

# SWP Research Paper

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
German Institute for International  
and Security Affairs

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## The ESDP and the Transatlantic Relationship

RP 11  
November 2007  
Berlin

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**SWP**  
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ISSN 1863-1053

*Translation by*  
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(English version of  
SWP-Studie 23/07)

# Table of Contents

5	<b>Problems and Conclusions</b>
7	<b>Commonalities and Differences</b>
7	Strategic Policy as a Premise for Action
7	War and Peace
9	Unilateralism and Multilateralism
12	<b>Civilian and Military Capabilities</b>
16	<b>Security Co-operation between the EU and the United States</b>
20	<b>Conclusions</b>
23	<b>Abbreviations</b>

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### **The ESDP and the Transatlantic Relationship**

In the context of security policy the term “Euro-Atlantic” automatically evokes associations with NATO. By contrast, security relations between the United States and the European Union are little developed and to date have been limited largely to the EU’s role in the dispute over nuclear weapons with Iran and as a member of the Middle East Quartet. European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) does not provide for any direct transatlantic link. And indeed from the point of view of the United States, there is no reason for such a link. The dominant view in Washington is that any security concerns requiring co-operation with the Europeans can be regulated via the NATO alliance.

For the Europeans, too, NATO constitutes the main forum for co-operation with the United States over security policy, while ESDP is designed to allow the European Union to act autonomously—in other words, independently of the United States. Yet since the EU continues to rely on NATO for support in larger-scale military operations, and NATO, in turn, depends on the support of the United States, there is certainly implicit potential for co-operation.

The EU-NATO agreements on which any such co-operation would be based involve mechanisms and procedures that are highly bureaucratic, complicated and time-consuming. What is more, for some time now consultations between the two organizations have been blocked by the Turkish-Cypriot issue. In any case, a comprehensive joint crisis-management strategy would need to go beyond a narrow focus on NATO. It has already been shown that in order to resolve conflicts and bring stability to a crisis region an integrated approach embracing both military and a variety of civil resources is necessary. NATO’s role is limited almost exclusively to the military aspects of crisis management. In addition, there are also some crisis regions where the deployment of NATO would be counterproductive because it would run into too much political and emotional opposition.

Hence, direct co-operation between the United States and the EU would offer an additional option for international crisis management. For this to happen, though, existing reservations would have to be overcome on both sides of the Atlantic. In addition, the approaches taken by the two actors in this policy field are sometimes very different. The aim of the study,

therefore, is first, to highlight the main differences in relevant areas of international crisis management and second, to identify common ground that might serve as a starting point for more intensive transatlantic co-operation. Three considerations are of particular importance here:

- ▶ strategic policy as the premise for action
- ▶ civil and military capabilities
- ▶ how willing the two sides are to engage in mutual co-operation and what mechanisms they would use to do this.

Both the guiding principles of the strategic policy pursued by the present US administration and the EU's strategic policy are summarized in their respective security strategies. While these include a number of commonalities, above all the values, aims and threat perceptions that shape security policy, the differences concern mainly the importance placed on using military means to resolve conflicts. Military strength has always been a cornerstone of US security policy. In the war against terrorism the pre-emptive use of the armed forces is deemed legitimate as a way of deflecting threats away from US territory. The EU, by contrast, is not in a state of war, and the European Security Strategy (ESS) therefore emphasizes that all political resources must be harnessed to attain security. Military instruments are assigned a secondary role, even in the fight against terrorism, and the EU documents do not even mention pre-emption as a strategy. Instead, the European Union espouses a policy of prevention, aimed particularly at tackling the causes of conflicts and threats.

There are also differences in the two sides' evaluation of multi-lateral action. For although the US administration believes in multilateralism in principle, it construes this notion primarily as co-operation with states that are prepared to accept Washington's leadership and to pursue Washington's aims. International organizations are judged primarily by whether they will be helpful in promoting American interests. For the EU, on the other hand, multilateralism is a key element of its foreign policy that is automatically inferred from its structure as a multi-national organization.

The two sides' security concepts may move closer together as the US administration increasingly finds its capabilities and resources overstretched and begins to recognize the advantages of burden-sharing that multilateral co-operation would bring. This process has been given a boost by the current Democratic majority in the US Congress and is likely to be a con-

cern of a future US administration. For the EU and its member-states it will therefore be important to enter into discussions with US opinion leaders and in particular to identify common premises for joint action to tackle concrete crisis situations.

The differences in US and EU civil and military ability to engage in crisis management are obvious. As the world's strongest military power the United States can dominate any military conflict. But when it comes to providing the civil resources required to bring about stabilization in the aftermath of conflicts it shows deficits. By contrast, it is generally recognized that the strength of the EU lies precisely in the civil sphere, while its military capability remains limited. These differing strengths might well provide a good basis for close co-operation: not only would the two actors be able to complement one another in terms of resources, if they were able to agree on a common concept they could also raise the effectiveness of their mission. This would, however, require both actors to be willing and able to engage in effective bilateral co-operation in crisis management.

Currently co-operation in the field of security policy is limited to a few, rather formal consultations. This is because the NATO-focussed US administration is only dimly aware of the existence of an EU security policy and does not take it particularly seriously. In addition, bilateral communication is hampered by the great variety of not very transparent structures within the EU and the overlapping competency of the Secretariat-General and the EU Commission. The responsibility that will in the future be accorded to the High Representative of the European Union for the Commission's foreign and security policy will ensure a greater coherence between EU structures. In addition a common European External Action Service will make it easier to address the EU as a foreign policy partner and make it more effective in the international arena. But structural measures alone are not sufficient. The important thing is for both organs to be vested with more far-reaching authority in order to be able to speak and act more convincingly on behalf of the EU. This puts the onus on the member-states to integrate their national foreign and security policies more strongly in the European framework. Yet the current reform treaty tends to suggest that they are doing just the opposite.

## Commonalities and Differences

### Strategic Policy as a Premise for Action

The security strategies of the United States and the EU reflect only part of the security policy debate taking place on each side of the Atlantic. Although criticism particularly of the US administration's actions in Iraq has become more vigorous and more pointed,<sup>1</sup> the US National Security Strategy (NSS)<sup>2</sup> continues to be the declared set of guiding principles and the basis for the US government's policy.

In the EU each of the twenty-seven member-states has its own national strategy and security concept. And while these largely accord with one another, there are differences of emphasis. The policy spectrum ranges from that of the neutral states to that pursued by the two European nuclear powers.<sup>3</sup> The European Security Strategy (ESS) agreed on by the then fifteen EU members in December 2003 thus represents a compromise.<sup>4</sup>

1 Thus former US President Jimmy Carter said President Bush was "the worst in history" in foreign relations. See *The Washington Post*, May 20, 2007, p. A07, <[www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/05/19/AR2007051900212.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/05/19/AR2007051900212.html)>. Zbigniew Brzezinski advocated finally putting an end to the American war psychosis. See "Terrorized by 'War on Terror'," in: *ibid.*, March 25, 2007, p. B01, <[www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/23/AR2007032301613.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/23/AR2007032301613.html)>. Strobe Talbott, president of the Brookings Institution, described US unilateralism as a "foreign policy disaster." See *International Herald Tribune*, February 21, 2007, <[www.brookings.edu/views/op-ed/talbott/20070221.htm](http://www.brookings.edu/views/op-ed/talbott/20070221.htm)>.

2 The current US administration's National Security Strategy (NSS) was formulated in 2002 and updated and amplified in March 2006. See *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, <[www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html)>, and *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, March 2006, <[www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf)>.

3 For a synopsis of the national security strategies of the EU and NATO states, see Zachary Ritter and Peter Schmidt, *Strategy Synopsis. An Overview of the National Security Strategies of EU and NATO Countries*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, May 2006 (Working Paper FG2, 2/06), <[www.swp-berlin.org/de/common/get\\_document.php?asset\\_id=2994](http://www.swp-berlin.org/de/common/get_document.php?asset_id=2994)>.

4 *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, Brussels, December 12, 2003, <[www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/2004/4/29/European%20Security%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/2004/4/29/European%20Security%20Strategy.pdf)>.

Since then it has been adopted in unchanged form together with the *Acquis communautaire* by the EU's twelve new members and continues to provide the basis for common European activities in the field of security policy.

A comparison of the ESS with the NSS reveals a host of common features, particularly with respect to their fundamental remarks on values and goals and their perceptions of challenges and threats. The differences become most plain on the question of how these strategies should be put into practice (and instrumentalized),<sup>5</sup> specifically the importance that is attached to military action as a means of achieving their goals, and in their attitudes to multilateralism.

### War and Peace

As President Bush stated unmistakably in his introduction to the 2006 version of the NSS, "America is at war. This is a war-time strategy." And he repeated this view in his State of the Union speech in January 2007.<sup>6</sup> The US declaration of war on international terrorism was made shortly after September 11, 2001. Initially President Bush even spoke of the necessity of waging a crusade against terrorism.<sup>7</sup>

The text of the NSS leaves no doubt that the United States will deploy all means available to wage this war, above all its military strength. The pre-emptive use of military force to eliminate impending threats is also expressly justified. It should be noted, however, that in the United States the word pre-emption does not have emotional connotations. For the majority of US citizens one of the fundamental tasks of any

5 See Peter Schmidt, "Die weltpolitischen Herausforderungen für die Europäische Union und die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika: Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede," in: Peter-Christian Möller-Graff (ed.), *Die Rolle der erweiterten Europäischen Union in der Welt*, Baden-Baden 2006, pp. 255-281.

6 See The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *President Bush Delivers State of the Union Address*, January 23, 2007, <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/print/20070123-2.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/print/20070123-2.html)>.

7 See "Bush Pledges Crusade against 'Evil-doers'," The Associated Press, November 17, 2001, <<http://archive.recordonline.com/archive/2001/09/17/rdp16.htm>>.

US president is to do everything to keep threats away from US territory and to ensure the physical security of the population.<sup>8</sup> “We must take the battle to the enemy” is thus the central notion in the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* of 2003, which states that terrorist sanctuaries, command, control and communications and logistical facilities would be attacked.<sup>9</sup>

The war against terrorism is supposed to end with a victory for the United States which will be achieved when the world is freed of terrorists. For Washington it is clear that this will require a long-term effort. In his State of the Union address in January 2007 President Bush prepared US citizens for the fact that this war would last long into the next generation.<sup>10</sup> He said the war in Iraq would be won when a well-functioning democracy had been put in place that would help “bring a future of peace and security for our children and our grandchildren.”<sup>11</sup> He did not, however, give a timeframe for achieving these goals. Nowhere in the American war rhetoric is the word “defeat” mentioned. Instead it warns that “failure” would be a disaster for the United States

This war rhetoric apparently has two aims. First to demonstrate to the terrorist network the United States’ determination to wage this war until it achieves victory. And second, to mobilize the US public behind the president. In addition, by declaring the country to be at war the administration seeks a legal

justification for such things as the Patriot Act or the special status of Guantanamo.<sup>12</sup>

But the choice of words in this rhetoric has also had other, unintentional effects. Insofar as Osama bin Laden had not already achieved this during the 1990s, the US declaration of war has also resulted in previously independent terrorist groups joining together in a network to combat their common enemy, the United States.<sup>13</sup> What is more, it seems to have been instrumental in motivating some Muslims to join the terrorists to fight this war.<sup>14</sup> In particular the word “crusade” has such emotional connotations in the Islamic world (during the Christian crusades of the Middle Ages hundreds of thousands of Muslims were killed) that it is seen as practically the duty of every observant Muslim to defend his faith in this new religious war. At least that is the central message that Osama bin Laden and his deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri broadcast at regular intervals in videos.<sup>15</sup>

As a consequence of the Iraq war the United States has begun to realize that the ability to win a war is not sufficient to restore stability and peace. The latest survey of public views of US foreign policy, commissioned by the Public Agenda Institute and the journal *Foreign Affairs* in February 2007, reveals a clear shift in the opinions of the American public. Seventy percent of respondents favoured a withdrawal of the armed forces from Iraq either immediately or within a year. Sixty percent were of the opinion that achieving the goal of being safe from terrorism was not dependent

**8** See Coit D. Blacker, *U.S.-European Relations after the Iraq War. An American Perspective*, Stanford: Freeman Spogli Institute, Stanford University, February 7, 2007, <[http://iis-db.stanford.edu/evnts/4805/U.S.-European\\_Relations\\_After\\_Iraq.pdf](http://iis-db.stanford.edu/evnts/4805/U.S.-European_Relations_After_Iraq.pdf)>.

**9** *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, February 2003, pp. 11f, <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/counter\\_terrorism/counter\\_terrorism\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/counter_terrorism/counter_terrorism_strategy.pdf)>. The 2006 edition of this strategy is less explicit on the targets to be attacked.

**10** Bush’s exact words were: “The war on terror we fight today is a generational struggle that will continue long after you and I have turned our duties over to others,” See *President Bush Delivers State of the Union Address* [see note 6].

**11** Bush described the United States’ aims in Iraq thus: “Victory in Iraq will bring something new in the Arab world—a functioning democracy that polices its territory, upholds the rule of law, respects fundamental human liberties, and answers to its people. A democratic Iraq will not be perfect. But it will be a country that fights terrorists instead of harboring them.” See The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *President’s Address to the Nation*, January 10, 2007, <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html)>.

**12** The security policy declaration of the EU–US summit of April 30, 2007, envisages a dialogue on legally relevant principles in order to achieve a better mutual understanding of divergent legal positions in the war against terrorism. See *2007 EU–U.S. Summit: Promoting Peace, Human Rights and Democracy Worldwide*, April 30, 2007, p. 6, <[www.eurunion.org/partner/summit/Summit20070430/Pol&SecurIssues.pdf](http://www.eurunion.org/partner/summit/Summit20070430/Pol&SecurIssues.pdf)>.

**13** See Jeremy Shapiro and Daniel Byman, “Bridging the Transatlantic Counterterrorism Gap,” in: *The Washington Quarterly*, Fall 2006, pp. 33–50.

**14** In the view of the British MI5 the formulation “war on terror” is being used by Islamic militant circles to win recruits. See Jason Burke, “Britain Stops Talk of ‘War on Terror’”; in: *The Observer*, December 10, 2006, <<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/politics/story/0,,1968668,00.html>>.

**15** See video transcript Ayman al-Zawahiri, “Realities of the Conflict—Between Islam and Unbelief,” December 20, 2006, in: <[www.instituteforcounterterrorism.org/](http://www.instituteforcounterterrorism.org/)>. A video clip was placed on the Online-Videportal YouTube at the end of 2006 entitled “Bush’s Crusade” in which pictures and recordings of President Bush’s call for a crusade were used for Islamic propaganda purposes, <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYMG10\\_Y2qk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYMG10_Y2qk)>.



on a US victory in Iraq. Sixty-seven percent now believe that diplomacy is a more promising instrument of US foreign policy than military action.<sup>16</sup>

The EU is not at war. Even though the European Security Strategy was drafted in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the fight against terrorism is not its chief focus and it therefore contains no declaration of war.<sup>17</sup> Its fundamental goal is revealed by its title: “A Secure Europe in a Better World.” The points it chooses to emphasize are almost the opposite of those in the US NSS. The security instruments of choice are diplomacy and preventive measures, while pre-emptive action is not even considered an option. Although the Secretariat-General’s initial draft included this term, it was discarded after discussion with the member-states.<sup>18</sup> Prevention, on the other hand, is regarded as a broad political approach directed not only at the symptoms but at the causes of violence in the sense of “preventive engagement.” Military instruments tend to be regarded in the ESS as of secondary significance.

This also applies to the EU’s anti-terror strategy. In the European perception terrorism is a problem that cannot be solved by using the armed forces. Therefore the conceptual approach of the anti-terror strategy is directed chiefly at fighting the roots of terrorism, in particular by using the police, taking legal and financial measures and making preparations to minimize the impact of a terrorist attack.<sup>19</sup> Military instruments are mainly seen as serving to support civil defence and to safeguard EU operations against terrorist attacks.<sup>20</sup>

In the US view the Europeans show a broad aversion to using force to defend their security interests. The

reason mostly given for this is the Europeans’ painful experience of previous wars in Europe. Thus at the Vienna symposium on Transatlantic Differences in 2003, William W. Boyer observed that after two world wars and fifty years in which the Europeans have succeeded in overcoming the enmities of the past through integration they have gained much more confidence in co-operation and peaceful negotiations.<sup>21</sup> Robert Kagan took a far more drastic view, saying that the Europeans had become so used to the American protective umbrella that nowadays the Europeans prefer to rely on a system of international law and to assure peace through binding international rules.<sup>22</sup>

These analyses may have some truth in them. Of course European thinking has been influenced by its past experience, particularly of the Second World War. And by the same token the strategy of deterrence pursued for fifty years, which, had it failed, would have turned Europe into a central theatre of a global war, has changed European consciousness so that the use of military force is considered an instrument “of last resort.” At the same time there is broad support in Europe for military *Peace Support Operations* in the framework of the UNO, NATO and the EU, even if this occurs at an early stage of a crisis. According to the European Defence Agency, in 2005 there were on average 73,000 European soldiers from twenty-four EU states deployed world-wide at any one time.<sup>23</sup>

## Unilateralism and Multilateralism

Ever since the end of the Cold War, when the United States ceased to be dependent on the support of its allies to keep the other superpower in check, it has been presumed to be pursuing a unilateral course.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See Public Agenda, *Confidence in US Foreign Policy Index: Anxious Public Pulling Back from Use of Force*, New York, Spring 2007 (Public Agenda, Vol. 4), <[http://publicagenda.org/foreignpolicy/pdfs/foreign\\_policy\\_index\\_spring07.pdf](http://publicagenda.org/foreignpolicy/pdfs/foreign_policy_index_spring07.pdf)>.

<sup>17</sup> The British Foreign Office banned the use of the term “war on terror” as a matter of principle in order to avoid creating additional tensions in the Islamic world.

<sup>18</sup> The French national security strategy does, however, include the possibility of pre-emptive action using military means. See Ministère de la Défense, *Projet de loi de programmation 2003–2008, Chapitre 3, Les fonctions stratégiques*, <[www.defense.gouv.fr/defense/enjeux\\_defense/politique\\_de\\_defense/programmation\\_2003\\_2008/loi\\_de\\_programmation\\_militaire](http://www.defense.gouv.fr/defense/enjeux_defense/politique_de_defense/programmation_2003_2008/loi_de_programmation_militaire)>.

<sup>19</sup> Council of the European Union, *The European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy*, Brussels, November 30, 2005, <<http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st14/st14469-re04.en05.pdf>>.

<sup>20</sup> *Conceptual Framework on the ESDP Dimension of the Fight Against Terrorism*, <<http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/ESDPdimension.pdf>>.

<sup>21</sup> William W. Boyer, “Confronting Transatlantic Discord. Major Policy Differences between the United States and Europe,” Symposium on “Transatlantic Differences,” Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, May 22–24 2003, p. 7, <[www.usembassy.at/en/download/pdf/boyer\\_lecture.pdf](http://www.usembassy.at/en/download/pdf/boyer_lecture.pdf)>.

<sup>22</sup> See Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*, New York 2003, p. 37.

<sup>23</sup> The calculation includes only states that are part of the EDA. Of the then 25 EU members only Denmark, on account of its ESDP opt-out, did not participate in the EDA. See European Defence Agency (EDA), *European – United States Defence Expenditure in 2005*, Brussels, December 19, 2006, <[www.eda.europa.eu/documents.aspx](http://www.eda.europa.eu/documents.aspx)>.

<sup>24</sup> See Charles William Maynes, “US Unilateralism and Its Dangers,” in: *Review of International Studies*, vol. 25 (1999), no. 3, pp. 515–518.

Whereas under Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton there were still a few signs of a multilateral policy, particularly in the first term of the present US administration the tendency towards unilateralism became only too plain. Government spokesman Ari Fleischer put this in a nutshell at a press conference in July 2001—in other words, even before the September 11 attacks—when he said: “The President will not shirk from his duties to protect the American people from any international agreements that the President does not think are in America’s interest [...] The President is going to continue to lead America into our relations around the world on the basis of what is right and what is best for America.”<sup>25</sup> The signal that President Bush sent to the world at a joint conference with French President Jacques Chirac in November 2001 following the September events was just as unequivocal “You are either with us or against us.”<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, to describe US policy even under the present administration as entirely unilateral would not be correct either. In principle the United States is prepared to co-operate with other states. The key issue is whether these states are willing and able to help the United States pursue its goals and to accept US leadership.<sup>27</sup> Thus the section of the NSS entitled “Strengthen Alliances to Defeat Global Terrorism” states: “America will lead in this fight, and we will continue to partner with allies and will recruit new friends to join the battle.”<sup>28</sup> Even international organizations are judged by the Bush administration in terms of how far they contribute to fulfilling the security interests of the United States, although Washington is fundamentally sceptical about the effectiveness of these institutions. This attitude is implied in those sections of the NSS describing US efforts to reform the UN or the International Atomic Energy Organization (IAEA), but it is not stated

<sup>25</sup> The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *Press Briefing*, July 27, 2001, <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/briefings/20010727.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/briefings/20010727.html)>.

<sup>26</sup> See The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *President Welcomes President Chirac to White House*, November 6, 2001, <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011106-4.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011106-4.html)>.

<sup>27</sup> See Jochen Hippler, “Unilateralismus der United States als Problem der internationalen Politik,” in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, July 28, 2003, <[www.bpb.de/files/AFVBF5.pdf](http://www.bpb.de/files/AFVBF5.pdf)>. Hippler observes that unilateral and multilateral approaches indeed operate in parallel, depending on which approach better serves the promotion of American interests.

<sup>28</sup> *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, March 2006 [see note 2], p. 12.

outright.<sup>29</sup> And while NATO receives praise in the NSS as an important partner of the United States, it is also urged not to flag in its transformation efforts. The EU, by contrast, is not mentioned at all in the sections that discuss joint action with other actors.

Even European states sometimes act unilaterally, but the impact of such a policy is usually automatically limited because most EU states scarcely have the power resources to be able to act independently. Only France and Britain have preserved the capability to conduct major military operations alone.<sup>30</sup>

For the EU “effective multilateralism,” as one of the chapters of the ESS is entitled, forms the basis for a desirable world order, and in any case the EU has no alternative to multilateralism. A multi-national organization founded on the principle of collective decision-making and collective action depends on the willingness of its members to compromise and to co-operate in order to function, even if sometimes only a minimal consensus is reached. Even for autonomous crisis-management operations the EU seeks co-operation with states outside the EU, as well as with other organizations. The crucial factor here is the realization that there is scarcely a problem that the EU could solve alone.<sup>31</sup> The EU’s awareness that it is dependent on co-operation with non-EU states and international organizations permeates all the fields of activity addressed both in the ESS and in its subsidiary concepts. Among the international organizations the EU assigns primary responsibility to the United Nations for preserving world peace and international security. Strengthening the UN is therefore a high priority in EU strategy.<sup>32</sup> The UN is deemed equally significant in its function as a provider of mandates for ESDP missions and operations.

The frequent emphasis in the ESS and its complementary concepts on the necessity and effectiveness of multilateral cooperation is striking. At the time when it was drafted, its espousal of effective multilateralism

<sup>29</sup> The National Security Strategy (NSS) does not contain any passages on the significance of co-operation with the UN.

Nevertheless, under the heading “Promoting meaningful reform of the U.N.” a number of steps are listed that the United States deems necessary to reform the UN. On the IAEA the NSS states: “We have led the effort to strengthen the ability of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to detect and respond to nuclear proliferation,” *ibid.*, p. 45 and p. 19.

<sup>30</sup> In terms of military capability Germany would also be in a position to do this, if it were not for the fact that a multi-national approach is a key principle of German policy.

<sup>31</sup> See. *European Security Strategy* (ESS) [see note 4], p. 13.

<sup>32</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 9.

and of the central role of the UN was certainly intended as a pointed response to the unilateral approach taken by the Bush administration in its preparations for the Iraq war.

# Civilian and Military Capabilities

The status of the United States as the sole military superpower is undisputed. This superiority is not, however, expressed in the number of military personnel. Currently the US armed forces comprise some 1.5 million. Together with the US National Guard the number of military personnel comes to almost exactly two million. With 1.91 million the EU states actually have almost the same potential in terms of troops.<sup>33</sup> A more revealing measure of the military strength of the United States is a comparison of defence expenditure. According to data provided by the European Defence Agency (EDA), in 2005 the United States spent 406 billion euros on defence, while the twenty-four EU states who are members of the EDA spent 193 billion euros. As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) this works out at 4.06 percent for the United States and 1.81 percent for the EU. In other words, relative to GDP, the EU states spent less than half the United States on defence, and calculated per head of the population only a third, namely 425 euros in the EU and 1,363 euros in the United States.<sup>34</sup>

In considering defence expenditure one should also take account of the fact that EU and US planning targets are different. While for the United States it is important to be able to dominate any form of military conflict, ESDP planning is restricted to the Petersberg Tasks, which range from humanitarian assistance to peace enforcement in regional conflicts.<sup>35</sup> The most demanding scenario underlying EU planning to meet military requirements would be something akin to the Kosovo conflict of 1999. A scenario comparable with the US-led war in Iraq is not envisaged by the Petersberg Tasks. Furthermore, unlike NATO, the EU does not envisage engaging in collective defence and this is therefore not part of planning.

Originally the EU intended to have attained the capabilities deemed necessary by 2003. And indeed it

<sup>33</sup> See The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 2006*, London 2006.

<sup>34</sup> See EDA, *European – United States Defence Expenditure in 2005* [see note 23].

<sup>35</sup> In accordance with EU Treaty Art. 17(2) the Petersberg Tasks embrace humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks and military action for the purpose of crisis management, including peace-making.

was announced in May 2003 that the required operational capabilities to cover the entire spectrum of the Petersberg Tasks were now available. This declaration, however, also contained clear reservations. Above all it emphasized that military operations in the upper spectrum (i.e., the more demanding) of the Petersberg Tasks involved a high level of risk, a reservation that continues to hold today.<sup>36</sup>

Numerous efforts have been made to overcome the gaps in the EU's capabilities. In particular the project groups formed under the auspices of the European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP) and the new European Defence Agency have sought solutions and in some cases found them. Progress has been extremely slow, however. The current *Capabilities Improvement Chart* still lists fifty-seven areas where there are deficits (compared with the original list of sixty-five); of these twenty-four are categorized as significant.<sup>37</sup> The only difference between the current chart and those for the years 2004 and 2005 applies to "Strategic Transport" where an arrow indicates an improvement. But even this does not mean that the Europeans have acquired additional transport capacity. Rather a stopgap has been found in the form of the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS), which allows existing and leased transport aircraft (for example, those provided by Ukraine) to be used more quickly and economically.<sup>38</sup> It is still unclear when the EU's capability requirements will be fulfilled. The current gaps cannot be

<sup>36</sup> "The current military assessment of EU military capabilities is that the EU now has operational capability across the full range of Petersberg tasks, limited and constrained by recognised shortfalls [...] on deployment time and high risk may arise at the upper end of the spectrum of scale and intensity, in particular when conducting concurrent operations." See General Affairs and External Relations Committee, *Declaration on EU Military Capabilities*, Brussels, May 19, 2003, <<http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Declaration%20on%20EU%20Military%20Capabilities%20-%20May%202003.pdf>>.

<sup>37</sup> Council of the European Union, *Capability Improvement Chart I/2006*, <[www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/esdp/89603.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/esdp/89603.pdf)>.

<sup>38</sup> See Xavier Solana, "Reaktionsfähigkeit bei Naturkatastrophen oder vom Menschen verursachten Katastrophen: ESVP-Mittel," lecture held in Innsbruck, March 6, 2006, <[www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/DE/reports/88647.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/DE/reports/88647.pdf)>.

bridged by the non-EU European members of NATO either, since the catalogue of shortcomings for the EU and for the European members of the Alliance is almost identical. In short, in militarily demanding operations the Europeans will continue to be dependent on US reinforcement for some time to come.

The simple option—frequently suggested by the United States—of considerably boosting defence spending is not realistic for most European countries.<sup>39</sup> The few increases in defence budgets have been eaten up for the most part by rising national costs for military operations. It is therefore crucial to spend the money available more efficiently, as is often proposed in European declarations. Yet current solutions focus mainly on pooling existing national capabilities, which already limit the potential for saving money from the start. Much cheaper alternatives, such as a division of tasks, role sharing and specialization, would require a much deeper defence integration. Hence, they generally fail to get off the ground because of the European states' wish to retain maximum potential for action and decision-making at the national level, even though—with the exception of France and Britain—multi-national military operations are the only option open to most of them.<sup>40</sup> As a consequence the twenty-seven EU states continue to afford the wasteful luxury of maintaining twenty-seven separate armed forces—comprising twenty-seven armies and air forces and twenty-two navies (five of the EU states have no coast) as well as twenty-seven national general staffs and headquarters structures. To do away with this expensive structure will only be possible when the individual states are finally persuaded of the advantages of greater political integration. Unlike NATO, the EU offers a framework for this. However, the Europeans are evidently not fundamentally prepared to change their way of thinking, as the debate over the reform treaty shows.

<sup>39</sup> In a 2004 survey commissioned by the German Marshall Fund and conducted in nine EU states, 64% of respondents advocated strengthening European military capability, but only 22% supported raising defence expenditure. See *Transatlantic Trends 2004*, p. 7, <[www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/2004\\_german\\_key.pdf](http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/2004_german_key.pdf)>.

<sup>40</sup> On new approaches, see Volker Heise, *Militärische Integration in Europa. Erfahrungen und neue Ansätze*, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, September 2005 (SWP-Studie S 26/05), and Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), *European Defense Integration: Bridging the Gap between Strategy and Capabilities*, Washington, D.C., October 2005, <[www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/0510\\_eurodefensereport.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/0510_eurodefensereport.pdf)>.

Nevertheless, vis-à-vis the United States the Europeans still have their own special strengths in military capabilities. Even some American commentators say that the European armed forces are better trained and more suitable than their US counterparts to undertake post-conflict and stabilization tasks. The experience and success of European peace-keeping missions, not only in the Balkans, speak for themselves.<sup>41</sup> A survey of peace missions (outside UN-Peacekeeping and excluding military participation in Iraq) in the period from 2002 to 2004 reveals that far more EU than US troops were deployed (33,261 and 20,966, respectively).<sup>42</sup> The difference is even more significant when it comes to UN operations: apart from the current UN-mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL), to which the Europeans have supplied around seven thousand troops, the numbers of military personnel supplied by EU states have been around 3,000 over the years, whereas those of the United States have amounted to only about 25.<sup>43</sup>

A particular strength of EU crisis management is its civil resources and mechanisms, which are often referred to as *soft power*.<sup>44</sup> Apart from the European Commission's financial resources, the EU member-states have the wherewithal to keep an impressive number of civilian personnel ready to be sent to crisis or disaster regions at short notice. At the Civilian Capabilities Commitment Conference in 2004 EU members pledged 5,761 personnel in the area of police, 631 for rule of law, 562 for civilian adminis-

<sup>41</sup> See Louis R. Golino, "Military Skills Key to European Influence in US," in: *The Washington Times*, July 18, 2004.

<sup>42</sup> See Gustav Lindstrom, *EU-US Burdensharing. Who Does What*, Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, September 2005 (Chaillot Paper 82), Tab. 43.

<sup>43</sup> See United Nations – Peacekeeping, *Monthly Summary of Contributors of Military and Civilian Police Personnel*, <[www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/)>.

<sup>44</sup> The terms *hard power* and *soft power* are frequently used to contrast the primarily military strength of the United States with the civil capabilities of the EU. This does not, however, accord with the original definition by Joseph S. Nye, who defines *hard power* as all resources and measures used above all to carry out coercive measures/sanctions, whereas he describes *soft power* as the ability to influence the agendas of others for one's own cause by making one's own culture and ideology attractive. See Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York 2004.

tration and 4,988 for civil protection.<sup>45</sup> Currently the EU is engaged in eight civil ESDP missions involving almost 900 people.<sup>46</sup>

The capability to deploy both military and non-military resources corresponds with the ESDP concept, which covers both conflict prevention and crisis management and assistance in the aftermath of crises. It is now generally recognized that the long-term success of crisis management depends to a large extent on the training of police forces, assistance in establishing the rule of law, the promotion of a civil society and last, but not least, on the economic development of the country in question. In this context it is increasingly being acknowledged that development aid has a special role to play both in crisis prevention and even more so in post-conflict support. If one compares the contributions of the EU and the United States to development aid worldwide (Official Development Assistance, ODA) in 2006, it becomes evident that the figures stand in more than inverse relation to the respective defence expenditures. In other words, the EU Europeans together with the EU Commission spent three times as much on development aid as the United States. According to OECD statistics, the joint contribution of the EU states and Commission in the year 2006 was 69.1 billion US dollars or around 66 percent of world-wide economic assistance, while that of the United States was only 22.7 billion US dollars or 21 percent. The proportions of GNI are almost in the same relation (EU 0.43%, United States 0.17%).<sup>47</sup> However, the comparison between expenditure on development aid and defence is only partially valid, since not all bilateral financial aid of either the United States or the EU is included in the OECD statistics, particularly if this money was used to build up the armed forces in countries receiving aid. In this area the expenditure

of the United States is most probably higher than that of the Europeans.<sup>48</sup>

The difference in military capabilities on the two sides of the Atlantic is obvious. But does this difference also exist when it comes to civil capabilities? Theoretically not, for the United States no doubt has all the necessary resources at its disposal. Yet only now, following the experience of the Iraq war, has it begun to develop capability and concepts in this area. In December 2005, for example, a Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization was appointed to the State Department by a presidential directive. Under his leadership preparations began to establish a Diplomatic Response Corps as well as teams of technical experts for rapid deployment.<sup>49</sup> In 2006 two hundred American legal experts were stationed in Iraq to advise and train the local justice and police authorities,<sup>50</sup> although parts of them were employed to provide legal and logistical support in the trial of Saddam Hussein.<sup>51</sup> The budgets for 2006 and 2007 provided for financial aid for Iraq amounting to 4,023 billion US dollars to be earmarked from the State Department budget, of which a large portion is to be used to train and equip the Iraqi police and security forces.<sup>52</sup> In addition in ten of the eighteen Iraqi provinces Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) have been set up, six of them under US leadership. The PRTs, which are made up of a mixture of civilian and military personnel, are to provide support for the provincial govern-

<sup>45</sup> *Civilian Capabilities Commitment Conference: Ministerial Declaration*, Brussels, November 22, 2004, <[www.intermin.fi/intermin/hankkeet/skh/home.nsf/files/CivilianCapabilitiesConference2004/\\$file/CivilianCapabilitiesConference2004.pdf](http://www.intermin.fi/intermin/hankkeet/skh/home.nsf/files/CivilianCapabilitiesConference2004/$file/CivilianCapabilitiesConference2004.pdf)>, and Council of the European Union, *Civilian Capabilities Improvement Conference 2006 – Ministerial Declaration*, Brussels, November 13, 2006, <[www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/esdp/91628.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/esdp/91628.pdf)>.

<sup>46</sup> See The Council of the European Union, *European Security and Defence Policy: Operations*, <[www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3\\_fo/showPage.asp?id=268&lang=EN&mode=g](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=268&lang=EN&mode=g)>.

<sup>47</sup> See OECD, *Net Official Development Assistance in 2006. Preliminary Data*, <[www.oecd.org/dataoecd/12/44/38344755.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/12/44/38344755.pdf)>.

<sup>48</sup> On the relationship between ODA and US Foreign Assistance see Larry Nowels, *Foreign Aid: Understanding Data Used to Compare Donors*, CRS Report for Congress, updated June 7, 2006, <<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/68816.pdf>>.

<sup>49</sup> See U.S. Department of State, *Fact Sheet: President Issues Directive to Improve the United States' Capacity to Manage Reconstruction and Stabilization Efforts*, Washington, D.C., December 14, 2005, <[www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/58067.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/58067.htm)>. Nevertheless, analysts are continuing to conclude that measures implemented by individual US departments are still being co-ordinated too little. See Austin Long, "Coordination Could Breed Control in Iraq," in: *washingtonpost.com*, January 24, 2007, <[www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/23/AR2007012301218.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/23/AR2007012301218.html)>.

<sup>50</sup> See USInfo.State.Gov, *U.S. Attorney General Lauds Rebuilding of Iraqi Legal Institutions*, August 29, 2006, <<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=August&x=20060829141824mlenuhret0.4365198>>.

<sup>51</sup> See Farah Stockman, "U.S. Role Tainted Trial," in: *International Herald Tribune*, December 30/31, 2006, p. 1.

<sup>52</sup> See U.S. Department of State, *Advancing the President's National Strategy for Victory in Iraq: Funding Iraq's Transition to Self-Reliance in 2006 and 2007*, Washington, D.C., February 2006, <[www.state.gov/documents/organization/62352.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/62352.pdf)>.

ments in improving regional administration and security. There are, however, no figures available on the number of US personnel in these PRTs.<sup>53</sup>

In the Pentagon, too, the learning process is making progress. The latest issue of the *Field-Manual 3-24* from December 2006, which gives instructions for counter-insurgency operations, emphasizes the importance of co-operative measures.<sup>54</sup> At the elite military academy Fort Leavenworth crash courses are now being held in "Cultural Awareness," in which leading officers learn that wars can no longer be won by military force alone and that crop seeds can sometimes be more important than ammunition.<sup>55</sup> Besides the PRTs the US Department of Defence has also contributed sixty advisers to the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT), which has been established by the coalition forces in Iraq.<sup>56</sup>

When compared with similar contributions of the EU, which amount to millions rather than billions, the level of US financial assistance is certainly impressive. Yet when compared with the costs incurred through the US military operation in Iraq, which an analysis by the US Congress puts at around 2.6 billion dollars a week, they look rather more meagre.<sup>57</sup> In terms of personnel resources, the US contribution appears rather modest when compared with that of the EU. When it comes to the deployment of police forces in international operations, for example, one sees that currently around 1,500 people from EU states

are involved in EU and UN missions, while the contribution of the United States to the UN missions is limited to 298.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See U.S. Embassy Baghdad, *Fact Sheet on Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, November 14, 2006, <[http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/20060223\\_prt\\_fact\\_sheet.html](http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/20060223_prt_fact_sheet.html)>.

<sup>54</sup> Headquarters Department of the Army, *Fm 3-24, Counter-insurgency*, December 2006, <[www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf](http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf)>.

<sup>55</sup> See Ullrich Fichtner, "Die zivilisierten Kriege," in: *Der Spiegel*, no. 51, 2006, pp. 50ff. General David Petraeus, the author of these statements, is now the new commander in chief of US troops in Iraq.

<sup>56</sup> See *Post-War Iraq: Foreign Contributions to Training, Peace-keeping, and Reconstruction*, CRS Report for Congress, updated March 21, 2007, <<http://italy.usembassy.gov/pdf/other/RL32105.pdf>>.

<sup>57</sup> For 2007 the total costs of the war on terror are given as 173 billion US dollars, those of the war in Iraq as 135.2 billion. See *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*, CRS Report for Congress, updated July 16, 2007, p. 3, <[www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33110.pdf](http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33110.pdf)>. For 2008 President Bush updated the defence funding request for the war on terror to a total of \$196.4 billion US dollars. See The White House, Fact Sheet: 2008 War Funding Request, <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/10/print/20071022-7.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/10/print/20071022-7.html)>.

<sup>58</sup> On the contribution of the EU, see note 46, for that of the UN, note. 43.

## Security Co-operation between the EU and the United States

Security co-operation with the United States has a long tradition in Europe. Even France, which has always pursued the goal of emancipating Europe from dependence on the United States, has never questioned the fundamental importance of transatlantic co-operation. Even when the United States' activities in the Iraq war caused clear consternation in some European states, this did nothing to change the firmly anchored conviction in Europe that the major problems of the world cannot be resolved without the United States and certainly not in opposition to it. The EU Security Strategy, which was formulated during this period of irritation in transatlantic relations, states the following on this point: "The transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a formidable force for good in the world. Our aim should be an effective and balanced partnership with the United States." At the same time this wording constitutes an appeal to the US administration to accept "an effective balanced partnership."

In the American perception, by contrast, NATO is almost the only crystallization point for security co-operation with Europe. In the 2002 version of the NSS the chapter on internal co-operation contains long passages about NATO, Russia, China and partner countries in the Pacific. The EU is referred to only twice, and then only briefly. On one occasion it is named as a partner in opening up world trade. ESDP as such is not mentioned, but the document nonetheless welcomes the European allies' efforts "to forge a greater foreign policy and defense identity with the EU," albeit with the proviso that in order to limit damage to the Alliance, the Europeans must ensure, in close consultation with the United States, that this takes place in accord with NATO.<sup>59</sup> The *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* of the US Defense Department of 2006, as might be expected, names NATO as a key organization in the chapter on international co-operation. Neither the EU nor ESDP are mentioned. And although the report praises the setting up of a Euro-

<sup>59</sup> The exact words were: "[...] and commit ourselves to close consultations to ensure that these developments work with NATO," see NSS (2002) [see note 2], pp. 25f.

pean police force, the abbreviation "EU" is deliberately omitted.<sup>60</sup>

An independent study on EU-US relations, commissioned by the European Commission in 2005, gives two main reasons for the low profile given to the EU in US policy. The first is that the dialogue between the EU and the United States lacks political commitment both on the part of the political leadership and at the working level. The second reason is that the EU as an organization is insufficiently understood both in Washington and by the American public.<sup>61</sup> Little has changed since then, at least not in the field of security policy. When Daniel Fried, the Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, listed transatlantic priorities in a recent speech to the Center for National Policy, he focussed almost exclusively on the United States' activities in NATO and the value of co-operation with Russia. The EU is not mentioned as a priority.<sup>62</sup>

The view that ESDP is of little relevance or even that it constitutes a damaging rival to NATO is something of a tradition in the United States. Its inception in 1999 was accompanied by a considerable degree of mistrust on the part of the Clinton administration. At least initially the United States feared that if an EU state that was also a member of NATO got into difficulties during an EU military operation, the United States would be drawn into the conflict willy-nilly via its treaty obligation to engage in collective defence. However, the primary US objection to an independent ESDP was that it perceived it as a superfluous duplication of the security function of NATO, which in the long term could damage the Alliance and hence the influence of the United States on security policy in Europe. In this phase the EU repeatedly

<sup>60</sup> *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 6, 2006, pp. 87f, <[www.defenselink.mil/qdr/report/Report20060203.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/qdr/report/Report20060203.pdf)>.

<sup>61</sup> See John Peterson, *Review of the Framework for Relations between the European Union and the United States. An Independent Study commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate General External Relations, Unit C1: Relations with the United States and Canada*, Brussels, n.d. [2005], p. 4, <[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/us/revamping/final\\_report\\_260405.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/us/revamping/final_report_260405.pdf)>.

<sup>62</sup> See Daniel Fried, *Transatlantic Priorities: The Short List. Remarks Before the Center for National Policy*, Washington, D.C., April 18, 2007, <[www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/83389.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/83389.htm)>.



assured the United States that the ESDP was not intended to compete with NATO but rather to complement it and that it would even strengthen transatlantic cohesion. In any case the EU would only engage in military action if NATO as a whole did not do so (i.e., without the United States). Eventually the United States agreed at the NATO summit in April 1999 to transfer to the EU the possibility of having recourse to the integrated command structure and to the collective assets of NATO that had been granted to the West European Union in 1996, and to further expand this authority particularly with regard to procedural matters.<sup>63</sup> This move was also intended to pre-empt a possible French initiative to have the EU establish a permanent command structure of its own. The integrated command structure of NATO, with its sixteen headquarters and a personnel volume of more than 10,000, is not only the centrepiece of NATO's military integration but also serves as the basis for the Alliance's ability to engage in military action. To duplicate these structures would indeed posit the EU as a rival to NATO with all that would imply for the Transatlantic Alliance.<sup>64</sup>

At the same time the ESDP goal of further developing European military capability was received positively in Washington. Within the framework of NATO the United States had already been urging the Europeans to undertake greater efforts in this area for some time, without any great progress having been made.

When the Clinton government was replaced by the Bush administration, the ESDP initially came in for renewed criticism in the United States. It was only the reassurances of British Prime Minister Tony Blair that led Washington to conclude that the ESDP could indeed be regarded favourably, as long as it was not

damaging to NATO.<sup>65</sup> For this reason the four-nation summit held in Brussels in April 2003—contemptuously referred to as the “chocolate summit”—at which France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg proposed to set up the nucleus of a permanent European operational headquarters in the Brussels suburb of Tervuren caused major irritation in the United States. This was interpreted by Washington as the beginning of a duplication of the NATO command structure and aroused sharp protests. The US ambassador to NATO at the time, Nicholas Burns, even called this initiative “the most serious threat to the future of NATO”.<sup>66</sup> After the project was reduced to an operative planning cell consisting of a maximum of ninety people, the protests quietened down. Since then the United States has continued to regard ESDP with mistrust but as basically rather irrelevant, since the major boost to European military capability that the US had perceived as the only positive aspect of ESDP has failed to materialize.

Following the unmistakable discord in the transatlantic relationship in the prelude to and during the Iraq war, President Bush's visit to Brussels in February 2005 was intended to herald a new era of co-operation between the United States and the Europeans both in NATO and in the EU. In his brief address to the European Council on February 22, 2005, Bush emphasized the United States' interest “...that the European Union [...] become a continued, viable, strong partner.” Here he singled out trade relations and common values, praised the EU's initiatives in the Middle East and in Afghanistan and showed appreciation for its suggestions on Iraq.<sup>67</sup> But after that the EU disappeared again from Washington's horizon, at least as a security partner.

Formal structures for bilateral co-operation between the EU and the United States do exist. An EU-US summit meeting takes place every year at which the EU is represented by the Troika, that is, by the High Representative for Foreign- and Security Policy, the current EU-Council President and the President of

<sup>63</sup> It was decided at the NATO Council of Ministers in Berlin 1996 that the WEU should be offered the possibility of having recourse to NATO capabilities. This agreement is referred to in short as the “Berlin Agreements.” See Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, *Final Communiqué*, Berlin, June 3, 1996 (Press Communiqué M-NAC-1(96)63), <[www.nato.int/docu/pr/1996/p96-063e.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1996/p96-063e.htm)>. On the Washington agreements known as “Berlin-plus” see *Washington Summit Communiqué*, April 24, 1999, nos. 9 und 10, <[www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-064e.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-064e.htm)>.

<sup>64</sup> The military integration of a NATO member is defined by its participation in the NATO command structure and collective defence planning of the Alliance. France does not participate in either of these. France's repeated demands for the EU to have the autonomous power to act meant that American fears had already been over-sensitized.

<sup>65</sup> See also Bastian Giegerich, Darya Pushkina and Adam Mount, “Towards a Strategic Partnership? The US and Russian Response to the European Security and Defence Policy,” in: *Security Dialogue*, vol.37 (September 2006), no. 3, pp. 385–407, <<http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/37/3/385>>.

<sup>66</sup> See “U.S. Clashes with Europeans on Defense Ambitions,” in: *The New York Times*, October 17, 2003.

<sup>67</sup> See The United States Mission to the European Union, *U.S., EU Leaders Cite Cooperation on Iraq, Middle East Peace*, Brussels, February 22, 2005, <<http://useu.usmission.gov/Article.asp?ID=8748CD08-F1CE-4E4B-828C-26F791044B23>>.

the EU Commission. At the ministerial level Troika representatives hold regular meetings with the US Secretary of State. Similarly institutionalized are meetings of the EU-US Senior Level Group, the Political Directors and the Working Group meetings.<sup>68</sup> Above and beyond that only the EU Commission currently has a representation in Washington while the US administration has one at the EU in Brussels. These representations are not, however, concerned with security affairs, even if the US representation in Brussels was recently assigned a military advisor on EU (and NATO) issues.

Even if the will were there, it is no easy matter to co-operate with the European Union in the field of security. The variety of EU structures alone makes the situation extremely complicated. There are, for example, two general directorates for foreign relations, one under the Commission (first pillar of the EU) and the other under the Secretariat-General (second pillar), whose powers are difficult to separate. While the Commission is responsible for humanitarian assistance—one of the main Petersberg Tasks envisaged by ESDP—authority falls not to the Commissioner for External Relations but exclusively to the Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid. Equally puzzling is the assignment of mandates to the EU organs. In meetings with the EU Troika it is not clear which of the three EU representatives has the say, the High Representative, the President of the Council or the Commission representative. In foreign policy affairs it is not only the HR/SG and the Council President who make public statements but, increasingly frequently, the Commission President or the Commissioner responsible for external relations as well. Meetings of US representatives with EU bodies are hampered by the fact that the EU states have usually already decided on a common position in preparatory meetings, making dialogue with the Americans rather unproductive.<sup>69</sup> As a result the US administration prefers to seek direct contact with the individual European governments in order to influence their positions before a decision is taken in Brussels.

So far transatlantic co-operation in the field of security has brought only meagre results. Leaving aside the numerous declarations that accompany

every EU-US summit, concrete agreements have been reached only in the fields of justice and the police as a consequence of the events of September 11, 2001.<sup>70</sup> In addition, at the EU-US summit in June 2005 a Joint Programme of Work on the Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction was commissioned.<sup>71</sup>

ESDP as such has so far not appeared on the agenda of transatlantic co-operation. If asked about the reasons for this, representatives of the US administration generally reply: Why should we co-operate with an organization in which we have neither a seat nor a vote, when we have NATO for this purpose.

Direct military co-operation between the United States and the EU is currently not on the agenda on either side of the Atlantic. For the United States it would scarcely be acceptable to subordinate US armed forces to an organization in which they were not able to directly influence the political control and strategic direction of the operation. The Committee of Contributors, through which Brussels offers non-EU participants in an operation the opportunity to have a say in some details of the mission, is not a substitute for this, since the political control and strategic direction of the operation as a whole remains the EU's prerogative. Military co-operation between the United States and the EU is only conceivable as an indirect process via the EU-NATO agreements, in cases where the EU has recourse to NATO resources via "Berlin plus." For the Europeans, too, NATO seems to epitomize the military aspect of transatlantic co-operation, for from the way it has been interpreted up to now ESDP is intended to enable the Europeans to conduct crisis management without the military assistance of the United States. The ESDP planning targets for the development of European military capabilities are therefore directed entirely at European efforts.

In civil crisis management, the EU-US summit held in May of this year may mark the beginning of a new trend in co-operation. The joint progress report cites technical consultations with the US Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization intended to serve the

<sup>68</sup> The working groups deal mainly with economic and legal issues.

<sup>69</sup> See *Review of the Framework for Relations between the European Union and the United States. An Independent Study Commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate General External Relations, Tender OJ 2004/p 83-070340, Brussels 2004.*

<sup>70</sup> Above all an agreement on intensive co-operation between the intelligence services and Europol and Eurojust with the US Department of Justice and the US Law Enforcement Agencies. See *EU Factsheet: The Fight Against Terrorism*, June 2005, <<http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/3Counterterrorfinal170605.pdf>>.

<sup>71</sup> Council of the European Union, *EU-U.S. Joint Programme of Work on the Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Brussels, June 20, 2005, <[http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/85388.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/85388.pdf)>.

purposes of information exchange and the co-ordination of mutual participation in training measures.<sup>72</sup> But even more important is the announcement contained in the joint security policy declaration<sup>73</sup> issued by the summit of the possible participation of US police forces in the planned civil *Rule of Law* mission of the EU in Kosovo.<sup>74</sup> Although the details for this participation still need to be clarified, it would nonetheless be the first time that US forces have served as part of an ESDP mission. In this particular case it may be easier for the United States to accept this role, since 200 US police officials are already involved in the current UN mission UNMIK, which is to continue under the leadership of the EU.<sup>75</sup>

But in spite of these two new attempts to engage in co-operation under the auspices of ESDP, NATO will continue to be the main forum for EU-US co-operation. According to the security policy declaration issued by the summit, this new co-operation will take place “consistent with and building upon co-operation with NATO.”<sup>76</sup> In the language of communiqués this means that little will change.

<sup>72</sup> See *2007 U.S.–EU Summit, Political Progress Report*, p. 7, <[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/us/sum04\\_07/progress\\_report\\_political\\_issues.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/us/sum04_07/progress_report_political_issues.pdf)>.

<sup>73</sup> See Council of the European Union, *General Affairs and External Relations Council Meeting*, April 10.2006, <[www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/89218.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/89218.pdf)>.

<sup>74</sup> The exact wording was: “We welcome the EU’s decision to establish a European Security and Defence Policy police and rule of law mission in Kosovo, and we look forward to US participation in that mission,” *2007 EU–U.S. Summit: Promoting Peace* [see note 12], p. 1.

<sup>75</sup> See *UN Mission’s Summary, Detailed by Country*, December 31, 2006, <[www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2006/dec06\\_3.pdf](http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2006/dec06_3.pdf)>.

<sup>76</sup> *2007 EU–U.S. Summit: Promoting Peace* [see note 12], p. 10.

## Conclusions

Given the general consensus about aims and interests in the field of security policy as well as the common perception of threats and challenges, close EU–US cooperation in crisis management ought to be a foregone conclusion. One obstacle to this, however, is the transatlantic dissent over how security concepts should be put into practice. Both sides are convinced that their own approach is the right one and expect the other to go some way towards accepting it. The Europeans are unlikely to adopt the norms for action or the capabilities of a global superpower, nor indeed would they need to for the EU to position itself as a global player. In the United States, on the other hand, a learning process is observable as both the Washington administration and the American public recognize the excessive burden of a unilateral course, even with the support of a “coalition of the willing,” and the political and financial advantages of multilateral cooperation. A Congress dominated by the Democrats has certainly accelerated this changing awareness. Therefore, the aspect of burden-sharing will most likely receive greater weight in US policy and subsequently Europeans will be approached with offers of closer co-operation, not only in the framework of NATO. For the Europeans, both in NATO and in the EU, it will be important to bring their political goals and concepts into the discussion with representatives of the US Congress early on. But even with the new Congress and a new US administration in place there will continue to be differences over strategic policy concepts and approaches. Therefore, both sides will need to strive to find a common basis, which will make it possible to join forces in crisis management in concrete situations.

The difference in military capabilities between the Europeans and the United States will continue to exist. But while the United States will remain unrivalled in its military strength, the US armed forces have a long way to go before they can successfully undertake peace-building missions—particularly in problem regions. At any rate crash courses in “Cultural Awareness” will not be sufficient to overcome traditional military thinking.

Conversely, it cannot be the goal of European armed forces to build up a counterweight to US military

strength. But the Europeans should at least try harder to attain their own goals. This is less a question of the level of national defence budgets (which realistically speaking in most EU states cannot be increased anyway) than of the political willingness to think and act in a more European way. With regard to the common security and defence policy this means that the members of the EU should permit integrative steps that would allow the development of armed forces in a European perspective rather than from a national one. The ideal case would be a European army. But for that to become reality would require a number of major preconditions to be fulfilled: an effective European government, European parliamentary control and a common defence budget.

A European army currently remains a vision. But much could be achieved if, in developing their national armed forces, the individual EU states would renounce military capabilities that can already be adequately supplied by other EU members and concentrate their resources in those areas where there are still European deficits. So far even such modest integrative measures have been narrowly constrained by national sensitivities and by the heterogeneity of the EU states. These include, particularly on the part of France and Britain, the continuing adherence to the ability to act autonomously. And while the neutral status of Sweden, Finland, Austria and Ireland allows these states to participate militarily in EU operations, a permanent transnational armed forces structure would impose legal limitations. Even more serious are the implications of the Danish opt-out from the military part of ESDP, which means, among other things, that Denmark would have to withdraw its military units from an operation if—as happened in the Balkans—an existing NATO mission is taken over by the EU.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>77</sup> On the basis of the 5th Protocol of the Treaty of Amsterdam Denmark occupies “a special position vis-à-vis EU citizenship, the economic and monetary union and defence policy and the fields of justice and internal affairs.” With regard to ESDP this means that Denmark will participate only in the development of civil capability but not in the development of military capacity. This also applies to EU-led operations using military instruments.

Even if it is currently impossible to realize integrated military co-operation involving all twenty-seven EU members, at least those European states that have no national reservations and for whom in any case only multilateral operations come into question could play a pioneering role in the integration process. An initiative of this kind would do much to achieve the necessary European capabilities more cost-effectively and sooner. The “permanent structured co-operation” envisaged by the reform treaty could provide the EU framework for this. But even outside formal EU procedures more cost-effective and more efficient joint action by individual states would be possible.

The transatlantic differences in civil capabilities will remain, at least for the foreseeable future. Although the lesson of Iraq has led the US administration to include the aspect of “comprehensive security” in its own strategies and concepts, the practical application of this concept and the development of corresponding capabilities are still in their infancy. Even under favourable conditions it will still be a long time before the necessary personnel is made available, has been sufficiently trained and has gathered the requisite experience.

Differences in potential in military and civil capabilities for crisis management make a division of labour seem plausible. Given its military strength, the United States could concentrate on those operations requiring a high level of military capability, while the Europeans with their limited military but special civil capabilities could primarily fulfil peacekeeping and stabilization tasks. In a temporal sense, a form of labour-sharing has already taken place in the Balkans, where both in Macedonia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina the EU has taken over NATO operations at the point when a fundamental level of stability had already been established. (The two autonomous EU missions in the Congo were limited in terms of both military and time requirements.) But a general division of labour along the lines of “the US cooks the dinner and the Europeans wash the dishes” can be in neither the US nor the European interest. For the foreign and security policy of the United States it would prove more than damaging in the long term if military strength remained its primary instrument for resolving the world’s conflicts. And by the same token it would be at odds with the EU’s self-image and its ambitions as a global player to limit itself permanently to militarily undemanding peace missions and the use of civil instruments. In any case there will always be instances, given the political sensitivities of certain

regions like the Middle East, where military intervention by the United States (with or without NATO) would be more likely to create additional problems than resolve existing ones and where the use of EU forces would therefore be the better option. In other regions, e.g. in the Balkans, a US presence is considered to be an important stabilizing factor that also needs to be taken account of by EU missions.

But even without engaging in task-sharing as a matter of principle, close and pragmatic co-operation is required in order to make optimal use of the differing strengths of the two sides and to compensate for their respective weaknesses. Even if there are reservations on both sides of the Atlantic about formal military co-operation, informal US support for EU military operations would be conceivable at least in those areas where US forces do not need to be deployed on the spot.

In the field of civil crisis management, US participation in a future civil ESDP mission in Kosovo might be a first step with a view to establishing permanent contacts and direct co-operation mechanisms between the EU and the United States. Something similar might be possible in Afghanistan, since there Afghan police forces are being trained by both the EU and the United States.

Fundamentally any effective form of co-operation requires a continuous process of information exchange, consultation, coordination and cooperation—before, during and after a crisis. This is already difficult enough to achieve in the United States–NATO relationship, and such a dialogue with the EU has hardly taken place as yet. In order to advance this process, the EU needs to shape its internal structures in such a way as to considerably reduce the overlap of jurisdiction between the Council and the Commission so as to improve its responsiveness. The changes envisaged by the reform treaty will reduce these structural problems from 2009 onwards. The double-hatting of the future High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, who simultaneously performs the functions of Vice President and Commissioner for External Relations in the Commission, raise the hope that the resources used and actions taken in the field of EU foreign policy will be more stringently co-ordinated between the two pillars.<sup>78</sup> Also the forth-

<sup>78</sup> For example, in policy determining the allocation of financial aid to third countries. But the relationship between the future president of the European Council and the High Representative in the field of foreign and security policy still needs to be clarified.

coming European External Action Service will improve the bilateral responsiveness of the EU in foreign and security affairs. Nevertheless, the EU is still far from issuing the “phone number for Europe” that Henry Kissinger once wished for, although in the future there should at least be fewer numbers to call. However, unless the Europeans invest the new structures with greater authority to take the initiative and make decisions, these will continue to have largely a “directory enquiries” or “switchboard” function.

Yet co-operation between the EU and the US is, of course, not just a question of structures. As already mentioned, more important is the willingness of the two sides to engage in a continuous dialogue. Here it is not a matter of increasing the number of official meetings or of establishing new bilateral bodies. Even the proposal to create a new high-ranking forum in which the United States, NATO and the European Union, including their member-states, would be represented, would only help slightly.<sup>79</sup> For although this would give the existing, formally separate dialogue-triangle United States–NATO–EU a common institutional consultation framework in which all aspects of crisis management and strategies for action could be discussed, the fact that neither side would bestow on this body the power to take decisions, means it would ultimately just be another talking shop almost identical in its composition and goals to the presently existing EU–NATO consultation mechanism and hence just another layer of bureaucracy. The current blockages in the EU–NATO relationship would at any rate not be overcome.

Much more effective would be to set up direct informal contacts between key individuals and offices in the EU and the US administration. In order for this to happen, though, Washington would have to become more strongly aware that in matters of security policy not only NATO but also the EU with its ESDP is a central partner. Direct contacts between the US Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization of the State Department and corresponding offices in Brussels would be a good start.

Conversely the EU states would have to recognize that a national foreign, security and defence policy will only be taken seriously beyond the borders of Europe if it is effectively embedded in a European

framework. This means that the member-states’ attitude to the EU should be governed less by a desire to maintain national autonomy and a maximum right of veto in these areas of politics but instead by the perspective of how more might be achieved jointly.

<sup>79</sup> See Franklin D. Kramer and Simon Serfaty, *Recasting the Euro-Atlantic Partnership*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 1, 2007, <[www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/070315\\_eusnato.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/070315_eusnato.pdf)>.

## Abbreviations

CPATT	Civilian Police Assistance Training Team
ECAP	European Capabilities Action Plan
EDA	European Defence Agency
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HR/SG	High Representative Common Foreign and Security Policy/Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
NSS	National Security Strategy (of the United States)
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRTs	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
SALIS	Strategic Airlift Interim Solution
WEU	West European Union