

# Policy Paper

Number 25  
November 2013

---

## The EU in the future of British security: Why a safer UK needs a stronger Europe

---

### Executive Summary

#### **Aims of project:**

This report is intended as a counterpoint to the British government's recent EU Balance of Competencies Review, which was commissioned to explore the areas in which the EU benefits the UK. The review drew attention to some of the benefits which the UK gains from European security cooperation, and areas in which the EU has failed to fulfil expectations but it stopped short of exploring how British security could draw greater benefit from the EU, and how the EU's security shortcomings could be overcome. Therefore, this report aims to 1) provide an argument of why the security of the UK and its interests vitally depends on both protecting and increasing its level of military cooperation through the EU and 2) propose methods to improve the EU's security institutions and so maximise their benefit to British security.

#### **EU benefits to national defence:**

NATO still provides the UK with the best assurance against state-based military attacks. However, NATO has very limited responses to non-conventional security threats, such as terrorism and cyber-attacks. NATO lacks the EU's civilian defensive tools, derived from its judicial, economic and social institutions. With the US decreasing its involvement in European security, NATO is becoming increasingly European, and so the gap between its military capabilities and those of the EU members is closing. Therefore,

### Author

**Andreas Capstack**  
Junior Research Fellow,  
Global Policy Institute

#### **Contact:**

andreas.capstack@  
sciencespo.fr

#### **Global Policy Institute**

31 Jewry Street  
London EC3N 2EY  
Tel: +44 (0)20 73201355

[www.gpilondon.com](http://www.gpilondon.com)

the UK should place greater emphasis on EU-led non-conventional defence initiatives.

**EU benefits to external operations:**

- 1) The UK and NATO's failures in recent interventions can be largely attributed to the lack of civilian involvement in constructing a stable and decent government with minimal adverse effect on the civilian population. To avoid NATO's mistakes in Afghanistan and Iraq, the UK should make greater use of the EU's crisis management tools, which allow for more diverse and integrated responses.
- 2) To fill the European 'capability gaps' which are opening due to the US's steady withdrawal of military support for Europe, the UK must encourage other EU members to develop their armed forces, for which the EU has specialised institutions such as the European Defence Agency (EDA).
- 3) The EU also offers the UK a veil of legitimacy and acceptability for pursuing its foreign policy owing to its softer, value-driven, image and comparatively amicable relations with other international organisations and states. Pursuing its security interests through the EU could allow the UK the ability to exert its influence in areas where doing so unilaterally or through NATO would be greeted with greater international and local opposition.

**Necessary EU foreign intervention reforms:**

To improve the EU's foreign intervention capability, UK should 1) help develop a new security white paper to minimise disputes on when to launch operations, 2) support the creation of a specialised and permanent EU military headquarters and 3) promote a NATO-style 'director system' whereby controversial EU operations could be led by small groups of members. To improve the EU's civilian operations, the UK should support the creation of 1) a standing pool of civilian crisis-response personnel, and 2) an analogous protocol to the EU's military ATH-

ENA mechanism which would allow states to bear the cost of civilian crisis response themselves, should they not wish to wait for the European Commission to allocate funds.

**EU benefits to defence economics:**

The EDA can facilitate and, if given greater political input and responsibility, encourage pooling and sharing of military resources to improve Europe's military efficiency to allow cuts to defence expenditure without compromising military capability. A 'European defence semester' could require states to submit their defence budgets to mutual scrutiny to ensure cuts are coordinated so as to increase efficiency ('rationalisation'), rather than reduce military capabilities. The UK should also encourage greater EU joint procurement and development projects and the creation of a joint European military industrial base. This would create economies of scale in the arms industry and increase scope for pooling and sharing, as well as provide Europe with greater strategic autonomy.

**EU benefits to British global power:**

A more militarily integrated EU is necessary for the UK to retain its position as a 'top-table power', which is threatened by the US pivot and the rise of the BRIC countries. The EU could define itself as a security provider for states which are suffering instability to allow the UK and Europe a greater degree of influence and closer relations with those areas, which otherwise might seek assistance elsewhere. Along with France, the UK is the most experienced and capable military actor in the EU. If the UK were to champion EU defence initiatives, it could translate this experience into a position of military leadership, which would overall strengthen its position within the EU and hence the world.

## Glossary of abbreviations

AU - African Union
BCR - Balance of Competencies Review
CFSP - Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIVCOM - Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management
CSDP - Common Security and Defence Policy
EDA - European Defence Agency
ESDP - European Security and Defence Policy
ESS - 2003 European Security Strategy
EUMC - European Union Military Committee
ISR - Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance
PSC - Political and Security Committee
SDSR - 2010 UK Strategic Defence and Security Review
SHAPE - Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe
WEU - Western European Union

## Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>National Defence</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Conventional and nuclear defence	5
Cyber-defence	7
Counter-terrorism	7
International organised crime	9
Alternative Security	9
<b>Foreign Interventions</b> .....	<b>9</b>
How the EU can help	9
<i>Civilian involvement</i>	10
<i>The 'capability gap'</i>	11
<i>Legitimacy</i>	12
Necessary reforms	14
<i>Strategic reform</i>	14
<i>Military reform</i>	15
<i>Civilian and organisational reform</i>	15
<b>Defence spending</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Pooling and sharing	17
Budget coordination	19
Procurement	20
Protecting global power	21
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>26</b>

## Introduction

In the 17th century the French finance minister, the Duke de Sully, proposed to the king the creation of a European Federation. He envisaged that this organisation would maintain peace and law in the continent through the use of a common army of 270,000 men and would be controlled by the 'Very Christian Council of Europe'.<sup>[1]</sup> Since then, many others have proposed a politically united Europe with its own European Army, although in few European countries has this idea been less popular than in the UK. Despite what some alarmist europhobes might claim, Europe does not have its own army by any stretch of the imagination. However, Europe does possess many institutions which enable and promote military cooperation between states, of which the most important two are NATO and the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union (CSDP).

NATO was created in the early years of the Cold War as an American-led alliance to protect Western Europe against attack by the Soviet Union and has since become increasingly institutionalised. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO has shifted emphasis from collective defence onto other roles such as counter-terrorism and 'conflict management'. The CSDP, previously known as the ESDP, is a body of the EU which acts as a mechanism for greater cooperation and joint action between EU members on matters of defence and (mainly) security. The ESDP was created in the 1996 and was intended to provide Europe with a greater ability to collectively respond independently to crises and so alleviate America's financial burden within NATO. Subsequently, the ESDP developed more clearly defined goals and methods of implementation and absorbed the Western European Union, a largely inactive European defence organisation which was declared defunct in 2011. The ESDP was renamed to the CSDP in the Treaty of Lisbon

which strengthened it by creating the post of High Representative (effectively an EU foreign minister) and more clearly outlining its tasks. The CSDP is assisted by several other European bodies, notably the European Defence Agency (EDA) whose aim is to improve the military capabilities of EU members.

Given its tradition of military self-reliance and suspicion of the lands across the Channel, Britain has always been amongst the most reticent European states towards joint-European military initiatives. When the UK has supported European military cooperation it was usually a result of practical considerations outweighing its euroscepticism, rather than out of devotion to principles of a shared European destiny, which have always been taken more seriously in France, General De Gaulle being one of the idea's most prominent exponents. Instead, the UK has traditionally preferred to cooperate with its Anglophone allies (especially the USA) and work through NATO. The UK has so far mainly supported the CSDP for its contribution to the Alliance. However, this close security relation with the US is becoming increasingly unreliable due to America's much discussed 'pivot to Asia'. So far the US has made little progress in pivoting towards Asia; only 2,500 troops have been stationed in Australia,<sup>[2]</sup> and plans to send troops to Vietnam have been problematic for obvious historical reasons. However the recent interventions in Libya and Mali clearly demonstrate the pivot away from Europe. The US was very reluctant to become involved in either conflict, seeing North Africa as outside its area of strategic interest and so did not take part in the combat directly. Instead, the US 'led from behind' by providing intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and other logistical support, without which Britain and France would not have been able to complete the operation. As former US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates warned at a speech in Brussels in 2011, "future [American] leaders may

not consider the returns on US investment in NATO worth the costs".[3] Therefore, the UK's traditional choice between its Atlantic or European partners may soon cease to exist.

When the UK evaluates its relationship with the EU, military matters are usually overshadowed by economic ones. However, the British government is aware of the need to consider defence as part of the current debate on Britain's future relationship with the EU. In July 2012 it launched a 'Balance of Competencies Review' (BCR) to examine Britain's relationship with the EU and how that relationship affects its national interests. The review comes at a time when the calls for Britain to reverse the process of deeper European integration are louder than ever and so the BCR was intended to inform the membership debate. Only one chapter of the Foreign Policy Report (one of 32 reports in total) is devoted to examining the EU's contribution to British defence and security. The chapter concludes that European defence and security integration is not sufficiently developed for there to be any reason to reduce British involvement in the EU in defence matters as "there is nothing to repatriate on the defence side".[4] The review also concludes that while the "delivery of CSDP could be improved", the CSDP has been overall of some benefit to Britain, which "gets out more than it puts in".

This paper aims firstly to respond to the BCR by offering a competing assessment of how the EU and CSDP currently benefit the security and defence of the UK. However, this paper will also expand upon the BCR by evaluating the CSDP's potential benefit to the UK and how that potential could be realised. It will be demonstrated that practical considerations and tightly defined national interest, rather than notions of a 'common European destiny', are sufficient to justify a far greater embrace of European military cooperation than is currently being supported by the UK. Four main areas of British security will be considered; 1) national defence, 2) foreign

interventions, 3) increasing efficiency and 4) protecting Britain's global power and influence. In each case Britain's current objectives and the challenges it faces will be assessed. Following this, there will be an examination of the potential benefits that could be derived from seeking to solve the problems through greater cooperation within the EU. This discussion inevitably draws the utility of NATO into question, which shares many of the same objectives and capabilities as the EU's CSDP. However, they also possess many important differences which makes it likely that both will continue to perform some functions best and so, contrary to the usual 'Atlanticism vs. Europeanism' dichotomy, it will be considered how both might play a valuable role in the future of British security.

For the CSDP to play a more central role, it needs significant reform as in its current form it is unfit for purpose in several ways. So far the CSDP has achieved only a fraction of what it was hoped to and, given that EU members in total spend more on defence than China and Russia combined,[5] European defence currently amounts to far less than the sum of its parts. Therefore this paper will propose several measures (most of which have been called for repeatedly by politicians and academics) that the UK should support at the European Council meeting in December 2013. These reforms would allow the CSDP to become the global security actor which it was intended to be, providing greater security to both Britain and Europe.

## National Defence

### Conventional and nuclear defence

Traditionally, the main role of militaries has been to defend states against attacks from other states. In many parts of the world, such as in East Asia or the Middle East, this is still a key consideration and so necessitates that

states maintain large standing armies, ready to repel an attack. Fortunately for Britain, this is no longer a pressing concern. Britain is fortunate to be situated in a prosperous, interdependent and stable region and enjoys a close alliance with the pre-eminent global military power (as well as several second ranked ones). This means that the costs of attacking the UK to the attacker are so great that such an attack is very unlikely.[6] The days of air-raid shelters and the home-guard are over.

Therefore, one could even argue that the UK no longer requires armed forces for defence against conventional attacks. This may well currently be the case but nevertheless there is a plausible case for maintaining an 'insurance' against any unforeseen threat in the future. This is the main argument in favour of the UK keeping and upgrading its nuclear arsenal. The 2010 British Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) also states that, although the army is reducing its heavy armour and artillery, which are useless against the non-conventional threats which the UK is mainly concerned with today, it will "retain the ability to regenerate those capabilities if need be".[7] Such measures should more than suffice to ensure that the UK is safe from state-based conventional (or nuclear) attack in the foreseeable future, in the absence of a dramatic change in the international order.

An additional insurance against future threats is remaining in collective defence alliances which ensure that the UK will never be forced to defend itself alone and provide a deterrent to potential attackers. Since 1949 NATO has guaranteed the UK collective defence, as was the organisation's original purpose and, according to its 2010 Strategic Concept, still "the cornerstone of the alliance".[8] Collective defence is guaranteed by article V of the North Atlantic Treaty which requires that when a member is attacked other members must come to its assistance and provide "such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed

force".[9,10] So far, article V has never been invoked, although it was offered by the US's allies after the September 11th attacks as a basis for their assistance in the invasion of Afghanistan. However, there is no reason to suppose that the UK cannot depend on its NATO allies to come to its aid if attacked. Britain is so deeply economically linked and geographically close to other key NATO members that any attack on the UK would be equally a huge threat to them, who would therefore be unable to ignore such an attack.

The main value of NATO's collective defence guarantee is the involvement of the US, which is still the unrivalled global military superpower with technology and force-projection capabilities far greater than those of the rest of the world combined. Although the US has stated its intent to reduce its commitment to Europe, there is no reason to assume this would lead to a neglect of article V commitments. The logic of the pivot was to stop the US getting involved in conflicts which were only in its allies' interests. However, this by no means implies that protecting the allies themselves is no longer in America's interest. After initial inaction in two world wars, the US realises the foolishness and futility of trying to stay out of wars in Western Europe, to which it is today politically and economically far more connected than was the case in the 1910s and 30s.

However, NATO is no longer the sole provider of collective defence to the UK. Article 42(7) of the Lisbon treaty commits EU members to upholding collective security, stipulating that all signatories should come to the aid of a member under attack "by all means in their power";[11] although this is qualified so that the obligations to collective defence do not conflict with members' commitments to neutrality or to NATO. However, it is hard to see the extra value which EU collective defence brings the UK, compared to NATO. The inclusion of the US in NATO gives the organisation almost four-times the mili-

tary budget of the EU's members and many times more fire-power. Even if the US did revert back to an isolationist position, reminiscent of the inter-war period, this would still not leave NATO in an inferior position to the EU in terms of providing collective defence. As the BCR notes, the EU also lacks NATO's many years of conventional war-planning and fighting experience and there is no agreement over how article 42(7) should be implemented.[12] Article 43(1) of the Lisbon treaty sets out the military tasks which the CSDP hopes to achieve and does not mention collective defence or engaging in any conflict larger than peacekeeping operations, showing the current lack of serious commitment to making the CSDP an alternative collective defence provider to NATO. Therefore, there is little reason for the UK to propose greater EU cooperation on collective defence when the EU's military efforts could be spent in areas where they are more likely to be used.

### **Cyber-defence**

With the absence of a pressing conventional or nuclear threat, the SDSR focuses mainly on non-conventional threats to the UK, the 'top tier' being terrorism, organised crime and cyber-attacks. Given the novelty of cyber-threats, it is difficult to predict the potential damage that they could inflict in the future. However, feared actions such as the remote disabling of national power grids far exceed any attacks successfully executed on a state to date. As it stands, national information and communication systems are insufficiently integrated to make cyber-attacks a decisive method of warfare. However, it is possible that cyber-warfare could become a greater area of concern in the future. The greater cyber threat is towards British commercial interests from cyber-criminals and there have been many cases of businesses and banks losing money to online criminal activity. The SDSR provides an example of 'criminals' reg-

istering 9,500 Olympic-related web addresses before the 2012 games.[13] However, it is not clear that such activity should fall into the category of national security, rather than law enforcement, given how different the nature of the threat and appropriate methods of response are, compared to armed threats.

Cyber-attacks have nevertheless significantly concerned both national and international defence organisations and features prominently in NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept. Due to the global nature of communications infrastructure, which allows many states to be affected by a single cyber-attack, it is logical that the combative measures should be similarly international. However, the measures to defend against cyber-attacks do not necessarily have to be undertaken by military organisations like NATO. Cyber-crime against businesses is a matter of law enforcement, rather than national defence. It requires coordination with the communications industry and regulation of security systems in both the public and private sectors. Such civilian tasks are better suited to the EU which has broad economic and commercial powers, which NATO lacks being a military institution. NATO may be better suited to dealing with military cyber-attacks (or carrying them out against other states) but currently this does not represent the main types of cyber-threat to the UK. Therefore, the UK should give greater support to the EDA's cyber-defence initiative, proposed at the November 2012 steering board meeting.

### **Counter-terrorism**

As with cyber-attacks, terrorism is an international threat. Terrorist groups can coordinate attacks from positions around the world, severely restricting the effectiveness of a purely national counter-terrorism response. Therefore, international organisations play a vital role in the UK's counter-terrorism activities. Since the September 11th attacks, NATO

has been very active in combating terrorism by allowing states to share intelligence and security advice. However, NATO's military response in tackling terrorism has been in some ways counterproductive, with the wars in Afghanistan and Libya exacerbating the root causes of terrorism, such as political instability and resentment towards the West. An effective counter-terrorism strategy must address the causes of terrorism and include methods such as 'counter-radicalisation', not just focus on foiling attempted acts. The terrorist threat to Europe has roots both domestically, from radicalisation of European citizens, and externally, from international terrorist organisations such as Al Qaeda which operate from areas of lawlessness. Potential methods of addressing the external causes will be considered in section 3 on 'foreign intervention' and, for now, the focus will be on ways to tackle the domestic roots of terrorism.

As former EU High Representative Javier Solana stated, "the military option alone cannot defeat terror. Judicial, police and intelligence cooperation should be the focal point for action".[14] Tackling the domestic causes of terrorism requires a very integrated combination of legal, educational and social measures to increase social cohesion and integration to prevent radicalisation, while still foiling attempted terrorist acts. Such tasks fall largely outside NATO's area of expertise and capability and, like cyber-defence, are better suited for the civilian institutions of the EU. The EU is also capable of undertaking the low-intensity military aspects of domestic counter-terrorist operations through the CSDP, such as protecting civilians and reacting to terrorist attacks, and so it does not require the additional conventional military force of NATO. Moreover, compared to the civilian institutions, military force has a limited utility in the fight against terrorism and so, as Solana stated, "[the CSDP] is not at the core of our [counter-terrorism] efforts".[15] Any military counter-terrorism

activities should be carried out in a way which does not conflict with civilian ones, for example avoiding increased radicalisation by minimising brutality. Therefore, it would be more cohesive for the CSDP to take over more responsibility from NATO on the military side of counterterrorist activities.

An advantage NATO has over the CSDP in counter-terrorism is the inclusion of the US. However, the EU has expanded its counter-terrorism partnerships with non-member countries, such the US, with which it runs a terrorist tracking program. Any NATO counter-terrorism strategy relies on cooperation with the EU but such efforts (as well as much other potential EU-NATO cooperation) are currently blocked by the dispute between Cyprus and Turkey over the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus. The two states together wield a 'double veto' against intelligence sharing between the two institutions, which they worry would aid the other in their dispute. Cyprus blocks Turkish involvement in the EDA and talks between the CSDP's Political and Security Committee (PSC) and NATO's North Atlantic Council, the respective executive bodies, which are therefore only able to meet informally and without a fixed agenda. There is little hope of a solution to the impasse in the near future, given that negotiations on the Berlin Plus agreement between the EU and NATO on military equipment sharing took two years due to Cypriot and Turkish disagreement. To avoid the difficulties of EU-NATO counter terrorist cooperation, it would be more effective for Britain to prioritise the sharing of intelligence through EU institutions and increase EU-US bilateral cooperation whenever possible, to ensure that the intelligence can reach civilian counter-terrorism programs.

Furthermore, in order to improve the coherence of its counter-terrorist programs, the EU needs to have a greater level of consensus on the best methods of tackling terrorism. This could be achieved through



the creation of a common EU counter-terrorism strategy. However, attempted terrorist attacks within the UK are becoming increasingly rare compared to those on British citizens and interests overseas, which therefore warrant greater attention.

### **International organised crime**

The benefits the UK would derive from greater EU cooperation in fighting organised crime are very similar to those of combating domestic terrorism. It requires an international approach and a combination of law-enforcement and military operations, such as those used to prevent people-trafficking in the Mediterranean. The EU and CSDP are better equipped for this than NATO due to the EU's ability to deploy a wider range of tools that mutually reinforce one another. The ways in which the EU can benefit British efforts to tackle the causes of international crime outside the EU (such as Piracy in the Gulf of Aden) will be discussed in section 3.

### **Alternative Security**

Mentions of 'alternative security' are becoming increasingly common in national security and defence reviews and include energy security, preventing climate change and protecting against 'civil emergencies' such as floods. Britain is fortunate that natural disasters and other civil emergencies are extremely rare and very small scale compared those in other parts of the world. Climate change-related disasters are predicted to increase but, unfortunately, the effects of climate change will be impossible to defend against without successful methods of limiting its causes. Preventing climate change, although vital to global security, bears very little in common with the armed security threats which this paper will focus on. For the sake of brevity, therefore, environmental security will be treated as a separate topic to be discussed elsewhere (although

there is doubtlessly much to be gained from greater EU environmental cooperation).

Like environmental security, Britain's energy security requires scientific solutions as much as political ones which places many of the possible solutions, such as the potential utility of nuclear power and fracking, outside the topic of discussion. However, ensuring Britain's energy security does require political solutions, such as maintaining good relations with energy producers and ensuring their on-going stability. Significant levels of Britain's energy imports are from potentially unstable countries, such as Algeria and Nigeria which together are the source of 12% of the UK's crude oil imports.[16] At times it may be necessary to intervene in such regions to protect British interests, the methods of which will now be considered.

## **Foreign intervention**

### **How the EU can help**

Most of the UK's military operations now involve deploying only a small number of troops in impoverished and war-torn regions. The motivations behind such actions are varied and often hard to disentangle. Usually there is a humanitarian justification, such as protecting civilians from civil war or inhumane regimes. Foreign interventions are also often justified on the grounds of protecting British citizens either in the UK or abroad, such as Operation Palliser in Sierra Leone in 2000.[17] Other interventions are justified as protecting British citizens at home by attempting to tackle the causes of terrorism abroad, such as the Afghanistan war. However, it is impossible to ignore self-interested motivations usually also behind interventions, such as removing unfriendly regimes to secure access for British-owned companies to a region, or to maintain stability to protect existing British commercial or strategic interest

in the regions, as was the case with the Iraq war. The UK still intends to undertake external military operations in the future with the SDSR stating that the armed forces should be able to engage in three simultaneous overseas deployments. Such military operations are rarely launched without some sort of accompanying civilian operation, such as delivering humanitarian aid or nation-building, which is usually undertaken by NGOs or international organisations such as the UN or EU, through the CSDP. To date the CSDP has launched in total 28 external operations, of which 16 are on-going (12 civilian and 4 military).

Experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan show that British overseas operations could be conducted far more effectively, with many being a) ineffective, such as the attempts to build a stable and effective government in Afghanistan, b) illegitimate, such as the war in Iraq or c) too late, such as the intervention in Bosnian civil war in the 90s. This section will outline ways in which the CSDP could help the UK overcome these problems and which measures should be taken to improve the effectiveness of the CSDP operations.

### *Civilian involvement*

Military interventions, such as those undertaken by NATO in Bosnia and Libya, are useful for achieving certain specific goals. They can quickly deter threats to civilians by destroying the potential attackers or by simply putting troops between civilians and combatants, which may not even require the use of lethal force. This can be a necessary prerequisite for providing civilian aid such as humanitarian assistance. However, military force alone has limited utility in external operations for three reasons. Firstly, as a response to armed threats, military intervention is only ever a reaction to crises, rather than a way of preventing crises in the first place, and so can only prevent a limited proportion of the suffering. Secondly, as was seen in Afghanistan, military force can defeat the enemy in

combat but doing so is pointless unless the recruitment of new enemy combatants can be stemmed, to avoid a stalemate. Despite possessing overwhelming military superiority and even making progress in counter-insurgency techniques, after over a decade the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan has failed to end the insurgency and build a state capable of maintaining security within its own borders, having cost the UK £37bn[18] and the US over £417bn. [19] Finally, military force alone cannot ensure that peace and stability in a region continue after the intervening troops have returned home by enabling the state to provide its own security in the future. Successfully using non-military methods instead of military ones can save many lives and spare great costs, as well as yielding longer-lasting results. In 2001 the EU High Representative Solana helped broker a peace deal between the Macedonian government and the Albania National Liberation Army, which seemed on course for a full civil war. By avoiding the need for military intervention, the peace deal saved thousands of lives and an estimated £14.7bn[20] to European governments upon whom the duty of intervening would have fallen.

Despite apparent British success in ending the civil war in Sierra Leone, which was undertaken essentially unilaterally (discounting the vital use of American logistical assets), the UK is unable to intervene on a larger scale without assistance from allies, especially given recent cuts to defence funding and personnel. Currently NATO is the UK's organisation of choice for undertaking external operation and the SDSR states that the UK would "support EU missions – whether military or civilian ... only where it is clear that NATO is not planning to intervene".[21] However, as a military body, NATO lacks the nation-building and aid-providing capabilities which the EU possesses and which are critically important.

One potential solution to NATO's shortfall is increasing the level of cooperation and

division of labour between the EU and NATO, with NATO undertaking the military aspects of operations (the 'heavy lifting') and the EU managing the civilian side, where its main strengths lie. Such an approach was suggested repeatedly in the BCR. However, NATO-EU cooperation is difficult for the same reasons mentioned in section 2c), namely the impasse over the Turkey-Cyprus dispute. Occasionally there has been successful cooperation between the EU and NATO through the 'Berlin Plus' agreement, which allows the EU to use NATO assets, such as in Bosnia. However, the cooperation was small scale and essentially involved troops replacing their NATO badges with EU ones. More recently the Turkish-Cyprus dilemma has proved very problematic for EU-NATO overseas interventions. In Afghanistan there was little coordination between the NATO Training Mission- Afghanistan (NTMA) and the EU Police Mission- Afghanistan (EUPOL) police training missions, due to the lack of formal EU-NATO planning meetings. Therefore, in the absence of an effective mechanism for cooperation between the EU and NATO, if the UK wishes to partake in cohesive civilian and military operations it should do so by conducting the entire operation through the EU, rather than attempt joint action with NATO and the EU or, worst of all, by acting solely through NATO and neglecting the civilian developmental and humanitarian aspects of the operation.

### *The 'capability gap'*

Despite globally being the 4th largest military spender, the UK has severe capability deficiencies which prevent it from independently achieving any but the most modest of its security objectives. The most serious deficiencies are in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), close air support,[22] UAVs and logistical support including transportation and air-to-air refuelling.[23,24] These deficiencies are even more serious in other European countries and are largely a legacy of the

American-imposed 'division of labour' within NATO in the cold war, whereby the US would focus on ISR, high-tech systems and logistics while the European allies would provide troops and tanks for the Alliance. This division of labour was not problematic in missions led by the US, such as in the Balkans, when it was able to provide its allies with the tools they lacked. However, as part of its 'pivot', the US is showing decreasing interest in supporting Britain or its other European allies. The 2011 Budget Control Act aims to reduce American defence expenditure by \$450bn over the next ten years. These savings will be, in part, made by reducing the level of American support to its European allies and no longer guaranteeing support in conflicts which are not in America's interest. American reticence about providing equipment to Europeans almost prevented the intervention in Libya in 2011, as the European states involved were unable to source their own 'strategic enablers' and therefore had to desperately seek assistance from the US, which ultimately provided air-to-air refuelling and 90% of the smart munitions for the mission.[25]

There is scope for the CSDP to play an important role in helping Britain close the 'capability gap' and ensure it is able to undertake the military and civilian operations which are within its interests. Already there has been considerable progress in this area, thanks to the work of the EDA which has directly addressed the EU's capability gap and is undertaking programs in the areas of air-to-air refuelling, satellite communications, maritime surveillance and many more. Furthermore, the creation of EU battlegroups, rapid expeditionary forces of about 1,500 troops at the disposal of the CSDP, has had a positive effect on Europe's armed forces. The EU has a very large number of troops, with around 1.7 million active personnel and over 5 million total military personnel. This significantly exceeds the USA and puts it second only to China.[26] However, as of 2010 only 28% of that pool of

manpower was deployable overseas, falling a long way short of NATO's target of 50% [27] (although in 2005 only 15% [28] were deployable overseas, showing encouraging progress). This increase is due to the pressure placed on EU members to contribute to battlegroups, which gives them an incentive to reform their armed forces. For example, Germany ended conscription in 2011 to ensure that its troops were professional enough for overseas deployment while the BCR singles out Sweden and Spain as having improved their armed forces by making them more rapidly deployable for overseas military operations.

Improving Europe's armed forces is of special interest to the UK which, along with France, is Europe's leading military power. As American experience in Afghanistan and Iraq has shown, it is very difficult for allies to cooperate when one is vastly more technologically advanced than the other. It is no longer possible for allies to 'carve up the front' into sections, allocating each to an ally which would fight with tactical independence, as was done in the Second World War. [29] Integrated communications systems mean that each combatant has to be constantly responsive to the entire operation. This is impossible when some allies have far more rudimentary systems and procedures than others and this has led to instances of friendly fire. Therefore, the UK needs to ensure that it does not allow a large gap to fall between the capability of its European allies and its own.

A second lesson to be learnt from the US is that being the senior partner in an alliance makes one vulnerable to free-riding. If one ally performs a role such as ISR vastly more effectively than the other, who falls into a habit of reliance, it becomes increasingly difficult to end that dependence without critically weakening the capability of the junior partner. Therefore, the UK should use the EDA to help and encourage other EU members to modernise their armed forces and allow them to make meaningful contributions to overseas

operations. It should also encourage the EDA in developing large projects, like satellite communications, to help the UK overcome its capability gap. As the military forerunner in Europe, the UK is well positioned to provide leadership and expertise in these tasks.

### *Legitimacy*

Many states are understandably uncomfortable about the US and Europe's habit of sending troops into other territories. Many non-Western leaders see such actions as a return to 19th century imperialism, with pretence of protecting human rights a mask for obtaining access to natural resources and markets. Inversely, some authoritarian leaders, such as Russian president Putin, see the interest in human rights as a problem in itself, due to their own dismal human rights records. In 2005 the UN adopted the principle 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) which states that national sovereignty is a responsibility which states can forfeit if the leaders subject their citizens to significant harm, such as war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Russia and China are concerned that this would give the West an excuse to interfere in the affairs of their own countries, pointing out that they are very selective when it comes to applying R2P and focus only on crimes of their enemies while ignoring similar ones of their allies. After the 2011 NATO mission enabled the Libyan National Liberation Army to overthrow Gadhafi, which was not authorised in its UN mandate, Russia and China felt betrayed for their acquiescence of the intervention. [30] Therefore, Russia is very reluctant to allow Western intervention in Syria, for fear of future mission-creep from protecting civilians to regime change and, being a member of the UN Security Council, has the ability to prevent any resolutions authorising intervention. Continuing to intervene in crises overseas when it is within its interests is important for the UK to promote its influence and maintain its credibility as a

global power. Therefore, the UK must find a way of overcoming such diplomatic obstacles.

Furthermore, a lack of legitimacy amongst the population of a country subject to intervention can make the mission far more difficult. In 2003 the US optimistically hoped to be greeted in Iraq as 'liberators' but after failing to win the people's 'hearts and minds', they were instead seen as invaders and the mission suffered heavily from insurgency. The EU can help the UK overcome both of these challenges by having a better relationship with other states and actors than NATO and so disguising British interests.

Firstly, despite now having military elements, the EU is fundamentally a civilian organisation, unlike NATO which is run by military staff. Although both organisations stress very similar commitments to upholding human rights and democracy, NATO was undeniably created primarily out of realist consideration as a way of increasing Western military power. NATO's claims to stand by certain values are severely undermined by consistently putting strategic considerations first, having allowed Greece and Spain to be members while the countries were dictatorships. Turkey is noticeably also a member of NATO, despite being an authoritarian regime with the highest number of incarcerated journalists in the world[31] and recently responding to popular protests of its citizens with bloody repression. The US has also greatly undermined its identity as a force for good in the world with the war on terror, continuing to conduct unpopular and secretive drone strikes in Pakistan, illegally imprisoning suspected terrorists in Guantanamo Bay and using online surveillance on both its own citizens and those of its allies. Although similar accusations can be made against many members of the EU, especially the UK, they are not as severe and do not significantly tarnish the reputation of the EU as a whole. Due to its part-supranational nature, the EU manages to avoid being associated with all of

the crimes of its members to the same extent as an intergovernmental organisation like NATO. Consequently, the EU is much more credible than NATO when it claims to be acting out of humanitarian concerns, rather than its own power-maximising interests.[32] Therefore, states like China do not consider the EU a threat to their interests in the same way as the USA or 'its tool' NATO, although this may also be a result of the Union's perceived weakness and so could change if it starts to assert its interests too aggressively. By being much less than an actual state but much more than simply a collection of states, the EU is not suspected of playing the same zero-sum power games as states are often assumed to do. This means that EU operations are less likely to face opposition.

For historical reasons, the EU enjoys a far better relationship with Russia than NATO does. Russian leaders[33] find interference by its cold war enemy in the former-Soviet bloc, and especially in the former Soviet Union itself such as Georgia, a huge insult and challenge to their domestic image of power. The value of the EU's more amicable (although far from close) relationship with Russia is currently being demonstrated by the EU monitoring mission in Georgia which was launched in October 2008 to maintain the ceasefire between Russia and Georgia after their conflict over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. So far the mission has helped maintain stability in the region, which has avoided further conflict and so has been largely successful. It is unimaginable that Russia would allow troops under the NATO banner (especially American troops) into Georgia, given Georgian interest in joining the Alliance was a major cause of the Russian invasion in 2008.

The EU also enjoys a good relationship with Africa. This too is partially because, without the identity of a state, the EU is seen as less likely to engage in interventions out of pure self-interest, such as neo-colonial scrambles for resources. The EU also has a

close relationship with the African Union (AU) and coordinates with it in missions in Africa, providing it with large levels of funding. The EU contributed €500m to the AU mission in Sudan in 2005 (AMIS1)[34] and €325m to the mission in Somalia.[35] Africa is predominantly the EU's area of responsibility for providing aid and promoting security with three of the CSDP's four on-going military operations are in Africa, as well as half of the civilian ones. Therefore, the close relationship between the EU and AU is very important to ensure that missions in Africa are accepted by both Africans and the wider international community as being in Africa's best interests, rather than as a return to the exploitative relationship between Europe and Africa in the past.

The EU's positive image makes it a useful medium through which the UK can conduct aspects of its foreign policy which would be viewed with suspicion if undertaken unilaterally or with NATO. This increases its scope for promoting its interests internationally and without damaging relations with other powers. The value of the EU's legitimacy can be observed currently with the EU's role in shaping the on-going political crisis in Egypt, with the emergency military government violently repressing the previously ruling Muslim Brotherhood. The Egyptian government is deeply suspicious of states intervening in its assertion of authority which gives the EU, with its softer 'value-driven' image a distinct advantage in conducting negotiations and allows the UK a method of intervening in the conflict (albeit less directly) that would otherwise be unavailable.

### **Necessary reforms**

#### *Strategic reform*

Western governments have often been criticised for intervening in humanitarian crises too late or not at all, examples being the Bosnian war and the Rwandan genocide

respectively. These criticisms are especially valid of the CSDP's record. Despite having battlegroups on standby, which were tailor-made for such crises, the CSDP did not intervene in either the Libyan civil war in 2011 or the Mali insurgency in 2013, with the burden falling on Britain and France who acted through NATO instead. To avoid such future embarrassment and meet its responsibilities, the CSDP needs an effective way of deciding its top priorities; when and how it should act and the means to be allocated to such action.[36] National governments do this by producing white papers usually labelled 'security strategies', such as the SDSR. A security strategy is also necessary to ensure that all of the actions of a state or organisation are coherent and work towards a single goal, rather than being ad hoc and contradictory.

The closest document the EU has ever produced to a security white paper is the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS). However, the obvious problem with the document is that it is now a decade out of date; being written before financial crisis, before the Afghanistan and Iraq wars had stagnated and generally at a time when the global centre of power appeared to be in the West. Even at the time of publication, the ESS was insufficient to act as an effective guide for enabling EU members to respond to crises with a common purpose. At only 15 pages, the ESS is very short (the SDSR is around 70 pages) and mainly discusses the threats which Europe faces and the general form which an approach to these threats should take (e.g. 'multilateral', 'preventative', and 'comprehensive'). It does not identify the specific objectives of such an approach and so, as Sven Biscop says "The ESS tells us how to do things, but not what to do".[37]

The ESS needs to be replaced by document similar to the SDSR, but created through a 'top-down process'[38] that includes supervision and input by the 28 EU heads of state, rather than the work being left predominantly

to lower level staff, as was the procedure with the ESS. This would give the new security strategy the authority to guide EU security policy. It should also give sufficiently detailed ways of responding to crises so that, in the event of a crisis, any debate between members would be limited to details of a potential intervention, not whether to intervene at all. Obviously, any such strategy should be regularly updated; Biscop suggests that this should be done every five years to coincide with the appointment new EU high representatives.[39]

A European security strategy could have prevented the EU's inaction during the Libyan and Malian interventions. At the time of the Mali crisis in January 2013, the joint German, Polish and French Weimar battlegroup was on standby and ready to intervene in such crises. However, the German government was unwilling to see their troops deployed overseas. A similar reluctance to use force resulted in Germany and Sweden blocking an EU intervention in Libya in 2011, when it was Swedish troops in the battlegroup on standby. However, a new European security strategy would give states such as Germany the ability to help decide in advance which actions the EU should take when crises occur in order to serve its priorities. Having agreed to such a strategy, it would be much harder for a national government to abstain or prevent action in accordance with the strategy.

### *Military reform*

The EU had high hopes for its battlegroups, as did their main creators, the UK and France. It is therefore an acute embarrassment that they are yet to be deployed, despite having become active in 2007. Much of this failure can be attributed to a lack of strategic consensus, which a new European security strategy would help overcome. However, the decision to put your own citizens in harm's way is likely still to be contentious, even with a new European security strategy. There will always be new crises that, it will be argued, do not fit

the pattern of any previous ones and so existing practises should not apply, giving pacifist EU members such as Germany scope to veto an intervention by the CSDP. In such a case, there should be the possibility that certain EU members can lead an intervention with other states being able to abstain or indirectly contributing, for example by taking over other security duties from the involved states such as airspace policing. This system would be similar to that in NATO, which allows groups of members to form 'directorates' and lead military operation while other members are allowed to abstain, rather than being forced to veto the operation. This approach was used in the Operation Unified Protector in Libya, which was led by the UK and France with Germany abstaining, and is widely regarded as a military success. Such a system would 'bridge the gap' until the foreign and security policy of the EU members becomes sufficiently integrated that the CSDP does not require the consensus of member states to deploy battlegroups or, more realistically, the consensus of member states can be assumed.

### *Civilian and organisational reform*

So far the success of several of the CSDP's civilian operations has been compromised by shortages of personnel, which led to missions being simply too small to accomplish their objectives. Lack of civilian personnel in the EU training missions in Kosovo and especially in Afghanistan, which involved around 400 EU personnel compared to Kosovo's over 3000 (despite being a much more challenging environment), means that the police forces in both countries are still plagued with corruption and unprofessionalism. The personnel shortage is caused by the fact that, unlike the military CSDP which draws from the standing armies of EU members, the CSDP recruits civilians especially for each mission. This creates delays and results in understaffing of more dangerous missions, such as Afghanistan, which receive fewer applicants.

A possible solution is for the CSDP to try and create a civilian equivalent of battlegroups; multinational corps of development and institution-building experts who agree to be on standby for deployment when and where they might be needed. There will inevitably be roles which are unique to a certain area of operation which need to be filled ad hoc, but having a database of civilian personnel on standby for deployment could significantly increase the response time of the civilian CSDP and allow it to provide the numbers of personnel necessary to achieve lasting success.

Civilian CSDP missions are also unnecessarily delayed due to their funding procedure. In EU military missions the costs mostly 'lie where they fall', apart from some 'common costs' (such as running a mission HQ) which, as of 2011, are shared amongst states participating in the operations under the 'ATHENA mechanism'.<sup>[40]</sup> However, civilian CSDP missions are funded by the European Commission, as it is responsible for the financing of foreign aid. The negotiations required to secure funds from the Commission mean that civilian operations take longer to organise, reducing their effectiveness. The relationship between the Commission and the European Council, which ultimately controls the CSDP, is very complex and therefore so would be any solution for eliminating inefficiencies of their relationship. However, the speed of civilian CSDP operations could be increased by giving states the option of leading the mission and bearing the costs themselves, following the same procedure as military operations, until the Commission has decided to allocate funds.

Finally, the overall cohesion of civilian CSDP missions can be improved. The civilian and military missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2003 (EUPM and EUFOR Althea) were plagued by poor coordination, with the civilian and military missions competing for resources and not reinforcing each other. This shows that there needs to be an improvement in cooperation between the European Union

Military Committee (EUMC) and Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) which advises the CSDP's Political and Security Committee (PSC) on the military and civilian aspects of missions respectively. This could be achieved by creating a permanent and dedicated CSDP Operational Headquarters. Such a facility has been suggested at various points by France but mainly for political reasons, such as the Tervuren Proposal in 2003 which aimed to create a non-NATO military headquarters in Europe to weaken American influence. Currently, CSDP missions either use their cell at the NATO Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Belgium, use national facilities of member states or, if all else fails, create a temporary headquarters in Belgium. Using the NATO headquarters is problematic for the same reason that all NATO-EU relations are problematic, namely due to the Turkey-Cyprus dispute. Using national or temporary headquarters does not allow for the possibility of long term planning operations by the EU Military Staff (EUMS) in anticipation of future crises. Britain's usual objection to the idea of an independent permanent EU strategic headquarters is that it would unnecessarily duplicate SHAPE. However, a CSDP headquarters would only duplicate SHAPE if the CSDP and NATO were undertaking the same tasks. If the CSDP were to take over more responsibilities from NATO, this would become less of an issue and increasingly necessary to respond to crises rapidly and coherently.

The BCR states that the UK has traditionally been against the idea of a dedicated EU operational HQ as it would be "duplicative of existing structures [and] produce an unnecessary ambiguity with respect to the role of NATO". However, the future of NATO is already deeply ambiguous and so diverting roles to the CSDP might leave NATO with a less ambiguous, smaller role consisting solely of the tasks which



it is best at, such as collective defence.

## Defence spending

Since the start of the financial crisis in 2008, Western governments have drastically reduced all types of expenditure, including on defence. Methods of reducing military costs now form a crucial part of European security reviews and in a survey in April 2013, 76 out of 100 European defence executives said that austerity was now the most important factor shaping European defence. [41] In the SDSR, the UK government stated its intention to reduce the defence budget by 8% and cut army personnel by 20% over the next five years, doubtlessly making it harder for the UK to achieve its security goals for which it is already under-resourced. Furthermore, within the EU as a whole, 60% of states reduced their defence expenditure in 2012 with the total regional defence expenditure falling by 1.63%. [42] With Europe already suffering from a capability gap, as well as the severe potential consequences of American reorientation, these cuts pose a large problem for European, and therefore British, security. As EUMC chairman General Hakan Syren worryingly stated, “the military capabilities of the EU member states are on a steady downward slope... looking a few years into the future, it is simple mathematics to predict that many member states will be unable to sustain essential parts of their national forces, air forces being the prime example”. [43]

In order for the UK and its EU allies to meet their governments’ efficiency targets whilst undertaking the necessary improvements in their armed forces without opening up new capabilities gaps, they must find ways of saving costs and economising in the least disruptive way possible. There is much room for improving efficiency in European militaries. Although the EU members spend together over a third as much on

defence as the US, they manage to acquire a far smaller fraction of its level of capability for that price. Some of the reasons for this can be seen by comparing how the US and European states spend their defence budgets. The US spends around 20.9% of its defence budget on personnel and 11.5% on research and development (R&D) while in the EU, 50% of the budget is spent on personnel and only 4.3% on R&D. [44,45] The upside of these inefficiencies for Europe is that there is consequently considerable scope for mitigating the effects of decreased defence budgets through improving efficiency. Three methods of accomplishing this are pooling and sharing, budget coordination and joint procurement.

## Pooling and sharing

Currently, the EU has 28 different militaries, each with its own command structure, bureaucracy, procurement plans and mostly with its own army, navy and air force. This is deeply inefficient in the same way in which it would be for the US government to decide to break up its military into 50 state-run militaries, which would each be made able to operate independently. Pooling and sharing are methods of overcoming these inefficiencies by reducing the duplication of capabilities of partaking countries. Pooling involves procuring equipment and conducting operations in tandem with other states while sharing involves states making their military resources available for other states to use. Pooling and sharing are far from new ideas, with already over 100 pooling and sharing programs in operation amongst EU and NATO members. [46] For example, in 2010 the UK and France signed the Lancaster House Treaties and agreed to create a joint Anglo-French rapid response force and carrier group. Within the EU, the EDA facilitates many pooling and sharing initiatives such as the European Satellite Communication Procurement Cell (ESCPC) and joint pilot

training programs. NATO too has realised the importance of pooling and sharing, including ‘smart defence’ in its most recent Strategic Concept which it defines as “a concept that encourages Allies to cooperate in developing, acquiring and maintaining military capabilities to meet current security problems”.<sup>[47]</sup>

The UK currently saves money through pooling and sharing programs conducted bilaterally, through NATO and through the EDA, and it should continue to do to maximise efficiency. The UK and France are natural partners for pooling and sharing due to their proximity and the similar size and capability of their militaries. Joint pooling and sharing projects between the two countries are most easily undertaken through direct agreements, rather than through the EDA (although obviously any initiative should be considered within a European context). Similarly, as long as the UK enjoys a special relationship with the US, it should utilise as many pooling and sharing opportunities through NATO as possible, such as the Joint Strike Fighter project, to utilise America’s superior technology. However, being larger military powers with somewhat divergent interests to other EU members (such as protecting overseas territories), the UK and France will be unlikely to sacrifice significant levels of military autonomy through pooling until the economic incentive becomes overwhelming.

However, pooling and sharing through the EDA does have certain advantages over relying on NATO or ad hoc agreements. The EDA can serve as a “marriage-broker” between member states for pooling and sharing, as described by ADS (a British defence industry trade organisation) in the BCR. Bilateral agreements only exist where there is already political will and the capability for pooling and sharing, which a specialised body like the EDA can help create. The EDA has a role in bringing pooling and sharing opportunities to the attention of states and assisting them in the process. For example, the EDA

has been increasing military standardisation within Europe and has developed a code of conduct<sup>[48]</sup> for pooling and sharing sharing which minimises friction between states that undertake cooperative military projects. Encouraging European militaries to save money by pooling and sharing, rather than entirely eliminating capabilities, will also reduce the countries’ operational dependence on the UK and France, who are the likely leaders of future European military operations.

The EU also has an advantage over NATO for pooling and sharing due to the political and economic aspects of joint initiatives. Pooling and sharing requires political guarantees that joint assets will be available when needed, as well as industrial standardisation. Due to the EU’s political and economic role, it is better equipped to support the non-military aspects of pooling and sharing initiatives. For example, the joint satellite communications project will have consequences for civilian telecommunications which the EU can deal with by itself. Therefore, in cases of supposed duplication between the EU and NATO, such as between the Multinational Aviation Training Centre and EU pilot training which is mentioned in the BCR, priority should be given to the EU initiative unless there is clear evidence that NATO performs the task better. However, the BCR notes that “it was also suggested that NATO’s performance in improving European capabilities has not been better than that of the EU”. A possible reason for the disappointing results of NATO’s smart defence is the lack of American support, due to its shift in priorities.

Despite the many successful pooling and sharing programs which the EDA has undertaken, there is still much room for improvement. In 2009 EU members spent €24bn on national procurement but only €7bn on joint EU projects.<sup>[49]</sup> The EDA could achieve more if it was given greater powers to be more assertive, rather than simply advisory. For this to happen, there needs to

be more active input by national leaders, who so far have mostly left working out opportunities for pooling and sharing down to lower level staff. Greater political input would allow EU members to avoid the current collective action problem in European defence, whereby almost all EU states support pooling and sharing in principle but do not want to take the first steps towards projects by themselves for fear of acting alone. Therefore, leaders should collectively demand that the EDA finds pooling and sharing opportunities and their militaries adopt them, with the same force that they have been able to demand that their militaries cut costs.

### **Budget coordination**

The effects of the recent defence cuts have been exacerbated by the uncoordinated manner in which they have been undertaken, with cost cutting often eclipsing military considerations and many cost-saving measures being incoherent in themselves. An infamous recent example is the British government's decision to replace the planned catapult-launched F-35C fighter jets with the F-35B Short Take-off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) variant, to avoid the cost of fitting carriers with the catapult system. However, equipping the planes with vertical landing gear greatly reduces their fuel capacity and therefore their range, increasing their cost of operation by requiring more air-to-air refuelling. The swap also prevented carrier interoperability with France and America, whose fighters require the catapult system and as French carriers are unable to take the weight of the heavier F-35B variant. Therefore, the decision scuppered the Anglo-French joint-carrier group project which was included in the Lancaster House Treaties.

Such ill-conceived measures could be prevented by greater budgetary consultation and mutual scrutiny between EU members to ensure that governments prioritise the least useful areas of their militaries for spend-

ing cuts so they have the smallest possible impact on military capability. The EU greatly overspends and is oversupplied in several military areas which, to use the EDA's phrasing, need to be 'rationalised'. For example, excessive spending on personnel has left Europe with a large number of troops who are poorly equipped and unable to be deployed overseas is clearly inefficient. Given the necessity for European states to work together on security and defence issues, the defence cuts of one state can have a severe impact on the capabilities of others. For example, the decision of Germany to reduce the size of its planned A400M transport aircraft fleet by 20 aircraft[50,51] is of severe concern to the EU as a whole, given the EDA's current intentions of creating a combined European air transport fleet to plug one of the most important European military capability gaps. Regular consultation over the defence budgets could be achieved by introducing a 'European defence semester', as has been suggested repeatedly by former EDA chief executive Nick Witney.[52] This would be equivalent to the existing European economic semester whereby EU members allow their national budgets to be scrutinised by the commission, which gives them recommendations (although it currently has no power to make changes). A defence equivalent would allow states to review each other's defence budgets and comment on potential capability gaps which could emerge from them. The international exposure of national defence reviews would raise the political costs of placing national economic interest above international security, as governments often do.

A European defence semester would also allow states to coordinate their defence cuts, for example by ensuring that if one state was reducing air lift but protecting maritime surveillance development, that others would do the inverse. The result of such coordination would be 'specialisation', whereby states do not attempt to maintain a 'full spectrum' of

capabilities but instead focus their resources on areas in which they have special expertise. For larger European military powers, such as the UK and France, it is seen as a matter of pride to maintain a full spectrum and so they are unlikely to specialise to the same extent as smaller countries. However, the SDSR acknowledges that “we should look to our existing areas of comparative advantage... We can and will invest in all those areas where we are relatively stronger than other countries”, showing that the British government is already aware for the need to consider the country’s military capabilities within a context of contributing towards an alliance, rather than in isolation. During the Cold War, the US employed specialisation in NATO by being the main ISR provider, which it could perform better than any other state and so maximised the alliance’s capability, as well as increasing efficiency by being able to ‘ask’ other members to make other contributions instead. A very limited European military ‘division of labour’ is already emerging with Lithuania offering water purification support for EU battlegroups and Greece offering sealift coordination. This could continue by the UK focusing on its strongest areas, such as intelligence, while diverting cuts other areas like airspace policing, which it is more efficient for other states to do.

### Procurement

Pooling and sharing is not only possible in operations and exercises, but can also take place in procurement by states developing and buying equipment together. The European defence market is currently deeply fragmented, with six times as many weapons systems being used by EU members as by the USA and order sizes being on average less than 1/5th of the size.[53] States tend to prefer to buy weapons domestically so as to support their own economies, even when buying from abroad would be cheaper. This

is exacerbated by the considerable political influence large defence conglomerates often have over their government, which allows them to ensure weapons are purchased domestically at higher prices.

Greater cooperation between European defence companies, especially BAE and EADS, in research efforts would lead to a smaller number of better designed weapons systems of which more would be produced with an economy of scale. Doubling the volume of batch sizes has been seen to increase efficiency by around 20%.[54] The proposed merger between BAE and EADS would have provided an opportunity for a smaller number of larger, more efficient batches but it failed due to France, Germany and Britain being unable to agree on their relative stakeholders in the potential conglomerate. A smaller variety of European weapons systems would also facilitate pooling and sharing by reducing cross-compatibility issues.

Procurement costs could also be reduced by creating a common EU market for military equipment. This would increase competition between European defence companies and so reduce prices, as EU members would not be constrained to buy domestically. The EDA has already made progress in this area by creating an online European market board for surplus military equipment, over which €10bn worth of equipment has been sold. [55] Increased competition between defence companies would also increase the incentive for them to cooperate, in order to compete with defence giants outside the EU such as Lockheed Martin or Boeing. The EDA could also assist EU members in finding the best value for money in military procurement by conducting defence supply audits.

Some have even argued that creating a ‘common European Industrial base’ would give Europe greater strategic independence, by reducing the ability of other states to issue arms embargos at times on conflict. The global defence economy is so integrated as to make it

impossible to totally equip one's army without outside assistance. Any given weapons system will usually consist of mechanical parts produced in the USA and electronics produced in China or Japan. However, maximising the European role in equipping European militaries would give Britain more scope for control over its supply and greater security against future disruptions to its supply.

### Protecting global power

Military capabilities are not only instrumental in promoting its interests but can also be ends in themselves. Despite having lost its 19th century imperial status, Britain still perceives itself to be an important global actor. This perception is somewhat justified by being in an exclusive group of states with a permanent seat on the UN security council, an independent nuclear arsenal and a global network of military bases which allow it to, as the SDSR proudly states, "continue to be one of very few countries able to deploy a self-sustaining, properly equipped brigade-sized force anywhere around the world and sustain it indefinitely". However, Britain's position as a world power is under considerable pressure. Countries like Brazil, China and India are enjoying rapid economic growth, which is allowing them to increase the scope and range of their interests. Their greater power is increasingly calling into question why Britain (and for the same reasons France) are P5 - UN Security Council permanent members whilst India, Japan and Germany are not, essentially due to their misfortune of not being in a position of strength at the time of the UN's creation. Within the EU, Germany is becoming more assertive and prepared to wield its economic pre-eminence to pursue its interests, although mainly in economic matters.

British eurosceptics often argue that the UK's position within the EU weakens its global position by transferring sovereignty to Brussels and reducing its scope for actions

such as joining the US in its pivot towards Asia. This is somewhat true for the supranational aspects of the EU, such as trade policy although it ignores the influence which British businesses gain by being able to shape international commercial and industrial standards and having their voice magnified on a global scale.[56] However, due to the perpetual need for consensus, the CSDP is strictly intergovernmental and does not infringe on Britain's sovereignty as it can simply veto any policy with which it disagrees.[57] However, as has been mentioned throughout, by being part of the CSDP Britain gains the ability to greatly expand its capabilities and influence in a way which is viewed with significantly less suspicion than other security actors, such as NATO. Furthermore, if a reformed EU is able to expand its global power, a more involved UK would reap many of rewards.

The EU has the potential to become the primary external actor in North Africa, due to its proximity and developmental capabilities. Also, by being able to guarantee security in North Africa after the on-going period of political upheaval, the EU could fulfil a role similar to that of NATO in Eastern Europe after the Cold War. NATO oversaw the security of Eastern European states while they underwent political transition, as well as helping reform their armed forces, for example by placing them under civilian control. In doing so, American influence in Eastern Europe was greatly increased. By being one of the most proactive members within the CSDP, the UK has the opportunity to similarly provide assistance while increasing influence in Northern Africa.

However, as Merlingen states, without a more coherent security policy, the EU will continue to have the behaviour of a "small power"[58] on security matters, like Canada or the Netherlands, despite having a GDP and population that exceeds the USA. Unless the EU becomes a 'United States of Europe', its lack of a unified foreign policy

will inevitably be a hindrance. However, this handicap should be minimised to maximise European influence. As Harvard professor Stanley Hoffmann stated in 1999, “Europe must not remain an economic giant and a diplomatic and military dwarf; in the long run its weakness in the latter domains will sap its forces in the other”.[59] The EU’s failure to assert its interests internationally is already harming its members, with European states losing voting rights in international bodies to East Asian countries (often with American assistance).[60] A more proactive CSDP not only gives the EU greater ability to promote its interests, but has symbolic value. As Nick Witney states, force is still the “lingua franca”[61] in many parts of the world, such as East Asia and the Middle East. For Europe to compete for influence with China and India, which are rapidly increasing their military strength, the EU needs to prove itself as an equal by being able to provide security assistance to countries in unstable regions.

Given that the EU has mostly economic relationships with the USA and other superpowers such as China and Russia, the most significant ways in which the EU can strengthen its relative position is by acting more decisively and with more cohesion on economic matters, rather than security ones. However, global economic interdependence is demonstrably reversible and there is always the possibility that economic collapse might cause states to return to a system of realist power maximisation policies. In such a case, European states would need to be able to act together to defend themselves from external threats and to protect their interests, for which military power is integral and so a more militarised EU would provide an insurance.

Finally, military integration would strengthen Britain’s position within the EU. The British government’s reticence about the country’s future in the Union is leading to increasing frustration from other members such as France and Germany, and the UK

risks becoming marginalised within the EU by the more proactive members, especially Germany which has by far the greatest economic power. However, in military matters the UK is able to play a far more pivotal role than it can in economic matters and has scope to exercise leadership, due to its military expertise and pre-eminent capabilities. If the EU became more concerned with security matters, the strengthened position of the UK could translate to other areas, such as economic policy, and give the UK more bargaining power when determining the future of the EU with Germany and France. Inversely, if the UK abstains from EU military cooperation, it risks being marginalised while France enjoys the benefits of leading the military aspects of the EU. In sum, military integration offers the UK a way to assume a more important role within the EU which will then magnify its global position, as well as magnifying the global power of the EU itself.

## Conclusion

The UK had a fundamental role in driving the wave of European defence and security cooperation at the start of the 21st century. Austerity, US realignment and new varieties of threats necessitate that it does so again. There are several main ways in which the EU is of fundamental importance to British security:

- The EU’s civilian capabilities, such as cooperation with judiciaries and law enforcement are necessary for the UK to effectively address the causes of terrorism and provide a more thorough defence against cyber-attacks and organised crime.
- The EU’s developmental and state-building capabilities are necessary for the UK to ensure stability and security in areas of importance overseas, especially where it has failed to do so with NATO.

- The EU's softer, value-driven image allows the UK to partake in missions in politically sensitive areas, such as Africa and the Caucasus. It also facilitates cooperation with other states and security organisations and reduces resentment from the population in the areas of intervention.
- The EDA and battlegroups are needed for other EU member states to overcome their military capability gaps and become more compatible with the British military, making overseas operations less burdensome for the UK and more effective.
- The EDA is needed for the UK to meet its austerity goals through pooling and sharing and by encouraging and facilitating other EU members to do the same, instead of sacrificing their military capabilities.
- Create a dedicated Operational Headquarters for the CSDP to increase its speed of reaction to crises and level of coordination between EU military and civilian missions.
- Give the EDA greater political power to ensure pooling and sharing targets are met by closer supervision by national leaders.
- Create a 'European Defence Semester' so that states can scrutinise and coordinate their defence budgets to minimise the overall effects of defence austerity and allow for greater efficiency through specialisation.
- Create a common EU defence market to reduce procurement costs and encourage more EU-wide development projects to achieve better value for money.

In order for the EU to become an effective security provider to the UK, Europe, and parts of the world which seek its assistance, it must undergo several reforms. The most important being to:

- Create a new European Security Strategy to codify Europe's strategic priorities, the circumstances in which it would launch operations and how these operations should be undertaken. This would allow the full utilisation of the CSDP and its battlegroups.
- In the event of a lack of consensus, allow CSDP to intervene in conflicts through voluntary 'directorates' of EU members. A civilian equivalent could be used in the case of delays in the Commission allocating funds.
- Create a CSDP civilian 'corps' of personnel ready to be deployed, to overcome slow operational deployment and personnel shortages.

These reforms would have the cumulative effect of creating a more capable and assertive EU with the UK in a more prominent position. This would increase the power and influence of the UK within EU and the EU in the world. This in turn increases the UK's overall global power and influence which is vitally important to protecting its interests in the future. However, even with a stronger EU, both the UK and the CSDP would still need to exercise caution when pursuing a more active security role. There will always be the risk of the CSDP becoming overconfident and undertaking a mission which is beyond its capabilities. An 'EU Vietnam' which required an American bailout would enormously damage the EU's credibility as a security actor and drain the momentum for future development in security cooperation.

Lastly, the importance of the CSDP for the UK does not mean that NATO is redundant and the Alliance still has several clear advantages over the CSDP, with 60% of Europeans continuing to see NATO as essential for European security, according to the 2010

Transatlantic Trends survey . These advantages include providing collective defence and undertaking the higher-intensity combat aspects of overseas intervention. NATO also serves as a method of slowing the US pivot away from in Europe, which is a cause for concern as long as Europeans suffer from capability gaps. However, as Europe develops its military capabilities and the US becomes more detached, NATO will lose its advantages over the CSDP and, potentially go the same way as the WEU and be incorporated into the EU (although of course this would require creative methods of maintaining cooperation with non-EU NATO members, particularly the US). However, such events are only a remote possibility. Although it requires some significant changes in the years to come, the EU and CSDP have the potential to play a crucial role in ensuring the protection of both the UK and its national interests, as well as the security of Europe as a whole.

## Endnotes

- [1] Mérand, 2008
- [2] Heisbourg, Ischinger, Robertson, Schake, & Valasek, 2012
- [3] Robert M. Gates, The Security and Defence Agenda (Future of NATO), delivered on Friday, June 10, 2011
- [4] Balance of Competences Review, 2013
- [5] SIPRI, 2013
- [6] Although Iran's nuclear program is often identified as a potential threat to the UK, there is little evidence to suggest an Iranian nuclear program exists, let alone that such a program would be a threat to the UK.
- [7] UK Strategic Defence and Security Review, 2010
- [8] NATO Strategic Concept, 2010
- [9] North Atlantic Treaty, 1949
- [10] Article VI of the treaty specifies that the mutual defence clause can only be invoked "in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer", which excludes most British overseas territories. Britain is still clearly concerned about their defence, with the SDSR explicitly stating that the Royal Navy must continue to act as deterrence against an (presumably Argentinian) attack on the Falkland Islands. The lack of international interest in the defence of British overseas territories means that Britain is not able to count on similar support from its allies as it is for protecting the UK itself from other states. Therefore, to protect its overseas possessions, the UK requires a navy to allow it to deploy an independent expeditionary force anywhere in the world.
- [11] Treaty of Lisbon, 2007
- [12] Balance of Competences Review, 2013
- [13] Although the SDSR does not quite manage to evoke the feeling horror from such a senseless crime as it apparently intended...
- [14] Solana, 2004
- [15] Solana, 2004
- [16] Bolton, 2013
- [17] The operation's objectives eventually 'crept' and it became a peacekeeping mission.
- [18] Ledwidge, 2013
- [19] Congressional Research Service, 2011
- [20] SDSR, 2010
- [21] SDSR
- [22] The Joint Strike Fighter project is aiming to remedy this.
- [23] On the other hand, the British armed forces have excesses of equipment which is no longer required for the types of operations in which it is likely to engage. A prime example is main battle tanks (MBTs) which are only useful for destroying other MBTs, a role which is no longer needed and, if it was, would now be more effectively undertaken by aircraft.
- [24] Biscop, The UK and European defence: Leading or Leaving, 2012
- [25] Biscop, The UK and European defence: Leading or Leaving, 2012
- [26] IISS, 2013
- [27] John, Scherf, & van Sintern, 2013
- [28] Schnabel, 2005
- [29] Page, 2006



- [30] Witney, How to stop the demilitarisation of Europe, 2011
- [31] Committee to Protect Journalists, 2013
- [32] The EU's habit of appealing to values rather than interests is heavily supported by many EU members, especially Germany. It is averse to using foreign policy (especially military policy) as a purely realist tool to further national interests, which is seen as the root of its foreign policy before and during the Second World War.
- [33] The public perception of NATO in Russia is softening, with a poll in 2010 showing that now 40% of Russians see NATO favourably, compared to 24% in 2009 (Laursen, 2012). However, the rhetoric of Russian leaders, many of whom served in the Soviet intelligence services in the cold war, are unlikely to see NATO as a spreader of laudable values rather than a tool of Western power.
- [34] Merlingen, 2011
- [35] IISS, 2013
- [36] Biscop, Raiders of the Lost Art: Strategy-Making in Europe, 2012
- [37] Biscop, Raiders of the Lost Art: Strategy-Making in Europe, 2012
- [38] Witney, How to stop the demilitarisation of Europe, 2011
- [39] Biscop, Raiders of the Lost Art: Strategy-Making in Europe, 2012
- [40] <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/policies/common-security-and-defence-policy-%28csdp%29/financing-of-csdp-military-operations?lang=fr>
- [41] John, Scherf, & van Sintern, 2013
- [42] IISS, 2013
- [43] Witney, Where does CSDP fit in EU Foreign Policy?, 2013
- [44] Merlingen, 2011
- [45] This is probably a consequence of it being politically far more difficult to cut expenditure on soldier's salaries than research projects, given that soldiers and their families have votes and would require support from the state after losing their jobs.
- [46] Mölling, 2012
- [47] <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/topics/en/Smart-Defence.htm>
- [48] European Defence Agency, 2013
- [49] Merlingen, 2011
- [50] <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/weniger-militaertransporter-bestellt-durchbruch-im-streit-ueber-am-1.1015973>
- [51] <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20110128/world-news/germany-to-take-fewer-a400m-planes.347477>
- [52] Witney, Where does CSDP fit in EU Foreign Policy?, 2013
- [53] John, Scherf, & van Sintern, 2013
- [54] Ibid
- [55] Mérand, 2008
- [56] Mattli & Büthe, 2011
- [57] The only exception is decision on the EDA budget which only requires the approval of the majority, although in practise consensus has so far always been obtained.
- [58] Merlingen, 2011
- [59] Deux obsessions pour un siècle, June 1999, Le Monde
- [60] Witney, Where does CSDP fit in EU Foreign Policy?, 2013
- [61] Witney, How to stop the demilitarisation of Europe, 2011
- [62] Laursen, 2012

## References

- European Defence Agency. (2013). EDA's Pooling & Sharing.
- Biscop, S. (2012). Raiders of the Lost Art: Strategy-Making in Europe- (Security Policy Brief).
- Biscop, S. (2012). The UK and European defence: Leading or Leaving- (Chatham House).
- Bolton, P. (2013). Energy imports and exports- (House of Commons Library).
- Büthe, T. and Mattli, W. (2011) The New Global Rulers: The Privatization of Regulation in the World Economy
- Committee to Protect Journalists. (2013). Turkey's Press Freedom Crisis: The Dark Days of Jailing Journalists and Criminalizing Dissent.
- Congressional Research Service. (2011). The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations since 9/11.
- European Union. (2003). A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy.
- European Union. (2007). Treaty of Lisbon
- Heisbourg, F., Ischinger, W., Robertson, G., Schake, K., & Valasek, T. (2012). All Alone? What US retrenchment means for Europe and NATO- (CER).
- Howorth, J. (2009). NATO and the ESPD: Institutional complexities and realities.- (Politique Étrangère).
- Howorth, J. (2012). CSDP and NATO post-Libya: Towards the Rubicon?- (Security Policy Brief).
- Hurst, M. (2011). CSDP, UK and France: The Franco-British Defence Co-operation treaty and the future of the CSDP.
- IISS. (2013). The Military Balance.
- John, D., Scherf, G., & van Sintern, W. (2013). Enlisting productivity to reinforce European defence. – (McKinsey & Company).
- Laursen, F. (2012). The EU, Security, and Transatlantic Relations.
- Ledwidge, F. (2013). Investment in Blood: The True Cost of Britain's Afghan War
- Mérand, F. (2008). European Defence Policy: Beyond the Nation State.
- Merlingen, M. (2011). EU Security Policy: What It Is, How It Works, Why It Matters.
- Mölling, C. (2012). Pooling and Sharing in the EU and NATO- (SWP).
- NATO. (1949). North Atlantic Treaty.
- NATO. (2010). Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.
- Page, L. (2006). Lions, Donkeys And Dinosaurs: Waste and Blundering in the Military.
- Schnabel, R. A. (2005). The Next Superpower?: The Rise of Europe and Its Challenge to the United States.
- SIPRI. (2013). Military Expenditure Database.
- Solana, J. (2004). An Intelligent War on Terror.-(<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/an-intelligent-war-on-terror>)
- Sparaco, P. (June 2013). European Defence's Blue- (Aviation Week and Space Technology).

Stansfield, G. (2013). A return to East of Suez? UK Military deployment to the Gulf- (RUSI).

Tocci, N. (2007). The EU and conflict resolution.

UK Government. (2010). Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review.

UK Government. (2013). Review of the Balance of Competences between the United Kingdom and the European Union: Foreign Policy.

Witney, N. (2011). How to stop the demilitarisation of Europe- (ECFR).

Witney, N. (2013). Where does CSDP fit in EU Foreign Policy?- (ECFR).

Witney, N., & de France, O. (2013). Europe's strategic cacophony- (ECFR).

Worré, P. (2013). The consequences of a British exit from the EU and CSDP: An analytical timeline –(Isis Europe).

*Assistance was very generously provided by Jon Temple, Chris Luenen, Michael Legge, Rod Dowler and particularly Manuel Muniz, who supplied advice and information throughout the project and contributed towards many of the ideas.*





The Global Policy Institute was created in August 2006 as a Research Institute of London Metropolitan University. It brings together academics from the social sciences and business disciplines to analyse the dynamics of the post-globalisation world and formulate policy solutions. The Institute's research and consultancy will be of direct practical use to decision-makers, policy formation, business users and civil society groups, and it will offer partnerships within and beyond the academic community.

**The Global Policy Institute**

London Metropolitan University  
31 Jewry Street  
London EC3N 2EY  
United Kingdom

**Tel** +44 (0)20 7320 1355

**Fax** +44 (0)20 7320 3018

**Email** [office@gpilondon.com](mailto:office@gpilondon.com)

**[www.gpilondon.com](http://www.gpilondon.com)**

[www.gpilondon.com](http://www.gpilondon.com)