

SDA Monthly Roundtable

Assessing the value of security strategy reviews



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Programme

Assessing the value of security strategy reviews

Monthly Roundtable – Monday, February 16, 2009

Bibliothèque Solvay, 12:00-16:00

After the recent ESDP review, what should we expect of the NATO summit?

Session I - 12:00-13:30

The “review” by Javier Solana of his 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) endorsed by EU leaders last December was, most analysts seemed to agree, far from radical. It underlined Europe’s growing role as a force for global stability and drew attention to new security-related challenges like climate change, access to energy, cyber attacks and piracy on the high seas. But it skated lightly over such sensitive issues as EU-NATO relations other than to say their strategic partnership must be deepened. Can we now expect NATO to use its 60th anniversary summit in April to draw a more detailed map of the West’s security interests and commitments? With its ISAF mission in Afghanistan failing to deliver either security or reconstruction, is a restatement of NATO’s security doctrine overdue?

SDA Members’ Lunch - 13:30-14:30

Are security strategies a growing embarrassment to policymakers?

Session II - 14:30-16:00

When the European Security Strategy was set forth five years ago it marked an important step in the EU’s development. In the absence of clear-cut treaty commitments by member states to the Union’s defence and security activities, the ESS provided a much-needed political basis for the drive to improve its defence industries and extend its military outreach. And although NATO has a very firm treaty base, of course, it was fashioned for Cold War challenges rather than 21st Century ones. With transatlantic and NATO-EU relations increasingly complex and volatile, are such security doctrines more a potential source of trouble than a foreign policy bedrock? How strong a case is there for radical and complementary reviews of both the ESS and NATO doctrines?

Executive summary

Session I - 'After the recent ESDP review, what should we expect of the NATO summit?'

NATO's Director for Policy Planning **Jamie Shea** said that NATO was expecting to be tasked with producing a strategic concept at NATO's summit in April. In terms of NATO's new strategic concept, **Paul Flaherty**, Deputy Head of the UK's Permanent Representation to the EU, said that "a narrow focus on Afghanistan would be too limiting" and that there is "a need for a wide range of capabilities that are deployable and capabilities that can be deployed to any NATO operation". Shea also suggested that a signal should be sent to Russia that NATO wants to work with Russia. Energy security, cyber-defence and homeland defence against biological and terrorist attacks are all possible areas for NATO to ponder.

Juraj Fogada, the Czech Republic's Deputy Representative to the Political and Security Committee, then ran through the various priorities of the Czech presidency of the EU, including police trainers and development aid going to Afghanistan plus upgrading helicopters and training crews.

In his opening speech, **Alvaro de Vasconcelos** stressed the "need for the EU to define a common position towards NATO (e.g. on NATO enlargement) as there cannot be member states in the EU and NATO holding two different positions" and underlined the critical importance of getting it right in Afghanistan to NATO's future. MEP **Geoffrey Van Orden** was concerned that the ESDP is encroaching on jobs that can be done by NATO and argued for a division of labour with the EU focusing on civilian issues (e.g. diplomacy, economic reconstruction, humanitarian aid) while NATO delivers the military side.

Thomas Silberhorn, MP and CSU spokesperson for European and Foreign Affairs in the German Bundestag, backed France's recently expressed view that the ESDP is not contradictory but complementary to NATO policy. As for Afghanistan, he thinks that the strategic aim should be restricted not to founding a Western-style democracy but to stabilising the country sufficiently to be able to hand security tasks over to the Afghans. Afghanistan was a

big topic during the question and answer session, with Paul Flaherty arguing that there needed to be a better way of doing things than the NATO ISAF having to deal with both security and the reconstruction. In his view, the comprehensive approach will not come through NATO and will require better relationships and strategic partnerships with other partners such as the EU or UN.

On the issue of whether money is better spent sending NATO troops to Afghanistan or training Afghans, Shea said that he sees the idea of putting money into the Afghan army as a good one but added that "we are not there yet". "If you empower the Afghans too quickly, they may not be able to hold the situation. The Taliban is quite an organised adversary and not a rag tag militia," he said. Thomas **Silberhorn** drew attention to a poll in which Afghans said that they expect to assume this responsibility in around six years and said that this is what the Allies should be aiming at. He argued that the Allies should try new methods to fight drugs and corruption and that there were different solutions depending on which part of Afghanistan was concerned.



Thomas Silberhorn said that the message from the EU to Russia should be that the EU's experience in recent decades has been to talk not just with the big countries but all one's neighbours at one table. **Alvaro de Vasconcelos** drew attention to a major weakness as being the EU's and the international community's inability to prevent crises, as in the case of Georgia, and seemed to argue for a more pro-active stance. "We're facing a new situation. Europe must understand better what it wants to do with Russia and answer [Russia's President] Medvedev on his proposals for a new security architecture," he said.

Session II - 'Are security strategies a growing embarrassment to policymakers?'

Former security adviser to Helmut Kohl and former chairman of the Munich Security Conference **Horst Teltschik** underlined the value of the process of developing strategies as much as the strategies themselves. He suggested that the EU should have clearer goals than it currently has. Rather than wait for Russian President Medvedev to further define his proposal for a new European security architecture, he asked why the EU and NATO are not defining a European security architecture themselves.



France's Ambassador to the Political and Security Committee **Christine Roger** sees security strategies as helpful in terms of devoting time to mapping out future threats and how to address them even if reality proves them to be wrong. In her view, the EU needs to think hard about Afghanistan, the Middle East and Iran and consider if it is flexible enough and in a position to adapt. It also needs to make as much progress as possible on civilian and military capabilities, in order to meet the objectives of the security strategy. MEP Ana Gomes was positive about the 2003 EU Security Strategy but sees the EU's 2008 Security Strategy document as more of "a PR document setting out the EU's achievements since 2003".

Karel Kovanda, Deputy Director General for the Common and Foreign Security Policy at the European Commission, focused on the need to identify and plan for potential disasters well in advance. "Supposing GDP fell by 30%, what is the ensuing level of social unrest or the growth of extreme parties likely to be? What if Ukraine implodes completely and Rus-

sia goes to sort it out?" he asked. "Does the EU or NATO know how to deal with such potential events of the not too distant future?"

Rob de Wijk, Director of the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, said that the key debate in Eastern Europe is about Russia and NATO's Article 5 tasks. "It means that the eastern Europeans structure their forces accordingly, such that they are not deployable in Afghanistan as expeditionary forces. Article 5 is about solidarity. Afghanistan is about solidarity. If countries do not send forces to Afghanistan, this is a solidarity problem that could undermine NATO," he said.

During the Q&A session, Horst Teltschik stressed the need for leadership in the EU to define common goals for issues such as Afghanistan and Russia while Christine Roger said that the EU was trying to get organised and have a more unified view but that this was not easy with 27 member states.

Ana Gomes said that the value of a strategy must be more than to generate public support and that it must be about its implementation. She was unimpressed by what the West has done in Somalia, pointing out that "anti-piracy efforts are not addressing the causes of the problem but the consequences of the problem. The root causes can only be addressed via a strategy". Christine Roger said that the EU was active in Somalia and would want to do more. Addressing piracy was not addressing the roots of the problem but it was a contribution to the stability of the region.

Karel Kovanda and **Horst Teltschik** both stressed the importance of pro-active thinking. "Waiting for NATO summits is not good enough. So, in the EU or NATO, countries like France, Germany or Poland must take the lead and convince partners to join in," said Teltschik.

Giles Merritt concluded by saying that the timing of both the EU and NATO reviews was "crazy".

Background

The European Union produced a report on the implementation of its 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) in December 2008 (a European Security and Defence Policy review in shorthand) while NATO countries are set to task the Alliance to come up with a strategic concept at its summit in Strasbourg/Kehl in April. The debate was split into two sessions – ‘After the recent ESDP review, what should we expect of the NATO summit?’ and ‘Are security strategies a growing embarrassment to policymakers?’. It was co-moderated by



Giles Merritt and Peter Weilemann

Giles Merritt, Director of the Security & Defence Agenda, and **Peter Weilemann**, Director of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung’s Brussels office. Giles Merritt introduced the first session by asking if reviews were a good thing or if they were really an invitation to bureaucrats to rubberstamp things. In his view, the ESDP review was more of a rubberstamping exercise and not a real rethink of the ESDP. Peter Weilemann asked if, after the ESDP review, it was now NATO’s turn to review its strategy.

Session I -‘After the recent ESDP review, what should we expect of the NATO summit?’

NATO’s Director for Policy Planning **Jamie Shea** said that NATO was expecting to be tasked with producing a strategic concept at NATO’s summit in April. “A new strategic concept will allow NATO to have the debate and the debate counts perhaps as much as the

paper document resulting from it,” he said. He sees two options for it – either an update of the existing model as was done with the ESS or a root and branch review of what NATO does – with the latter being his preference. He stressed the importance of NATO’s ability to work with others in the 21st century, with external diplomacy becoming as if not more important as getting its own members into line. Defining when NATO will support others was another key point that he made.

At the summit, a declaration on Alliance security – renewing the Transatlantic ‘marriage vows’ after the arrival of the new US administration – can be expected as can France’s anticipated rapprochement with NATO plus Croatia and Albania joining NATO if the ratification process can be completed in time. Also at the summit, the importance of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty is likely to be reconfirmed as it is very important to many allies in the current climate. NATO’s open door policy, with no-one outside having a veto over that process, is also set to be reiterated. He stressed that NATO countries should not pick and choose from the NATO agenda but should be ‘all for one and one for all’ and be receptive to each other’s interests. He pointed to the importance of NATO countries defending themselves both in and beyond their borders (e.g. Afghanistan). He also suggested that a signal should be sent to Russia that NATO wants to work with them as it can gain



Jamie Shea

a lot from cooperation, for example via transit routes to Afghanistan. He believes that cooperation with the Allies is also essential for Russia and that it is “not a zero sum game”.

The comprehensive approach, working with the UN, EU and others, is also important. Jamie Shea stressed that partners were important, such as Australia, New Zealand and Japan for example, and that NATO candidate countries in the western Balkans should not be forgotten. He referred to new challenges such as energy security, cyberdefence and terrorism and suggested that the financial crisis might exert pressure towards reducing duplication between NATO and the EU. In the light of discussion at the Munich Security Conference on arms control, he also pointed to the role NATO might play in international efforts to strengthen arms control and disarmament.

He emphasised the need to use military power cost effectively and asked whether the focus should be on special forces or naval forces. Homeland defence is another area where he believes NATO could be involved, for example protecting populations against biological attacks, terrorist attacks or protecting coasts. He said that the tendency was “to hand this over to other actors, underestimating what NATO can contribute”.

Juraj Fogada, the Czech Republic’s Deputy Representative to the Political and Security Committee, ran through the various priorities of the Czech presidency of the EU. He expected the EU to renew its EU BAM Rafah mission if Israel, the Palestinian Territories and Egypt requested it to do so. On Afghanistan, he said that the EU was committed to having 400 trainers of trainers in place by June and that the European Commission had promised to fund four or five more provincial



Juraj Fogada

reconstruction teams. Since 2002, he said that the EU had spent 3.8 billion euro on development aid and 200 million euro to build up the Afghan police. On helicopters, the priority was to have enough of them for its missions as sometimes those provided cannot operate in sand (e.g. in Chad) or at high altitude (e.g. Afghanistan). The Czechs will be continuing on with European Defence Agency projects to pay more attention to upgrading helicopters and training crews together with NATO. He referred to an anti-sea landmines research and technology project and armaments cooperation, with a focus on airworthiness during the Czech presidency of the EU. Coordinating and simplifying how pilots are trained for missions was one area of work. With regard to the European Defence Technology Industrial Base, there is a focus on SMEs. He also referred to two EU directives, one on intra-EU defence transfers and another on defence procurement.

EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) Director **Alvaro de Vasconcelos** began his intervention by responding to the question of



Alvaro de Vasconcelos

whether reviews were interesting or a waste of time by saying that from a general point of view and a diplomatic perspective he found such exercises very interesting and indeed often more interesting than the results. The EUISS was involved in the ESDP review. “Member states and think tankers could look through the strategy and implementation to see what worked and didn’t work. Not everything in the debate made it into the final document,” he said. During the debate, he said that “it had become very clear that there was a need for the EU to define a common position towards NATO (e.g. on NATO

enlargement) as there cannot be member states in the EU and NATO holding two different positions". When NATO reviews its strategy, he highlighted the importance of NATO seeing if it is compatible with the EU's strategy. He pointed out that the Russia issue made the review of the EU's security strategy difficult as no-one wanted to open a Pandora's Box. With the world becoming more multipolar and the need to engage with countries like China, India and Brazil, there was a need for effective multilateralism as the West cannot do without the rest any more. Key issues for debate are if NATO wants to open itself up to all the democracies of the world, if it wants to transform itself into a global alliance of democracies and by doing so into an alliance of the West against the rest, which would undermine all prospects for effective multilateralism.

Turning to Afghanistan, he said that the current perception is that "if NATO loses Afghanistan, then perhaps we lose NATO". A key question is if Afghanistan is the exception or the rule for future NATO engagements. Europe tends to see it as an exception. He said that "NATO countries who were EU member states need to come together before the NATO summit to develop a common position on NATO issues". He sees this as more likely to happen than in the past because of the French move towards NATO. He suggested using that opportunity not just to strengthen Europe's Security and Defence Policy but to define what the EU wants from NATO. His view is that the EU needs to develop with the US a broader agenda than just NATO, including issues such as global governance and climate change. He also said that Turkey needs to be integrated in terms of cooperation on security and defence issues.

Thomas Silberhorn, MP and CSU spokesperson for European and Foreign Affairs in the German Bundestag, said that the reintegration of France "opens up a window of opportunity to consolidate the ESDP". He pointed out how important it was to see France's President Nicolas Sarkozy say, at the recent Munich Security Conference, that ESDP was not contradictory but complementary to NATO policy. This is something that Germany says all the time but it was important that France said it, he added.

The question is what the EU's added value is.

He sees NATO and EU member states having to find themselves, on a case-by-case basis, in groups of states willing to be more active. Things have already started moving in this direction, as can be seen in Georgia and the Middle East.

On Afghanistan, what is missing is a common analysis of the situation, as currently the US talks of it as a counterinsurgency and in terms of the 'war on terrorism' while the EU talks of schools that they have built and children going to school in Afghanistan. There is no common perception of the threat situation in Afghanistan.

He said that the US surge of an extra 30,000 troops being deployed in Afghanistan will cost around 5,000 US dollars per month per soldier (i.e. 150,000,000 US dollars). The same amount of money could be used to finance more Afghan police and soldiers than ever needed. In his view, the strategic aim in Afghanistan should be restricted not to founding a Western style democracy but to stabilising the country so as to be able to hand security tasks over to the Afghans. Then, there would be clear options for acting, especially in terms of financing and training the Afghan army and police.

On the issue of coordinators, he said that a NATO coordinator could be an instrument for a common security strategy of NATO to Afghanistan. He thinks that NATO coordination could be better and that NATO should aim to reach a common military and civilian strategy for Afghanistan.

At the Munich Security Conference, he pointed out that US Vice President Jo Biden had said that the US would act multilaterally where possible and unilaterally where needed.



Thomas Silberhorn

The question he asked is if the US will keep its caveats on international law, adding that the closure of Guantanamo gives the impression that it will not. For him, the transatlantic partnership is more than security policy and should encompass areas such as economic and social issues.

MEP **Geoffrey Van Orden** said that France running the EU side of defence and being responsible for transforming NATO was an “extraordinary brew”. He argued for a division of labour with the EU focussing on civilian issues (e.g. diplomacy, economic reconstruction, humanitarian aid) while NATO delivers the military side but feared that this would not satisfy those with an agenda for the EU. For him, “it is about time that everyone realised France’s



Geoffrey Van Orden

determination to create something separate from the US” and that “this must end”. His fear is that the NATO summit would put the seal on an enhanced European defence role. He pointed out that Sarkozy had insisted on being seated next to the NATO Secretary General when the cameras come into the room before an alphabetical order seating plan was adopted once the cameras had left. He does not want the US to be hoodwinked. He also feared that the NATO summit would give more substance to the ESDP and the idea of an EU operational headquarters.

He described the EU’s security strategy as “an interesting sketch of the world’s problems to promote the idea of the EU’s centrality in their resolution” and suggests that the EU has arrogated to itself the notions of multilateralism and the ‘comprehensive approach’ whereas in fact

the latter has long been the conventional wisdom in military circles and is “nothing new”. He added that the European Commission’s spending of six billion euro in seven years on rural development was good but that it was a pity that it had not been better coordinated with NATO’s military operations.

On police training in Afghanistan, he suggested that the US had trained one third of the Afghan police (some 25,000 personnel) in 2008 alone where the EU had spent 50 million euro and not trained one policeman.

He concluded by saying that the EU’s emphasis on defence detracts from NATO and complicates NATO’s task as it then needs to coordinate with the EU at the military level. In his view, the EU should do less better, focussing on civil capabilities.

Q & A Session

Turkey and the ESDP

Esra Dogan Grajower from the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that, if the EU is interested in coordinating with others, why did the review of the EU’s Security Strategy not include NATO and Turkey (a big contributor to ESDP missions)?



Esra Dogan Grajower

Alvaro de Vasconcelos’s response was that Turkey, the US and NATO had been invited to a French seminar on NATO relations since Turkey is a key country in that context while Geoffrey Van Orden said: “Don’t be surprised that Turkey is kept out because the ESDP is divisive and divides the Allies.”

Rebuilding Afghanistan

Paul Flaherty, Deputy Head of the UK's Permanent Representation to the EU, said that, for the last 8 years, part of the problem in Afghanistan was that NATO ISAF had been asked to do both the security and the reconstruction and that there needed to be a better way doing that. As for the new strategic concept, he said that "a narrow focus on Afghanistan would be too limiting" and that there is "a need for a wide range of capabilities that are deployable and capabilities that can be deployed to any NATO operation". He added that the comprehensive approach will



Paul Flaherty

not come through NATO and will require better relationships and strategic partnerships with other partners such as the EU or UN. He sees France's full integration into NATO as an opportunity but there needs to be a better vision of what the EU-NATO relationship should be.

A participant indicated that sometimes it is better to send NATO troops to Afghanistan [rather than spend the money on training Afghans] as there is a very high risk of infiltration in the Afghan army.

In response, **Jamie Shea** said that he sees the idea of putting money into the Afghan army as a good one but added that "we are not there yet".

A short-term surge of forces to beef up security may be expensive in the short term but can give Afghans time to build up their forces. "If you empower the Afghans too quickly, they may not be able to hold the situation. The Taliban is quite an organised adversary and not a rag tag militia," he said. He also stressed that strategy reviews should not create a confusion of new actors in Afghanistan but should result in more coordination so that the same, clear message could be delivered to President Karzai.

Thomas Silberhorn said that he did see the need for NATO forces in Afghanistan. Germany had decided in December 2008 to increase its presence by adding 1,000 soldiers to its contingent there. Although he sees the need for military action of this kind in Afghanistan, he thinks that the aim must be to hand over responsibility for security to Afghanistan. He drew attention to a poll in which Afghans said that they expect to assume this responsibility in around six years time and said that "we should be prepared to tackle this in six years if that is the expectation of Afghans". He argued that the Allies should try new methods to fight drugs and corruption and that there were different solutions depending on which part of Afghanistan was concerned.

Dealing with Russia

Klaus Becher, a consultant from Knowledge and Analysis LLP, asked what the main messages to Russia should be from the security strategy reviews.



Klaus Becher

For Russia, **Thomas Silberhorn** said that the message from the EU should be that the EU's experience in recent decades has been to talk not just with the big countries but all one's neighbours at one table. It has been Germany's concern to see small EU member states treated as just as important as the bigger ones. He argued that this is one of the reasons why EU integration has been so successful.

Alvaro de Vasconcelos drew attention to a big weakness as being the EU's inability to prevent crisis, as in the case of Georgia, and seemed to argue for a more pro-active stance.

His argument was that, although everyone knows that Russia is a difficult partner, the last thing that anyone wants is a confrontational bipolarity in Europe.

"We're facing a new situation. Europe must understand better what it wants to do with Russia and answer [Russia's President] Medvedev on his proposals for a new security architecture," he said.

"EU-NATO/EU-US relations

Geoffrey Van Orden said that a distinction should be made between the EU's role as a whole, where it does good work, and the ESDP. He argued that the UK is engaged in a 'damage limitation' process on the ESDP and that it wanted to get Europeans to deliver more military capability.



He said that there were powerful actors at NATO wanting ESDP to be written into the NATO agenda and warned of

a danger that NATO's new strategic concept becomes a further vehicle for the development of the ESDP.

Jamie Shea sees Sarkozy as being very pragmatic, as seeing the need for the EU and NATO to work closer together and as being interested in getting the job done rather than who is doing it. Within NATO, he referred to countries wanting to cut its areas of action down and others for it to handle security beyond borders. Those countries in favour of the latter vision will need to put in more resources to counter the 'minimisers'.

Alvaro de Vasconcelos argued that EU-US relations should be more than just about Afghanistan and that more permanent structures than only the summits needed to be created. To solve the problems of coordination and coherence in the EU, he suggested that there was need for more Europe and not less Europe.

Session II - 'Are security strategies a growing embarrassment to policymakers'

Former security adviser to Helmut Kohl and former chairman of the Munich Security Conference **Horst Teltschik** was the first to speak in the second session of the debate. He was under no illusion about the impact of strategy papers. Although he said that few heads of government, ministers, MPs or journalists read them, he added that it was important that experts discuss them and undergo the process of developing strategies. "Speechwriters use them and embassies use them in reports to governments so they do have an impact," he said. Two examples of strategy papers that are of



Horst Teltschik

great importance are the Obama administration's papers on Afghanistan/Pakistan and on the Middle East. Horst Teltschik was positive about the modus operandi for them, starting with using two special emissaries to listen to all the parties. He contrasted this with Sarkozy, who "has lots of ideas" but "changes his mind very quickly". "Does he pursue direct goals and strategies?"

He described Merkel as more of a "moderator than a strategic thinker". "Everyone is looking to US leadership," he said. He sees it as important to have clear goals and is concerned that the EU today does not have direct goals as to where the EU should move.

As for Russian President Medvedev's proposal for a new European security architecture, he said that the West's answer is that "it is up to him to define his proposal and then we will react". Sarkozy has suggested an OSCE summit but there is no content at all. "Why are the EU and NATO not defining a European security architecture ourselves rather than waiting for the Russians? It's quite obvious what they want. We don't need more details from the Russians," he said.

France's Ambassador to the Political and Security Committee **Christine Roger** was pleased that a report on the implementation of the EU's Security Strategy had been adopted but noted that it was not as ambitious as some MEPs wanted. "They wanted a White Paper, which would have been more time-consuming and more of a challenge but maybe this is the next step," she said. She sees security strategies as helpful in terms of devoting time to mapping out future threats and how to address them even if reality proves them to be wrong. The EU needs



Christine Roger

to think hard about Afghanistan, the Middle East and Iran and consider if it is flexible enough and in a position to adapt. This is possible where we have leadership, as the EU showed with the Georgia-Russia conflict. As for Iran, the EU should welcome that some dialogue is to take place but dialogue does not mean that we have abandoned our conditions and prerequisites. We need to make as much progress as possible on civilian and military capabilities. She stressed the importance of identifying gaps in military equipment and filling them and pointed to a number of projects involving from five to twelve EU member states and relating to force projection, force protection and space & intelligence.

On the civilian side, she said that it was important to generate capacities to man EU missions, adding that it was difficult to organise for big missions such as in Kosovo or Afghanistan. She is looking forward to ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, which she thinks will provide some answers as to how to get civilian or military means together. She is also looking forward to a creative and innovative arrangement in the Council secretariat to merge the civilian and military tracks for the EU when it is faced with crises. "To implement objectives, you need to be sufficiently flexible and able to move quickly when you need to," she concluded.

MEP **Ana Gomes** said that the 2003 EU Security Strategy continues to be a "relevant, concise and genuinely useful document". For the 2008 review, everyone agreed that nothing spectacular was needed, except for updates on cybersecurity, energy security and climate change. "So why not have a separate section for the new threats, explaining their relevance?" she suggested.



Ana Gomes

What came out of the process was a muddle – an incoherent collection of vague goals and 12 pages of self-congratulatory text." She drew attention to the lack of reference to state failure and regional conflicts.

"Did we not learn anything from the experiences in Afghanistan and Somalia?" She added that the text was vague on energy security, referring to "addressing transit routes through Turkey", which revealed more about the EU's hesitations

and failure to come up with clear solutions to problems. For her, the EU's 2008 Security Strategy document is "a PR document setting out the EU's achievements since 2003". "We can avoid security strategies being embarrassing by making them forward-looking, making sure that they have practical value plus clear and measurable goals and invoke past achievements to learn lessons for the future or they will have no doctrinal value and will fail to become guiding documents," she said.

"The 2008 review is not an embarrassment but it could become so if we proceed in this way."

Karel Kovanda, Deputy Director General for the Common and Foreign Security Policy at the European Commission, began his intervention by saying that his words were his own personal view and even that some may not be his view



Karel Kovanda

but were aimed at being provocative. He drew a distinction between a security concept or strategy being a public document to say what we should focus on and an operational document being one that outlines what to do about what we stand against. NATO's first strategic concept was only an operational document, there was no public discussion and it was not published as its effectiveness depended on its secrecy. Once the documents became public, the first aim began to predominate and they were of less value operationally. In terms of its usefulness, he doubted that a leader would turn to a strategy when faced with a new problem. However, it could be useful as a reference for what NATO and the EU are good for and can contain a list of threats, risks and activities.

He pointed out that EU and NATO lists of threats and risks overlap, for example regarding weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, but that organised crime and climate change are 'EU-only threats' because of the civilian nature of the EU. He added that cyberspace, energy security and piracy were in the EU's Security Strategy and that some will no doubt be in NATO's security concept.

Karel Kovanda referred to events such as the end of the Cold War, 9/11 and the financial meltdown as unexpected in terms of their speed and timing even if the events themselves were not entirely unexpected. He asked if we are ready to tackle future events of this kind. "Supposing GDP fell by 30%, what is the ensuing level of social unrest or the growth of extreme parties likely to be? What if Ukraine implodes completely and Russia goes to sort it out?" he asked. "Does the EU or NATO know how to deal with such potential events of the not too distant future?"

He concluded with an expression: "Strategies are for amateurs. Professionals deal with logistics."

Rob de Wijk, Director of the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, said that there was an urgent



Rob de Wijk

need for doctrines for both the EU and NATO. "It's not the final document that's important but the process leading up to it," he said.

"The doctrine should address a very divisive issue – should NATO be a collective defence alliance or a worldwide security provider?" he added. In a sense, NATO is already a global security provider as it has troops deployed all around the world.

He described Russia as one of the political obstacles to drafting EU and NATO strategies as "we don't know what to do with Russia".

He said that the key debate in Eastern Europe is about Russia and NATO's Article 5 tasks. "It means that the eastern Europeans structure their forces accordingly, such that they are not deployable in Afghanistan as expeditionary forces.

Article 5 is about solidarity. If countries do not send forces to Afghanistan, this is a solidarity problem that could undermine NATO," he said. He also pointed out that the world was becoming more multipolar with the emergence of China, Russia and India, and that a multipolar system is by definition more unstable than the bipolar system of the Cold War. He added that the Georgia crisis had shown the limits of the West's power as the US had asked the EU to run the show and the EU's dependency on natural gas meant that Russia had effective ways to counter Europe. He touched on issues such as sovereign wealth funds from China being willing to invest in the US and Europe to get more political influence, on the problem of having to deal with resource-rich autocracies and with the fact that the major oil reserves lie in areas of political instability ("a reason why piracy is high on the agenda").

In his view, the emergence of new powers has led to the relative decline of the West whereas the financial crisis could result in the absolute decline of the West. "A decline of 30% in GDP is possible and then there would be serious consequences for the West to deal with issues such as energy security and in terms of its ability to shape the world," he said.

Q & A Session

Where is the EU heading?

Mia Doornaert from *De Standaard* pointed to there being no overall concept for the EU and where it is going, that member states do not

agree on how to deal with the financial crisis, Afghanistan or NATO enlargement. She asked what strategic plan there could be.

Horst Teltschik decried the fact that member states are giving up more and more sovereign rights to the EU but politicians are talking about the importance of nation states, describing this as not being honest with people. "After EU summits, politicians go home and say that the results are not good enough and then hope that people will support Europe. This can't work," he said. He added that leaders do not say that there will be another summit in six months and we can improve things then.

He sees a need for leadership in the EU to define common goals for issues such as Afghanistan and Russia. "Maybe one head of government can say that this is my personal goal and I'll fight for it and see if other governments have the same interest," he said.

Christine Roger said that the EU was trying to get organised and have a more unified view but that this was not easy with 27 member states.

The EU now has a common position on Iraq and on Afghanistan.

"Russia is a different story but we managed to agree to negotiate a new agreement with Russia although some countries wanted to wait," she said. "You need to look at the results of the process."

The link between strategies and capabilities

Muriel Domenach from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the EU's Security Strategy was being criticised for being "a PR document" and for "not being sexy enough" but that this was "a bit paradoxical".

With regard to NATO's strategic concept, she wondered how the connection between strategy and capabilities could be ensured.

Rob de Wijk said that there was a clear relationship between strategy and capabilities as strategy should also contain guidelines for force planners.

In his view, Europe should transform its armed forces into expeditionary forces. The Netherlands had done this but many countries have not. "If we leave the 'dirty work' to a handful of countries with transformed forces, we'll undermine solidarity between countries and will fail in Afghanistan. We should have an understanding of the kind of armed forces we should have in NATO and the EU," he said.

He added that we needed discretion as to the re-interpretation of Article 5 of the Washington



Muriel Domenach

Treaty. "It should not only cover forces in defence of a territory but forces in defence of interests. If economic interests are affected somewhere in the world, we may have to deploy forces. Piracy off Somalia is a good example," he said.

The value of security strategies

Michael Doczy from the Council of the European Union's Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit said that one of the aims of the report on the EU's Security Strategy was to have a public discussion and that this event was a good opportunity for that. He said that the EU had done a lot and wanted to show what it had done and that the drafters had tried to avoid having a self-congratulatory text. Progress is slow and incomplete in terms of the link between external and internal security. Regarding the absence of the term 'state failure', he said that the term 'state fragility' was in the report. He said that the EU must do more on Afghanistan and Somalia and added that there were clear recommendations on WMDs and terrorism. "We have a strategy but need to continue to implement it," he said.

Esra Dogan Grajower wondered, if for example there was a crisis in Turkey's neighbourhood,



Michael Doczy

what would happen in terms of support for Turkey. She also asked about NATO's achievements.

Gert Timmerman from the Dutch Ministry of Defence wondered if strategies were being drawn up to establish convergence and suggested that there should be more hard thinking on the relationship between preemption and preventive engagement. He asked if we are engaged in a preemptive or preventive exercise with regard to Iran.

Ana Gomes expressed the view that the value of a strategy must be more than to generate public support and that it must be about its implementation. For example, on Somalia, for years, the West did nothing and even acted counterproductively by pushing the Ethiopians to invade the country. "Now, the anti-piracy efforts are not addressing the causes of the problem but the consequences of the problem. The root causes can only be addressed via a strategy," she said.

She sees a problem of leadership at European level as, for example, the European recovery plan is not an EU plan but a sum of national plans with no real EU articulation. She also echoed the fear expressed by Giles Merritt that the financial crisis of last year has become the economic crisis now and will become more and more of a security crisis. She sees protectionist and nationalist drives getting worse.

With regard to Somalia, **Christine Roger** said that things are being done, such as the Commission funding the police with salaries.

“The EU is not always the best placed to intervene,” she said. “We know that addressing piracy is not addressing the roots of the problem but it is a contribution. [...] We’d like to do more to have clear, positive and effective action but this is a very complex situation.”

Pro-active forward planning

Karel Kovanda said that the financial and economic crisis had not been anticipated in any of the strategy documents that we have but may find its way into the NATO strategic concept until the next unanticipated crisis comes along.

Horst Teltschik said that he has the impression that the EU “is just muddling along” and therefore needs strategies. For him, strategies mean identifying threats, analysing them, prioritizing and defining goals to cope with them. He sees a problem in terms of lack of credibility because of a lack of implementation. For example, he referred to a refrain running from a previous NATO Secretary General George Robertson and the incumbent Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, calling for capacities. “We ask for 15 helicopters. Can we provide that? No. It’s absolutely crazy.”



Giles Merritt

He added that no-one in Europe took much notice of Ukraine before the Orange Revolution but that suddenly Europe discovered Ukraine and suddenly the US proposed bringing them into

NATO. “But we have no strategies to cope with these things and that’s a problem,” he said.

“Waiting for NATO summits is not good enough. So, in the EU or NATO, countries like France, Germany or Poland must take the lead and convince partners to join in,” he said. “Is waiting for Obama to come up with a strategy at the NATO summit or waiting for Medvedev to come up with a strategy good enough for Europe?”

Giles Merritt concluded by saying that the EU’s decision to have a review of its security strategy five years after the original one was a bureaucratic reflex and that its timing made no sense because everyone knew that there would be a new administration in the US that would reflect changes in US thinking. “Back in December, we already knew that the financial crisis would be really serious but we went ahead with the review and didn’t have much to say. NATO is more or less in the same position. Two reviews before there is anything to review seems crazy to me,” he said.

End notes

¹ "Declaration on Alliance Security".

² http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Afghanistan_map.png

³ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/16/AR2009011603717.html> for the full article. The other four lessons learnt had been calls for: more cohesion from NATO and its partners, a real regional approach, more support on the civilian side and much better communications in the sense that the real feelings of the Afghan people need to be publicised.

⁴ <http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/>

⁵ http://www.defenselink.mil/comptroller/defbudget/fy2008/budget_justification/pdfs/nsip/02_NSIP_FY%202008.pdf

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