The End of Civilian Power EU: A Welcome Demise or Cause for Concern?

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The end of the Cold War might have been expected to usher in an era in which civilian power could be of greater influence: the overwhelming exigencies of defence disappeared, the nuclear standoff was over. Joseph Nye argued that attention could turn to the "real issue – how power is changing in world politics".[2] The exercise of power in international relations was less and less dependent on military force. Yet the impact of the end of the Cold War on the European Community was not to reinforce its civilian power image – quite the opposite. Instead, the new European Union (EU) established by the Maastricht Treaty has set about acquiring a "defence dimension".

At the Intergovernmental Conferences of 1991 and 1996-97, improvement of the mechanisms for foreign policy cooperation among the EU member states was high on the agenda. Much of the discussion centred on proposals relating to the EU's defence dimension. The Maastricht Treaty made provisions for using the Western European Union (WEU) as the military arm of the EU's new Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and declared that the CFSP would include the "eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence" (Article J.4.1). The Amsterdam Treaty modified that wording slightly (the "progressive" framing of a common defence policy), and provided for closer EU-WEU institutional links. The EU could undertake humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping, and crisis management, including peacemaking

(the "Petersberg tasks"[3]), using the WEU to implement such decisions. All of the EU member states could participate in these operations, even if they are not full members of the WEU. In 1998-99, the UK led a new initiative to endow the *EU itself* with a military dimension; the Cologne European Council in June 1999 then declared that "the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, 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 without prejudice to actions by NATO".[4] The WEU is now scheduled to disappear, most likely by incorporation into the EU; in November 1999, the CFSP High Representative, Javier Solana, was named WEU Secretary-General as well. In December 1999, the Helsinki European Council took several important decisions to enable the EU to undertake the Petersberg tasks, declaring that by 2003 the EU will be able to deploy 50,000-60,000 troops for up to one year in such operations, although the heads of state and government took care to state that this did "not imply the creation of a European army".[5]

This article will argue that despite the obvious current weaknesses of the EU's defence dimension, it is now abandoning its civilian power image. The second section questions the assumptions that lie behind such a move, in particular the widespread perception that the EU will be unable to act effectively in international affairs unless it can use military instruments. The third section examines the security threats facing the EU and questions how military instruments would help reduce or eliminate them. The EU risks generating a "security dilemma" itself, if outsiders feel threatened by the establishment of an armed bloc centred on the Union. Finally, the article will argue that the case for a civilian power EU is still strong.

Is this the end of civilian power EU?

Hanns Maull has defined civilian power as involving:

- the acceptance of the necessity of cooperation with others in the pursuit of international objectives;

- the concentration on non-military, primarily economic, means to secure national goals, with military power left as a residual instrument serving essentially to safeguard other means of international interaction; and

- a willingness to develop supranational structures to address critical issues of international management.[6]

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3   These are the tasks that the WEU declared it would be willing to carry out at a meeting in Petersberg, near Bonn, in June 1992.
4   "Declaration of the European Council on Strengthening the Common European Policy on Security and Defence", Cologne, 3 June 1999.
5   Conclusions of the European Council, Helsinki, 10-11 December 1999.
6   H. W. Maull, "Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 69, no. 5, 1990, pp. 92-3.

To the extent that it acted in international relations, the Community (and European Political Cooperation, or EPC) was a civilian power: lacking military means (even as a "residual instrument"), it relied on economic and diplomatic instruments to influence other actors. Furthermore, the values and objectives of Community/EPC external activity differed from those of the superpowers. Economic stability was considered important for political stability (hence the US and West Europeans differed over the causes of conflict in Central America and the basis for peace in Europe), respect for human rights was to be encouraged through quiet diplomacy and long-term interdependence, regional cooperation (the "export of the Community model") was promoted. As Christopher Hill has argued, a distinctive West European position in international affairs developed, which emphasised "diplomatic rather than coercive instruments, the centrality of mediation in conflict resolution, the importance of long-term economic solutions to political problems, and the need for indigenous peoples to determine their own fate...".[7]

Hill, however, distinguished between two possible models of the Community's international behaviour: the civilian power model and the power bloc.[8] In the first, the Community/EPC relies primarily on persuasion and negotiation in dealing with third countries and international issues; in the second, the EC/EPC uses its economic strength for political purposes, to reach its own objectives. Hill's civilian power model is close to François Duchêne's vision of the Community's role: "The European Community's interest as a civilian group of countries long on economic power and relatively short on armed force is as far as possible to *domesticate* relations between states, including those of its own members and those with states outside its frontiers".[9] Neither type of behaviour, however, relies on the threat or use of force, and can be subsumed here under the more general category of civilian power.

Sceptics have long doubted the merits of civilian power. Hedley Bull famously argued that the power or influence exerted by the EC and other civilian actors was conditional upon a strategic environment provided by the military power of the superpowers.[10] And Alfred Pijpers pointed clearly to the "limits of a civilian power in a rather uncivil world". [11] But in and of itself, civilian power was not without

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7   C. Hill, "National Interests - The Insuperable Obstacles?", in Hill, C. (ed.) *National Foreign Policies and European Political Cooperation* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983) p. 200.

8   C. Hill, "European Foreign Policy: Power Bloc, Civilian Model - or Flop?", in Rummel, R. (ed.) *The Evolution of an International Actor: Western Europe's New Assertiveness* (Boulder: Westview, 1990).

9   F. Duchêne, "The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence", in Kohnstamm, M. and W. Hager (eds) *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign-Policy Problems Before the European Community* (London: Macmillan, 1973) pp. 19-20.

10   H. Bull, "Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 21, nos. 1 and 2, September/December 1982.

11   A. Pijpers, "The Twelve Out-of-Area: A Civilian Power in an Uncivil World?", in Pijpers A., E. Regelsberger, W. Wessels, and G. Edwards (eds) *European Political Cooperation in the 1980s: A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe?* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1988) p. 162.

influence, as evidenced by the ever increasing demands on the Community/EPC by third countries for political dialogue, aid, trade ties, and other benefits.

Yet we can question how deep the attachment to a civilian power Community was. Before the Maastricht Treaty, there were several (unsuccessful) attempts to add some sort of defence dimension to the European integration process, including the European Defence Community, the Fouchet Plans, and the Genscher-Colombo proposal. Several factors blocked the development of a purely European defence identity, most of which had little to do with any intrinsic merits of civilian power. The most important of these was, obviously, that the West European states needed NATO and the US in defence against the Soviet bloc, and did not want to jeopardise this system. Security and defence were matters best handled in other fora; the Community/EPC was a civilian power "by default".

Attempts to develop West European cooperation in the security and defence field increased in the 1980s, due mainly to the transatlantic crisis (for example, concern over the Reagan administration's bellicosity towards the Soviet bloc). But Denmark, Greece, and Ireland opposed discussing defence within EPC, each for their own reasons, although they agreed to add the "political and economic aspects of security" to EPC's remit. In 1984, the other seven member states revived the Western European Union, as a forum in which they could discuss defence issues without a US presence, although this was couched in terms of "Europeanizing" the Alliance, or reinforcing the European pillar of NATO. Panos Tsakaloyannis has argued that the Community thus abandoned its civilian posture in the early 1980s.[12] While this is an exaggeration, as there was still a "taboo" on defence,[13] certainly the foundation for dropping the civilian power image was laid before the Cold War ended; further integration was already associated with adding some sort of a defence dimension.

At the end of the Cold War, three considerations seem to have prompted moves to develop a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI), which would be more or less connected to the European Community. First, German unification prompted the "deepening" of European integration, as a means of anchoring a united Germany to Western multilateral structures. This entailed replacing EPC with a Common Foreign and Security Policy, which was seen almost automatically as requiring a military profile. Second, the US was withdrawing many of its troops from Western Europe, as they were no longer needed as collateral: this both made room for an ESDI and seemed to necessitate it. Responsibility for territorial defence would thus fall increasingly on the West Europeans, although the prospect of a direct attack on their territory was remoter than it had ever been. Third, military force did not seem to be so irrelevant after all, though not perhaps entirely in

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12 P. Tsakaloyannis, "The EC: From Civilian Power to Military Integration", in Lodge, J. (ed.) *The European Community and the Challenge of the Future* (London: Pinter, 1989) pp. 245-6.

13 As Holly Wyatt-Walter argued in *The European Community and the Security Dilemma, 1979-1992* (London: Macmillan, 1997) part II.

the way realists might argue. Tyrants (most notably Saddam Hussein) still caused trouble, necessitating a collective response. The number of UN peacekeeping missions doubled in the late 1980s, to sweep up the detritus of superpower rivalry. Ethnic conflicts exploded, especially as the Soviet and Yugoslav federations collapsed, thus creating further demand for peacekeeping missions. A higher-profile role for the Community in international relations entailed participating in such missions: in particular, "Europe" was expected to act collectively in the Gulf War and in the Yugoslav crises. It thus needed to acquire the military capability to do so.

Nonetheless, there have still been fundamental divisions between the member states over ESDI. The primary sources of disagreement are the relationship of a European defence structure to NATO, and to the EU (some member states support an EU-WEU merger; the UK and the neutrals have – until recently – been opposed to this). Thus the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties reflected compromises: the EU's aim is only the "progressive" framing of a common defence policy. The WEU remains undeveloped and dependent on NATO, and was used on only one occasion to back up a CFSP joint action, to coordinate police forces in Mostar. On other occasions, the member states have not been able to agree to use the WEU for Petersberg tasks, although they discussed the possibility: the Yugoslav war (1991); the Great Lakes region (1996)[14]; and Albania (1997). NATO remains the primary organisation for the defence of Europe, *and* for any out-of-area operations.[15]

But the British about-face on an EU defence dimension, as reflected in the joint Franco-British declaration of St. Malo in December 1998, has led to significant developments in the field of defence. The EU and WEU are essentially to be merged, the European Council has set a goal for the EU's eventual military capability,[16] and new political and military bodies will be established within the EU Council.[17] The EU will acquire the capacity to undertake the Petersberg tasks, which involve military intervention and not collective defence (still the preserve of NATO). The developments signal a major shift towards the development of an EU military capability, although the EU is certainly not a military power – yet.

The Union is still, in practice at least, a civilian power. And regardless of a lack of conviction about the merits of civilian power on the part of some participants in the EU's foreign policy-making machinery, the EU has in fact embraced civilian power in its international relations. Some of its most successful international actions and policies have been civilian, including the Pact for Stability in

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14   In the case of the Great Lakes, the Council requested that the WEU examine how it could contribute to a joint action to enable the delivery of humanitarian aid to eastern Zaire and facilitate the return of Rwandan refugees (OJ L 312, 2 December 1996). But as the refugees began to return to Rwanda anyway, the member states decided not to intervene.

15   See G. Wyn Rees, *The Western European Union at the Crossroads: Between Trans-Atlantic Solidarity and European Integration* (Boulder: Westview, 1998), especially chapter 5.

16   The Helsinki European Council agreed that "cooperating voluntarily in EU-led operations, Member States must be able, by 2003, to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least 1 year military forces of up to 50,000-60,000 persons capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks".

17   These are: a standing Political and Security Committee; a Military Committee, composed of Chiefs of Defence; and a Military Staff.

Europe and, arguably, the enlargement project. Furthermore, the stated objectives of EU external action (both EC and CFSP) are clearly civilian: promotion of human rights and democratic principles, support for regional cooperation, conflict prevention and settlement, and so on.[18] The means by which the EU has tried to reach those objectives have been virtually exclusively civilian, including aid, association agreements and political dialogue. To an extent, as Henrik Larsen has argued, these actions reflect the "general emphasis in the Post Cold War Period on peaceful conflict resolution, political and economic means, and the importance of the liberal values as central to the solving of conflicts". But Larsen has also argued that the EU still has a very specific approach to international security, in which "non-military means are central in relation to solving concrete problems and conflicts".[19]

Yet the ultimate ambition of a common EU defence policy is there, however fuzzily stated, and impressive steps towards achieving it are under way. Even the neutral member states support an enhanced EU intervention capability.[20] The EU is thus in the process of discarding the civilian power image, although, as Richard Whitman also concluded in 1998, it is not quite a "superpower in the making".[21] One could argue that the EU will nonetheless remain a civilian power because it will only retain military power as a residual instrument: the capacity to undertake Petersberg tasks is necessary in the last resort, as Maull put it, "to safeguard other means of international interaction", such as trading relationships or cooperative frameworks. But by acquiring a defence dimension, the EU repudiates civilian power, as can be seen in the three principal arguments that have been advanced for adding the defence dimension.

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18 See, for example, the report of the foreign ministers to the June 1992 Lisbon European Council on "The Likely Development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with a View to Identifying Areas Open to Joint Action vis-à-vis Particular Countries or Groups of Countries", in *EC Bulletin* no. 6, 1992.

19 H. Larsen, "Concepts of Security in the EU/CFSP", p. 22. Paper presented to the Third Pan-European International Relations Conference and Joint Meeting with the International Studies Association, Vienna, 16-19 September 1998. Cited with permission of the author. To be published as "The Concept of Security in the EU/CFSP", in Chouliaraki, L. and L. Phillips (eds) *Discourse Across Disciplines* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming).

20 At the start of the 1996 IGC, Finland and Sweden called for a more active role for the EU in conflict management, including participation by the EU member states in joint peacekeeping and crisis management operations conducted by the WEU. "The IGC and the Security and Defence Dimension: Towards an Enhanced EU Role in Crisis Management", Memorandum from Finland and Sweden, 25 April 1996. See also N. Petersen, "The Nordic Trio and Future of the EU", in Edwards, G. and A. Pijpers (eds) *The Politics of European Treaty Reform: The 1996 Intergovernmental Conference and Beyond* (London: Pinter, 1997). Some neutral countries are even considering abandoning their neutrality and joining NATO.

21 R. Whitman, *From Civilian Power to Superpower? The International Identity of the European Union* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

Why add a defence dimension?

Three key assumptions are behind the arguments for an EU defence dimension:

1) The model for European integration in the foreign, security and defence fields is effectively the state. As Simon Nuttall has noted: "The response to these challenges [the new European environment] was to envisage a security and defence policy of the nation-state type, desired by some and contested by others."[22]

For proponents, the Union must acquire the traditional trappings of statehood including a foreign policy with a military dimension. This may be opposed by some actors, but the debate is essentially couched in terms of this state model. Even the theoretical debate is informed by this assumption: neofunctionalists and realists argue over whether economic integration will spill over into the security and defence fields, considered the ultimate bastion of sovereignty.

The proposals for reforms at the 1991 IGC illustrate this point. France and Germany stated that the aim should be to set up "a common European defence system in due course without which the construction of European Union would remain incomplete".[23] Italy and the UK declared: "Political union implies the gradual elaboration and implementation of a common foreign and security policy and a stronger European defence identity with the longer term perspective of a common defence policy compatible with the common defence policy we already have with all our allies in NATO."[24] More recently, the Cologne European Council declared that development of the EU's military capability is "a new step in the construction of the European Union".

2) The CFSP will not be effective unless the EU can have recourse to military instruments. If the EU can use force, its influence will increase. This assumption is virtually universal, shared by the member states, the Commission, the European Parliament and many observers.

Frustration with the CFSP after Maastricht often centred on reluctance to use the WEU; the 1996-97 IGC was meant to address this "problem".[25] The Reflection Group on the 1996-97 IGC (representing the member states) stated that one of the objectives should be to endow the Union with a greater capacity for external action; according to the European Council of March 1996 (which opened the IGC), this entailed how better to assert the European identity in matters of security and

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22   S. Nuttall, "The Foreign and Security Policy Provisions of the Maastricht Treaty: Their Potential for the Future", in Monar, J., W. Ungerer, W. Wessels (eds) *The Maastricht Treaty on European Union: Legal Complexity and Political Dynamic* (Brussels: European Interuniversity Press, 1993) p. 136.

23   "Franco-German Proposals on Political Union: Security Policy Cooperation in the Framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of Political Union" (February 1991) in Laursen, F. and S. Vanhoonacker (eds) *The Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1992) p. 333.

24   "An Anglo-Italian Declaration on European Security and Defence" (5 October 1991) in Laursen and Vanhoonacker, *The Intergovernmental Conference*, p. 413.

25   Rees, *The Western European Union at the Crossroads*, p. 116.

defence.[26] The 1998 St. Malo Declaration and the Cologne European Council declared that for the EU to play its full role on the international stage, the EU had to be able to use military force.

The Commission's proposal for the 1996-97 IGC stated: "[t]he Union's foreign policy suffers from its inability to project credible military force".[27] European Commissioner Hans van den Broek argued: "To be credible, the Union needs power behind its diplomacy and power to act if diplomacy fails."[28] Even the European Parliament's stated priorities for the 1996-97 IGC included the gradual merging of the WEU into the EU.[29]

One observer, Barbara-Christine Ryba, argues:

> Si l'Union souhaite prendre au sérieux son aspiration, inscrite dans le traité sur l'UE, de jouer un rôle significatif sur la scène internationale permettant de prévenir et d'agir, notre conviction est qu'elle n'aura pas d'autre choix que de se doter d'une défense européenne.[30]

Peter van Ham agrees: "it is difficult to foresee an effective CFSP which is capable of projecting peace and stability across Europe and beyond, without the option of using military force as a last resort".[31] And Göran Therborn asserts, "without the backing of force and a willingness to use it, 'Europe' is unlikely to become a normative power, telling other parts of the world what political, economic and social institutions they should have."[32]

3) Military force is useful and effective, especially in an uncivil world. Civilian power is of limited utility in a world filled with leaders, groups and countries willing to use force to achieve their goals. For Michael Clarke, the Union's potential to encourage peaceful behaviour is limited to the long run, because "economic interdependence, international institutionalism, and the incentive to join prosperous

26   Turin European Council (29 March 1996), Presidency Conclusions on the Intergovernmental Conference, in Italian Presidency, *Intergovernmental Conference on the Revision of the Treaties: Collected Texts* (Luxembourg: OOPEC, 1997) p. 72.

27   European Commission, "Reinforcing Political Union and Preparing for Enlargement", COM (96) 90 final, 28 February 1996, p. 13.

28   H. van den Broek, "Why Europe Needs a Common Foreign and Security Policy", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1996, p. 4.

29   "Resolution embodying (i) Parliament's opinion on the convening of the Intergovernmental Conference, and (ii) an evaluation of the work of the Reflection Group and a definition of the political priorities of the European Parliament with a view to the Intergovernmental Conference", reproduced in Italian Presidency, *Intergovernmental Conference*, p. 53.

30   B.-C. Ryba, "La Politique Etrangère et de Sécurité (PESC): Mode d'Emploi et Bilan d'une Année d'Application (fin 1993/1994)", *Revue du Marché Commun et de l'Union Européenne* 384 (January 1995), p. 35.

31   P. van Ham, "The EU and WEU: From Cooperation to Common Defence?", in Edwards and Pijpers, *The Politics of European Treaty Reform,* p. 308.

32   G. Therborn, "Europe in the Twenty-first Century: The World's Scandinavia?", in Gowan, P. and P. Anderson (eds) *The Question of Europe* (London: Verso, 1997) p. 380.

security communities are difficult to manipulate for the good in short-term crises".[33] The Community's failure to bring the fighting in the former Yugoslavia to an end is often cited in support of this argument.[34]

Wielding military instruments will reap benefits; military power allows states, and therefore will allow the EU, to exercise influence. And, more importantly, by intervening militarily or threatening to do so, the EU will be able to resolve crises, and even prevent conflicts from erupting. The perceived effectiveness of NATO's use of force in Bosnia and Kosovo supports this argument, however unique or nuanced these successes may be. These two cases have provided *the* justification and spur for the development of an EU military capability.

Questioning the assumptions

These three assumptions should be subjected to more intensive questioning than is currently taking place. The assumptions about national foreign policy, apparently the model for an EU foreign policy, for example, are remarkably traditional. Although some member states are neutral, and Germany was oft-cited as *the* foremost example of a civilian power, different models for European integration in these fields do not appear on the agenda.

What is so striking about this lopsided debate is that the EU itself is *sui generis*; its development cannot be neatly categorised as a state-building enterprise, although key actors have pushed for such a project since the 1950s. Born of an attempt to reduce the threat of war within Western Europe, it is the premier example of how inter-state relations can be transformed through intense cooperation, which does not necessarily entail the creation of a superstate. From this, the civilian power image derives particular strength. But in the debate on an EU defence dimension, the contributions that a civilian EU could make to international relations have been discounted. François Duchêne has reiterated these: "With all its imperfections, the Community domesticates the balance of power into something which, if not as 'democratic' as domestic norms, has made the international system in Europe take a huge step in their direction".[35]

Assuming that the EU will have a more effective foreign policy if it can wield military instruments overlooks other much more serious obstacles to a common

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33 M. Clarke, "Future Security Threats and Challenges", in Pappas, S. A. and S. Vanhoonacker (eds) *The European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy: The Challenges of the Future* (Maastricht: European Institute of Public Administration, 1996) p. 66.

34 See S. A. Pappas and S. Vanhoonacker, "CFSP and 1996: A New Intergovernmental Conference, an Old Debate?", in Pappas and Vanhoonacker, *European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy*, p. 5.

35 F. Duchêne, *Jean Monnet: The First Statesman of Interdependence* (New York: W.W.Norton and Co., 1994) p. 405. This is a similar argument to that of the functionalists. David Mitrany criticised the project of European federalism because it did not loosen the conception of politics based on territorially sovereign units; on the contrary, it sought to re-create the sovereign state on a larger scale, which would be no more conducive to international peace and security than a system of smaller states. D. Mitrany, "The Prospect of Integration: Federal or Functional?", in J. S. Nye, Jr., *International Regionalism* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1968).

foreign policy. Most foreign policy does not involve the use of force. Excessive emphasis on the military dimension diverts attention from the key problem - the member states themselves. If they cannot agree, then whatever the institutional arrangements, there will be no common foreign policy and no use of foreign policy instruments, civilian or military. The "logic of diversity" (as Stanley Hoffmann argued many years ago) still holds true in many cases. There are also several other reforms that might improve EU foreign policy-making (such as reforming the EU's external representation), but the key issue is still that of building a consensus. But if we set aside the problem of achieving an EU consensus, it is still not clear what the EU would use military instruments for: in other words, what will a force of 60,000 troops "buy"? In a later section it is argued that it will not buy much: adding a military dimension will not turn the EU into a more influential actor.

The usefulness of military force should also be questioned. Where the use of force has been most often discussed is in terms of intervening in internal conflicts (which is what the Petersberg tasks would most likely involve). Yet there may be little that outsiders can, or should, do in these cases, especially when the combatants are still fighting. It is by no means clear that military force can help resolve conflicts. Ken Booth has argued:

> In their instinct to "do something", many people seem to have forgotten the limited utility of foreign forces in complex conflicts whose terrain features forests, mountains, cities and sanctuaries: Vietnam, Afghanistan, Beirut and Belfast. There is a dangerous over-confidence in military force in some quarters, which recent history does not support.[36]

States in practice have been hesitant to intervene at all in most conflicts: witness the discussions over sending soldiers to Albania or Zaire in 1996-97, or more recently the refusal to send ground troops to Kosovo. Assigning international forces tasks over and above protecting humanitarian deliveries is controversial.[37] This reflects several unhappy experiences, in which intervention has proved problematic or actually disastrous (as in Somalia).

Furthermore, intervention should take place within an agreed international framework of rules, as it is still viewed suspiciously. Surely the EU has an interest in upholding the framework of international law. As Adam Roberts notes, there is "no agreement in the international community on the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention, still less on any agreed definition of the circumstances in which it might be justified". [38] Above all, military intervention in internal conflicts (even for

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36   K. Booth, "Military Intervention:Duty and Prudence" in Freedmen, L. (ed.) *Military Intervention in European Conflicts* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 67.

37   The 1997 mission to Albania is an example: the UN mandate excluded the disarming of the population, even though this was a major security concern.

38   A. Roberts, *Humanitarian Action in War*, Adelphi Paper no. 305 (London: Oxford University Press, 1996) p. 26.

humanitarian purposes) is simply not considered legitimate unless launched or sanctioned by the UN. The UN's legitimising role was evident even in the recent experience of the Kosovo crisis, in which the Security Council was initially side-lined but later utilised, once it became clear that international support for NATO's action was far from universal. How an EU military capability could affect the UN's authority is discussed further later.

The assumptions that lie behind the moves towards an EU military capability should thus be viewed more critically. In particular, we should question whether these moves will actually lead to a more effective EU in international relations. But whether these developments will increase the EU's security can also be questioned, as noted in the next section.

What use military instruments?

The debates about an EU defence dimension tend to ignore the relationship between "means" and "ends". The Helsinki European Council declared that the EU will be able to respond to "international crises", without defining the sorts of crises to which the EU should respond, where they might be, and why it is important for the EU to do so. As Mathias Jopp noted: "Current moves in security integration are based on a system of increments: One starts with building structures and creating instruments, then consideration is given to possible responses in certain crisis situations and, later on, perhaps to strategies. So, the horse is saddled from behind without knowing much about the race course."[39] What is missing is debate on the actual threats to the EU's security: are these primarily military in nature, and do they require a military response and therefore an EU military dimension?

In fact, most discussions of security threats, even those within the EU and WEU, emphasise their variegated nature. "Security" in the post-Cold War world has acquired a much broader connotation than military security: threats to security within and between states arise from a variety of sources, including ethnic disputes, violations of human rights, economic deprivation, international crime, and small-arms proliferation.

In 1992-93, three reports were produced, the first by the foreign ministers, the second and third by foreign ministry officials dealing with security: on the development of CFSP; on the security aspects of CFSP; and on European security interests and common principles of the CFSP. All three reached the conclusion that economic, political, and social instability are often the causes of conflicts and threats to peace.[40] A 1995 WEU report on "Common Reflections on the New European Security Conditions" stated that the security challenges for Europe include: instability in Russia, the CIS, and the southern Mediterranean basin; the proliferation of

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39   M. Jopp, "The Defense Dimension of the European Union: The Role and Performance of the WEU", in Regelsberger. E., P. de Schoutheete de Tervarent and W. Wessels (eds) *Foreign Policy of the European Union: From EPC to CFSP and Beyond* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1997) p. 165.

40   See M. Jopp, *The Strategic Implications of European Integration*, Adelphi Paper no. 290 (London: Brassey's, 1994) pp. 21-2.

weapons of mass destruction; international terrorism; and uncontrolled migration.[41]

A 1995 report by several European think tanks argued that priority should be given to the elimination of risks that threaten:

- the territorial integrity of EU and member states (such a risk could arise from the resurgence of an aggressive great power in Europe, the spread of local conflicts, terrorist activities, or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons by rogue states or groups);
- the EU's economic stability (risks include threats to sources of raw materials, overseas markets, communication lines, or a massive influx of refugees);
- the EU's ecology (essentially a nuclear threat to the environment); and
- the EU's democratic structure and social stability (the threat here lies in massive immigration).[42]

In many of these cases, it is difficult to see how military instruments are going to help reduce the threats. If an aggressive state capable of threatening the EU arises, territorial defence *will* become an issue, but it is unlikely that it would be difficult to organise common defence in such an event. In any case, NATO still provides for the common defence now.

How the use of military force will prevent the spread of local conflicts in third countries, or terrorism for that matter, is unclear. And even if we assume that military intervention could solve security problems, it is not clear where the EU (or NATO, for that matter) will intervene in the future. In conflicts in the former Soviet Union? Given Russia's propensity to act alone there, this does not seem likely – and would indeed be inopportune given Russia's sensitivity about Western intervention and NATO in particular. In Africa? This would counter the recent attempts to build African peacekeeping forces and could raise concerns about neo-colonialism. Along the southern Mediterranean or in the Middle East? Here intervention by the EU (or NATO) would be an even more sensitive matter, raising suspicions about neo-colonialist intentions and potentially generating considerable opposition. Elsewhere in the world, Latin America and Asia, seems even less likely. Central and Eastern Europe, for the moment at least, does not appear a likely target for intervention. That leaves the Balkans, but neither the EU nor NATO intervened in Albania (leaving the job of "humanitarian intervention" to an Italian-led *ad hoc* force), for example. The only "interventions" have been in Bosnia and Kosovo. Much energy and time has thus been expended to push for a military capacity, yet the potential scope of EU military action would be quite

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41   See Van Ham, "The EU and WEU", p. 322.
42   L. Stanier, "Common Interests, Values and Criteria for Action", in Martin, L. and J. Roper (eds) *Towards a Common Defence Policy* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies of the WEU, 1995) p. 17.

limited.

Surely the wisest course of action would be to try to prevent such security-threatening situations from arising in the first place, rather than using resources to build a European defence mechanism. As Edward Mortimer pointed out: "Just as in Eastern and Central Europe, the security problems arising on Europe's southern perimeter have economic, social and political roots, and in the long term effective action in these areas will produce more security for Europe than any amount of military preparations."[43] And Jan Zielonka has more recently argued: "aspiring to military power status would be an expensive, divisive, and basically futile exercise for the Union";[44] it would be far better for the Union to improve its capacities to do what it can already do fairly well, with civilian means.

In particular, the EU is very well-placed to address the long-term causes of insecurity. Christopher Hill has noted that "precisely the kinds of attributes possessed by the European Community - the intellectual impact of a new model of interstate relations, the disposition of considerable economic influence over the management of the international economy, the possession of a vast network of contacts and agreements with every region of the international system - are those most capable of influencing the very environment which determines whether or not military strength will need to be used".[45] Mathias Jopp has argued, "as many conflicts and tensions are rooted in political, social and economic instabilities, the Union is much better equipped than any other international organisation to address related problems".[46]

Addressing the EU's ability to deal with such security threats will involve first and foremost building an EU consensus on the necessary action to be taken and strengthening the economic and diplomatic instruments and procedures that the EU can already use, including trade and association agreements, aid, the use of special envoys, election observation, human rights monitoring, and so on. The EU is making some progress in this respect: at Helsinki, the European Council decided to establish a non-military crisis management mechanism. An inventory of available civilian resources of the EU and member states has been compiled, and an action plan developed to improve the EU's capacity to deploy them, at short notice, in crisis management tasks.

Furthermore, the creation of an armed EU, capable of intervening in other countries or regions, could have negative effects. It could conceivably set off a "security dilemma", so familiar to realists.[47] Richard Rosecrance has argued that

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43   E. Mortimer, *European Security after the Cold War* (London: Brassey's for the IISS, 1992) p. 37.
44   J. Zielonka, *Explaining Euro-Paralysis: Why Europe is Unable to Act in International Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1998) p. 228.
45   Hill, "European Foreign Policy", p. 43.
46   Jopp, *Strategic Implications*, p. 67.
47   Constructivists have also studied how social interaction can create a competitive (self-help) security system, in which states are trapped in a security dilemma. See A. Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics", *International Organization*, vol. 46, no. 2, Spring 1992.

the Union is unique in international relations: never before has an actor acquired so much power without sparking a counter-balancing coalition. The EU is simply not threatening: "Countries want to join or be linked with Europe, not to oppose it. Peripheral countries have been centripetally attracted to the European centre, not driven away from it."[48] Even the WEU is not currently seen as a military threat in Russia.[49]

This happy state of affairs may end if the EU proceeds with the development of a defence dimension. The development of military capabilities sends a worrying signal about intentions, particularly when the EU has remained so silent about what the capabilities are to be used for. From the perspective of third parties, these intentions cannot be considered *a priori* to be harmless because the EU is not developing a common defence in the first instance, but an intervention capability, which could potentially even be used against them. This is alarming especially for the EU's neighbours to the east and south. Might they be susceptible to EU intervention? Some of the Petersberg tasks are open to interpretation: "crisis management including peacemaking", for example, could entail old-fashioned, robust intervention of the sort the superpowers used to engage in. But even the experiences of peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention in the 1990s have shown how easy it can be to slide into "enforcement" action. Far from being non-controversial, the Petersberg tasks could instead be seen as excuses for unilateral intervention by the EU to promote its own selfish interests.

And enlargement could exacerbate the security dilemma. The East Europeans seem to want a common EU defence policy, particularly to counter what they view as a Russian threat. Yet this could seriously damage relations with Russia. Russia might take a negative view of developments within the sphere of EU defence integration, suspecting that it will eventually create an opposing alliance.

Even more serious problems arise when it comes to squaring an EU military capability with enlargement to southern and eastern Europe and with relations with non-members in Europe. An EU-WEU merger would not only create problems for those current EU member states that are not full members of the WEU or NATO (will the neutral member states be forced to join NATO?), but also for those countries due to join the EU but not NATO (only three of the candidate countries are now NATO members) and for those countries that are NATO members, but remain outside the EU (such as Turkey, for now, and Norway). The Helsinki European Council agreed to establish a dialogue on defence issues with non-EU European

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48   R. Rosecrance, "The European Union: A New Type of International Actor?", in Zielonka, J. (ed.) *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998) p. 16. *The Economist* has also noted, "Precisely because [the EU] has evolved as an economic entity, but not as a military one and scarcely as a diplomatic one, it has found friends almost everywhere and few if any real enemies." "Europe's Elusive Foreign Minister", *The Economist*, 18 July 1998.

49   S. Rogov, "Russia, NATO, and Western European Union", in Deighton, A. (ed.) *Western European Union 1954-1997: Defence, Security, Integration* (Oxford: European Interdependence Research Unit, 1997) p. 88.

NATO members and other countries in the EU's accession queue. The Council will be able to invite all non-EU states (including the candidate countries and outsiders such as Russia) to participate in EU-led operations. But how all this will work in practice is yet to be specified.

EU membership is "exclusive": there is a fundamental difference between non-members and members, which is natural considering the rather unique responsibilities and benefits of membership. Thus, creating an EU military capability could cement a division in Europe rather than overcome it. If European security is to be achieved by building ties of interdependence across the continent, then further EU integration in the defence sector is not the way to go about it. Instead, one option would have been for the WEU (de-linked from the EU) to become a more inclusive organisation, with membership offered to non-EU and non-NATO European states as well. This will be taken up in the next section.

What are the alternatives?

If the EU did not proceed with strengthening its military capabilities, would this condemn Europe to domination by the US? Would it mean that European states will re-nationalise their military forces? Would humanitarian disasters merely be watched from a distance?

The experiences of the 1990s illustrated that US involvement is fairly crucial for enforcement and intervention operations, although it is not always easy to secure that involvement. As broad a coalition as possible needs to be formed; it is politically necessary (even in the clearest case of aggression – the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait – care was taken to assemble a broad coalition), more legitimate, and probably more effective to do so.

There is an argument, though, that Europeans should be able to share more of the burden of any international military action, especially if the US cannot always be relied upon to assume a leadership role. Maintaining a civilian power EU does not mean that European states would not cooperate on defence matters and thus be unable to assume a larger burden. Nor does it mean that European states would never intervene. Unfortunately, there will probably continue to be situations in which intervention is necessary. But the EU does not have to be the organisation that does the intervening. While the Cologne European Council seems to have discarded this, one option would have been to separate the EU and the WEU – the EU would remain civilian, the WEU used for military and defence purposes.[50] By de-linking the EU and WEU, the WEU could have widened, and all (or most) European states could have participated in schemes centred on WEU activism. The EU could always push for WEU action, but political direction and authority would come from the OSCE or the UN, or the EU in cooperation with other WEU member states, in line with the argument that military action (even, and perhaps especially,

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50   This is an option mentioned in S. Silvestri, N. Gnesotto and A. Vasconcelos, "Decision-Making and Institutions", in Martin and Roper, *Towards a Common Defence Policy*, pp. 61-2.

with respect to the Petersberg tasks) needs wide legitimation anyway. The EU would remain a civilian power; a wider Europe would have the capacity to use military instruments.

Alternatively, it could be argued that the European states should intervene by participating in UN missions directly. UN authorisation is generally considered necessary (and politic) for military intervention.[51] And as Simon Nuttall has argued:

> [I]t will presumably be the aim of members of the Union to support the peace-keeping role of the United Nations. To maintain an independent military peace-keeping force would cast doubt on this aim. And if the primacy of the United Nations' peace-keeping responsibility is recognized, it matters little whether the Community's contribution is made through national or Community contingents.[52]

The Helsinki European Council stated that the Union recognises the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, and that EU action will be conducted in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. But this implies UN Security Council authorisation for EU action, at which point it is not clear why the UN should not itself intervene.

True, the UN has had difficulty in raising peacekeeping forces and then deploying them. This led former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to argue that regional arrangements and organisations should assume greater responsibility for maintaining peace and security, especially in "preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building".[53] NATO in particular has been busy developing its peacekeeping and intervention capabilities, in view of such responsibilities. But the not-always-smooth experiences of UN-NATO collaboration in the former Yugoslavia indicate that using regional organisations for peacekeeping missions may not be the best solution to the UN's lack of resources.[54] (This would apply to the WEU option as well.) Concerted EU efforts could be made to increase the UN's capacity to intervene or undertake complex operations.

Requiring UN Security Council approval could, however, allow a Russian or Chinese veto to block Western desires for military intervention. Particularly in

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51 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has made this clear: "Can we really afford to let each State be the judge of its own right, or duty, to intervene in another State's internal conflict? If we do, will we not be forced to legitimize Hitler's championship of the Sudeten Germans, or Soviet intervention in Afghanistan? Most of us would prefer, I think – especially now that the cold war is over – to see such decisions taken collectively, by an international institution whose authority is generally respected. And surely the only institution competent to assume that role is the Security Council of the United Nations." Kofi Annan, "Intervention", Thirty-Fifth Annual Ditchley Foundation Lecture, 26 June 1998 UN Press Release SG/SM/6613.
52 Nuttall, "The Foreign and Security Policy Provisions of the Maastricht Treaty", p. 136.
53 Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace* (New York: United Nations, 1992) paragraph 64.
54 On UN-NATO relations during the Yugoslav crisis, see S. Tharoor, "United Nations Peacekeeping in Europe", *Survival*, vol. 37, no. 2, Summer 1995.

cases where intervention appears to be the preferred course of action (to put an end to immense human suffering, for example), such an outcome would be disastrous. Discord on the Security Council should not prevent action by willing states – and if the US is unwilling, then, the argument goes, the EU would practically have a duty to go ahead. But it should be noted that Russian and Chinese vetoes have not entirely blocked the UN Security Council for most of the 1990s; it was not Russia that prevented intervention in the case of the Rwandan genocide in 1994. The lack of UN activism could be more rightly blamed on the distinct lack of enthusiasm for the UN displayed by the US. The first impulse must still be to build as wide-ranging and legitimate a basis for action as possible – and this requires first attempting to do so in the UN. But even if the Security Council is paralysed and yet the "right thing to do" is to intervene, then it still does not follow that the EU should assume this responsibility. It would be far preferable for an organisation with a wider membership (such as an enlarged WEU) to do so; the motives for unilateral intervention by the EU could be subjected to as much suspicion as would a single state's.

Conclusion: what sort of international actor should the EU be?

It has been argued here that an EU military capability is not necessary and is, furthermore, potentially harmful. There is, finally, also the normative dimension. The debate about civilian power involves fundamental choices about the EU's international identity. Jan Zielonka, in a strong argument for a civilian power Europe, has stated that "[o]pting for a civilian power Europe would represent one of the basic strategic choices that could help the Union acquire a distinct profile – so important in terms of identity and legitimacy".[55]

An EU military capability would represent the culmination of a "state-building" project. Integration would recreate the state on a grander scale. It would not be a more revolutionary project to transform our notions of sovereignty and thus of international relations in general. To use Joseph Weiler's terms, the "unity" vision would prevail over the "community" vision.[56] Unity is about Europe transforming itself into a superstate, as a way of countering the excesses of statism so evident before World War II. Community, or supranationalism, would instead control the reflexes of national interest in the international sphere, by redefining "the very notion of boundaries of the state, between the nation and state, and within the nation itself".[57]

Some might argue that the EU could quite easily develop a capability to undertake peacekeeping missions, or to defend itself, and still remain a civilian power. Force would only be used as a last resort, and the emphasis would remain

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55 Zielonka, *Explaining Euro-Paralysis*, p. 229. The most relevant section outlining his argument for a civilian power Europe is on pages 226-9.
56 J. Weiler, "Ideals and Idolatry in the European Construct", in McSweeney, B. (ed.) *Moral Issues in International Affairs: Problems of European Integration* (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 67-70.
57 Weiler, "Ideals and Idolatry", p. 68.

on using economic and diplomatic instruments. This would accord with Maull's definition of civilian power. But the stated intention of enhancing the EU's military resources carries a price: it sends a signal that military force is still useful and necessary, and that it should be used to further the EU's interests. It would close off the path of fully embracing civilian power. And this means giving up far too much for far too little.

Of course, one could argue that based on its past record, the EU would probably not behave as the superpowers did during the Cold War. Nevertheless, it would signal the end of the EU's (potential or actual) contribution to a different kind of international relations, in which civilian instruments are wielded on behalf of a collectivity which had renounced the use of force among its members and encouraged others to do the same. As Duchêne argued over 25 years ago: "[T]he European Community will only make the most of its opportunities if it remains true to its inner characteristics. These are primarily: civilian ends and means, and a built-in sense of collective action, which in turn express, however imperfectly, social values of equality, justice and tolerance."[58] The end of civilian power EU thus signals an abandonment of key values on which the European Community was built, although – as seen above – there has long been tension between civilian power values and state-building values. A civilian power EU could have represented a major shift in international relations. Its passing should be cause for more thought than currently seems to be the case.

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58   Duchêne, "The European Community", p. 20.

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