on ESDP proposed in the Lisbon Treaty.<sup>72</sup> Koeing, then, concludes that while the EU cannot change the course of national foreign policies, it should increase its “leadership for coherence,” Europeanise its crisis response procedures in the medium term and aim at preventing incoherence in the longer term.<sup>73</sup>

It is worth mentioning that there occurred a German and French split on the Libya question, with Germany finally conceding politically but unwilling to send forces. Libya might well be remembered less for the fate of Kaddafi than for the fact that this was the first major strategic break between Germany and France in decades. German national strategy has been to remain closely aligned with France in order to create European solidarity and to avoid Franco-German tensions that had taken place Europe since 1871 Franco-Prussian War. One should also note that this had been a centrepiece of German foreign policy, and it was suspended, at least temporarily in the Libya Crisis.

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<sup>71</sup> Nicole Koeing, “The EU and the Libyan Crisis: In Quest of Coherence?” *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, Volume 46, Issue 4, 2011.

<sup>72</sup> Anand Menon, “European Defence Policy from Lisbon to Libya,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Volume 53, Issue 3, 2011.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Luis Simon, similarly, asserts that the EU's ineffectiveness vis-à-vis Libya and the southern Mediterranean crises more generally is explained by the ESDP's narrow mandate centred on crisis management.<sup>74</sup> For him, the EU's emphasis on external crisis management was strategically viable given the geopolitical context of the 1990s. That said, he suggests that the Libya crisis has proved that (soft) crisis management has become increasingly out of date in the light of a swiftly changing geopolitical setting characterized by a general retreat of Western power globally, a weakening of America's commitment to European security, a progressively more disorderly European neighbourhood, and Europe's financial troubles. He, then, concludes that in order to meet the demands of a changing geopolitical environment, ESDP must break away from its characteristically reactive approach to security to include all the functions usually associated with the military including, primarily, deterrence and prevention. This would allow the EU to passionately shape its regional and global setting.<sup>75</sup>

In the words of High Representative Catherine Ashton, there were "different approaches from different member states to the military issues. [...] They are sovereign nations. They settle on what approach they take to military action, and that is right and proper. That is for them to do. They are sovereign states."<sup>76</sup> Any intervention under the framework of the ESDP was not taken into consideration due to the divisions among EU members. Brussels has been a "spectator" in the face of war.<sup>77</sup> According to Menon, the

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<sup>74</sup> Luis Simon, "CSDP, Strategy and Crisis Management: Out of Area or Out of Business?", *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, Online Publication April 30, 2012.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.euronews.net/2011/03/22/ashton-defends-eu-unity-over-libya/> (Accessed May 12, 2012)

<sup>77</sup> Ruth Hanau Santini, 2011, 'Libya and the EU: Ashton's moment of truth, 28.02.2011' in *EU Observer*, available at: <http://euobserver.com/7/31882> (Accessed January 2011)

EU was incapable of agreeing on how to act, failing miserably in the Libyan crisis. The disunity of the EU has been extensively interpreted by European diplomats and policymakers as “the end of the illusion” for ESDP.<sup>78</sup> In addition, as noted by Santini, the crisis exposed: “two serious flaws of European foreign policy: the lack of a common migration approach beyond the creation of Frontex, a border control agency, and the death of collective energy security policy”.<sup>79</sup>

It is not viable to say whether the Libyan crisis will mark the end of the ESDP, but EU idleness has fully illustrated the dramatic weaknesses of the European defence policy in terms of coherence and capabilities.<sup>80</sup> The fact that the EU has proven to be so internally divided towards a political and military crisis at its borders is the same pattern that we have noticed in the previous cases.

### Conclusion

While all the empirical evidences in the literature points out the emergence of a defence profile of the EU, which is truly *sui generis*, the performance of the EU in four cases that this study analyzed does not say so. That is, the EU as a heavyweight that can emulate or rival the US in global military force projection is hard to suggest. There is, therefore, little point in predicting future of this “infancy” and contemplate about its orientations 25 or 30 years later. Nonetheless, one thing is clear that the ESDP is reasonable offspring of “exogenous” forces driving from the end of Cold War. The ESDP is not endogenous in a sense that intra-EU discussions are of little value in the evolution of the ESDP. It is crystal clear that the most notably exogenous factor that has a direct impact on

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<sup>78</sup> Armellini Alvisi, 2011, ‘Diplomats mourn ‘death’ of EU defense policy over Libya’, in Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 24 March 2011, please see: [http://news.monstersandcritics.com/africa/news/article\\_1628333.php/Diplomats-mourn-deathof-EU-defence-policy-over-Libya](http://news.monstersandcritics.com/africa/news/article_1628333.php/Diplomats-mourn-deathof-EU-defence-policy-over-Libya) (Accessed May 12, 2012).

<sup>79</sup> Ruth Hanau Santini, 2011, ‘Libya and the EU: Ashton's moment of truth.’

<sup>80</sup> Anand Menon, “European Defence Policy from Lisbon to Libya,”

the ESDP is the lessening strategic importance of Europe for the US, and as a consequence, the diminishing political and military significance attached by Washington to European security and defence. The most salience indicator of this paradigmatic policy shift is the US Military's disengagement from the old continent.

There are three key options available for the EU:

First is to ignore the contemporary strategic challenges such as global terrorism, illegal immigration, natural disasters, humanitarian crisis, piracy in the globe and maintain to concentrate on what she has always been (a civilian "soft" power, or an economic-political giant that can not bite). In this option, the EU may continue to be the biggest "humanitarian donor" in the international crises, which was the case for all cases this study analyzed. Furthermore, in this option, the ESDP may evolve into a more "civilian" concept the application of which can generate soft power for the EU. Limited "civil-military" humanitarian missions in the European neighbourhood would also be seen in this option.

The second, given the relative unsuitability or competence problems of European militaries, is to identify some means from inside NATO, the command structures and military capacities of which enable Europeans to exclusively care for their own "backyard" but not lead to a "European" mark in the contemporary global security environment. The nurture of the "infant" ESDP in the womb of NATO may either mean burden sharing or balancing. In the light of the findings of the four cases analyzed, this study suggests that this option more reflects the burden sharing option since more NATO involvement to the evolution of the ESDP means stricter and closer US control.

The last is the option of an autonomous political and military capacity for the EU itself.<sup>81</sup> This option, that has not been ever the

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<sup>81</sup> Jolyon Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, New York, Palgrave Macmillian, 2007, pp.25-27.

case any case analyzed by this study, may easily lead to the act of balancing. An autonomous and unified act in the field of defence regardless of its being a necessary or a trivial one would, indeed, be interpreted as an act of balancing. The refusal of Germany, France and Belgium to the deployment of Belgium-made Patriot Systems into the soil of Turkey during the Iraq Crisis is a good example of this option, and thus balancing.

On the other hand, based on the four cases analyzed, one may argue that at least three explanations would be offered to explain why the EU could not act effectively during the international crises involving armed conflicts.

- The first explanation would be that the member states' aspiration to maintain sovereignty regarding foreign policy decisions when/if they face an international crisis involving armed conflict. The argument here is that while member states yielded sovereignty in issues such as monetary policy, they have been inclined to maintain a stronghold on defence matters. This is coupled with other factors that have played a part of the states' strategic calculation of foreign policy interests: states such as the UK have favoured 'Atlantic' ties. Those such as France and Germany have sought to coagulate links with each other in order to become leaders on the world stage within Europe. Smaller states such as Ireland remained ambivalent about the future of the ESDP based on purely rational cost-benefit analysis and concerns regarding the loss of foreign policy 'neutrality.' This “logic of diversity” between European member states' interests in the Iraq Crisis of 2002-03, for instance, led to a strategic split in the EU dramatically into two blocks, the Franco-German and Anglo-Spanish-Italian.

- The second explanation, which focuses less on developments at the domestic level and more on those at the supranational EU level, would imply that the ineffectiveness of policies such as ESDP can be explained through the weak “institutionalization” of the supranational decision-making structure in the EU. Given the importance of intergovernmentalism, unavoidably requiring unanimous agreement of the member states

when decisions are to be made, coupled with the lack of leading role EU institutions, such as the Commission and the Parliament, the EU institutional structure seems almost fastened, if not doomed, when seeking to find a unified voice regarding defence matters in crises.

The third explanation, which goes beyond developments at both the domestic and supranational level and instead focuses on those at the international one, is that the EU's behaviour as an international actor is conditioned by transatlantic relations. The dispute here is not so much that different member states may or may not have ties to the US that consequently influence their preferences, as the first explanation suggests. Rather, the stance taken by the US towards the EU as a whole helps explain why the latter has been unsuccessful in attaining the position of significant international actor with clearly defined security and defence policies that are respected globally.

The findings of this study suggest that the ESDP project of the EU, at least for now, does not aspire to become a “European military” responsible for collective territorial defence of Europe and an aspirant to be a global player in defence matters. It is conceived only as a *capacity* in both political and military terms to respond to the humanitarian crises in the EU's immediate neighbourhood and, to some extent, beyond. Any military operation envisaged is expected to be conducted in consistency with NATO, a body with which the EU has shared distinct defence and security responsibilities in an “institutional” manner and comprehensive understanding.

To sum, the theoretical debate on the nature of relationship between the US and the EU on defence matters, this study would suggest that the relationship is generally understood differently by the US and European narratives. While the US side seems to demand unquestioned leadership and full trust but complained about the lack of burden sharing both in a military capacity and economic terms; the Europeans, on the other hand, seem to happy with the free riding but constantly complain about US's assertiveness and even hegemony. This is, in fact, a type of reality with which neither side has been satisfied.

In conclusion, Jolyon Howorth asserts that “Like it or not, the European Union, in the wake of Lisbon, has become an international actor.”<sup>82</sup> He then continues that the ESDP now faces two main external challenges. The first is to develop a strategic vision for a potentially unstable emerging multi-polar world. The European Council's December 2008 Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy “recognized that, over the last five years, the threats facing the EU had become increasingly complex, that we must be ready to shape events [by] becoming more strategic in our thinking.”<sup>83</sup> The second challenge, for Howorth, is to help push the other major actors towards a multilateral global grand bargain. He then contends that such a bargain will be the crucial result of the change from a US-dominated post-1945 liberal world order, towards a new 21st century order compliant to the rising powers and responsive to the needs of the global south. Without such a complete and cooperative bargain, the rising multi-polar world will be common with tensions and highly conflict-prone zones.<sup>84</sup>

Once, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger posed a question: “If I want to call Europe, what phone number do I use?” At least, the EU has institutionalized enough to have a phone number. Furious about the EU's ignorance and incompetence during the Kosovo Crisis in 1999, Lord George Robertson, then NATO Secretary General stated that “You [the EU] cannot send a wiring diagram to a crisis with armed conflict to resolve it.” In this sense, when/if the EU decides to send soldiers with “European flag” and “European Corps” banner in their arms instead of wiring papers

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<sup>82</sup> Jolyon Howorth, “The EU as a Global Actor: Grand Strategy for A Global Grand Bargain”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.48/3, June 2010, pp. 455-474.

<sup>83</sup> Please see for the full report: [http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/documents/en/081211\\_EU%20Security%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/documents/en/081211_EU%20Security%20Strategy.pdf) (accessed May 20, 2012).

<sup>84</sup> Jolyon Howorth, “The EU as a Global Actor” Grand Strategy for A Global Grand Bargain”.

with the EU stamp to any international crisis involving armed conflict, can we talk about an autonomous and unified ESDP. Only then can we suggest that the ambiguity around the ESDP has settled. But overall question still lingering is: “Does the US let this?”

### ÖZET

Uluslararası ilişkiler alanında son on yılın en ilginç olaylarından biri, 27 egemen Avrupa ülkesinin savunma ve güvenlik alanında Avrupa Birliği Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası (AGSP) adında ortak bir kimlik inşa etme çabasıdır. Bu çalışmanın cevap aradığı temel soru AGSP kimliğinin doğuşu ve evriminin nasıl yorumlanabileceğidir. Acaba, AGSP Avrupa mücaviri bölgede ABD'nin operatif askeri yeteneklerini özellikle finansman, askeri yetenekler ve kaynak temini alanlarında desteklemek maksadıyla bir “sorumluluk paylaşımı” stratejisi olarak mı yorumlanmalıdır? Yoksa AGSP geleneksel realist yaklaşım ışığında etki alanında ABD gibi “hegemonik” bir güçle karşı karşıya gelen bir grup devletin bu hegemonik gücü “dengeleme” stratejisi olarak mı kabul edilmelidir? AGSP tarihsel olaylara reaksiyon olarak kabul edilebilecek bir dizi adım olarak doğup geliştiğinden, bir değişken olarak AGSP'nin tarihsel bir analizle izi sürülebilir ve bir değişken olarak AGSP'nin evrimi tarih boyunca izlenebilir. Bu çalışmada, AGSP'nin Irak Savaşı, Afganistan Savaşı, 2008 Rus-Gürcü Savaşı ve son olarak Libya Krizi örnek olayları üzerinden AB üyesi devletlerin kendilerini konumlandırması (özellikle Almanya, Fransa ve İngiltere) ve bu konumlandırmaların AGSP'nin evrimine verdiği yön incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın temel amacı, AGSP'nin tarihi arka planı ile bu dört örnek olayın analizi üzerinden AB üyesi devletlerin (özellikle Almanya, Fransa ve İngiltere) ABD'ye göre kendilerini stratejik pozisyonlaması ile bu pozisyonlamaların AGSP'ne etkilerini aydınlatarak, AGSP'nin evrimi konusunda yeterli bir akademik altyapı sağlamaktır.

Çalışma temelde üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır.

- İlk bölümde Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ) disiplinindeki temel teorik yaklaşımlardan olan realist, liberal teoriler ile inşacı yaklaşımın temel parametreleri özetlenmiştir. Bu bölümde özellikle liberal teori ile realist teoriyi birbirine bağlamayı amaçlayan yumuşak güç (soft power) kavramının AGSP’ni açıklama gücü sorgulanmaktadır.

- İkinci bölümde ise önce AGSP’nin 1998 İngiliz-Fransız Saint Malo Zirvesi ile başlayan AGSP serüveninin tarihi arka planı verilmiştir. Bu tarihi arka plan analizinde özellikle AB troykası olarak kabul edilen İngiltere, Fransa ve Almanya’nın ABD ile olan stratejik ilişkileri ve stratejik ilişkilerin bir sonucu olarak AGSP’nin evrimi sunulmuştur. Bu bölümde daha sonra Irak Savaşı, Afganistan Savaşı, Rus-Gürcü Savaşı ve en son Libya Krizi örnek olaylarında AB ile ABD arasındaki stratejik ilişki incelenmiş ve AB ülkelerinin bu dört örnek olaydaki stratejik tercihlerinin AGSP’nin evrimine olan etkileri irdelenmiştir.

- Çalışmanın sonuç bölümünde ise önceki bölümlerdeki sunulan teorik çerçeve ve tarihi analiz ışığında savunma ve güvenlik alanında henüz “çocukluk” döneminde olan AGSP’nin evrimi konusunda üç olası senaryo önerilmiştir.

Bu olası senaryolar;

- AB’nin savunma ve güvenlik alanında ordusu ve sert askeri yetenekleri olmayan “yumuşak” bir güç olarak devam etmesi ve AGSP’nin “sınırlı barış destek” yetenekleri olarak kimlik bulması,

- AB’nin sadece Avrupa mücaviri bölgede ve NATO yeteneklerini de kullanmaya devam etmesi ve AGSP’nin ABD’nin savunma ve güvenlik alanında “bölgesel müttefik” olarak kimlik bulması (mevcut durum),

- AGSP’nin AB’nin ABD’nin hegomonik gücünü dengelemeyi amaçlayan küresel bir kimliği olarak ortaya çıkmasıdır.

Çalışmanın sonucuna göre AGSP önümüzdeki beş yılda savunma ve güvenlik alanında iddialı bir küresel kimlik olmaktan uzaktır. Çalışmada incelenen dört örnek olayın tamamında bariz

olarak gözüken AB'nin stratejik kararlarındaki Fransız-Alman ile İngiliz-İspanyol-İtalyan yarılması AB içinde kolektif bir kimlik oluşturmanın önündeki temel engeldir. AB yakın dönemde ABD'nin NATO şemsiyesi sayesinde Avrupa mücaviri bölgede sınırlı askeri yeteneklere sahip kalmak istiyor görüntüsü çizmektedir. Ancak, önümüzdeki on yılda da her ne kadar AB üyesi ülkeler savunma ve güvenlik harcamaları konusunda kısıntıya gitse de AGSP'nin giderek kurumsallaştığı gerçeğinden hareketle kısa zamanda ABD ve NATO'dan "bağımsız" bir kimlik kazanabilecek yetenek ve kapasiteye sahip tutulmak istendiği de gözden kaçmamaktadır.

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