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Review article

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FUNCTIONALITY OF THE CSDP AND THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Abstract

Within the institutional structure of the EU, there are both relations of cooperation and competition. According to the formula that the form follows the function, the institutions of the Union are a reflection of the goals of the existence of the Union, i.e. their architecture is aimed at achieving the Union's priorities. The establishment and deepening of a common foreign and security policy has been challenged by both external and internal challenges. The author tries to point out the late adoption of the Maastricht and Amsterdam agreements and the consequently dysfunctional EU foreign policy in relation to the events in the former Yugoslavia. The thinking is that the EU has been more reactive than active. Questions are raised about the achieved functionality of the Union's foreign policy action in accordance with the developed instruments in the security and defence policy in the following years; then why does the Member States have not been able to achieve the initial Headlines Goals set; as well as fears that an independent European security pillar would diminish NATO's importance. The available data indicate that the continuous development of the CSDP and the EU crisis management are institutionally and functionally related to NATO, with the two institutions being separable but not separate.

Keywords: *EUROPEAN UNION, CFSP, CSDP, CRISIS MANAGEMENT, NATO*

Introduction

EU action was and still is a mixture of supra-nationalism and inter-governmentalism. The three-pillar structure was established by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and abolished by the Lisbon Treaty. The second pillar was the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and the third, which covered home affairs and justice with the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, was renamed Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters. The very pillar position indicated the two dominant models of construction and action of the Union: a model of communal integration and a model of intergovernmental cooperation. "Within the institutional structure of the EU, there are both relations of cooperation and competition. But, common to all institutions is the realization of the three main functions, such as: political direction, governance of the Union and integration

of the interests of the subjects" (Ванковска, 2008, 18). According to the formula that the form follows the function, the institutions of the Union are a reflection of the goals of the existence of the Union, i.e. their architecture is aimed at achieving the Union's priorities through the interests of its member states which they could not pursue individually.[1] Since its inception in 1951, when the European Union as a European Coal and Steel Community was an integration between six countries, it is continuously growing in size through the accession of new member states[2] and has increased its power by adding new political areas.[3] The Lisbon Treaty was signed in December 2007 (and only ratified in October 2009)[4] with the intention of amending existing treaties with amendments to the Union's policy and legal structure. "Analyses to date on the impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the character of the EU point to three relevant premises: first, the hybrid character of the EU remains; second, the intergovernmental method will continue to dominate EU practice; and thirdly, the democratic deficit as an internal feature of the Union will not be significantly reduced with this reform" (Ванковска, 2010, 62). "Objectively, a review of the historical development of the EU shows that this is a dynamic and continuous evolution of an entity that is developing in breadth and depth. This development is far from being free of crises and stagnation, but the impression dominates that the history of the EU is a history of successful management of (political) crises between countries with different interests and capacities" (Ванковска, 2010, 31).

The harmonization of the common policy on certain specific issues between the EU member states in order of promoting the interests of the Union and those of the international community as a whole, begins within the framework of the European Political Cooperation (EPC) since 1970. "In general, the establishment and deepening of a common foreign and security policy has been driven by both external and internal challenges" (Schneckener, 2002, 6).

Externally, the cause was global and regional challenges and crises, especially those that resulted from the disintegration of the Warsaw Bloc. In this regard, it is emphasized that the most important reason for the initial shaping of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was the wars in Yugoslavia during the 1990s. The member states have unanimously agreed that such a political union should not be based solely on an integrated economic and

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[1] Ex. Common market, international influence, security, etc.

[2] Currently a political and economic union of 27 member states located in Europe.

[3] The influential status of the European Union and its characteristics as a nation are also recognized by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The EU was treated in the CIA publication in December 2004. Moreover, "third" countries now see the Union either as a potential superpower or as a contemporary with its own challenges for the United States, and this is what shapes relations for and against Europe. See publication the world fact book.

[4] Ratification was slowed down in Ireland, and political rethinking also took place in Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland.

monetary area and an internal market. Joint capacities to act on foreign and security policy issues must be established if the Union is to be proactive in future situations of political and military instability.

The internal challenges to the development of the CFSP were led by two debates. First, member states were divided over the CFSP's ties to the United States and NATO, with the French-led group called Europeans, advocating foreign policy independence from the transatlantic relationship, with a vision for the transfer of that independence to the defence sphere. The other camp - the Atlanticists represented by Britain and Denmark - saw the CFSP only as a complement to NATO security policy. The second debate concerned the connection of the CFSP with the institutions of the Union. Here, the two sides Inter-governmentalists and Supra-nationalists also had completely opposite views. The first, large member states, saw the CFSP as a purely domain of governments to be governed by the Council of Europe and the foreign ministers of the member states, which would not allow the involvement of other European institutions and would base its decisions on consensus. The latter, on the other hand, especially the smaller EU countries, advocated the communitarian role of the CFSP with the strengthened role of the Commission and Parliament on issues in that area, with some members even favouring a qualified majority vote (Schneckener, 2002, 7). Such debates were quite advanced at the time of the Maastricht Treaty.

The CFSP as we know it today was established and shaped in accordance with the treaties of the European Union. Thus, the Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force in 1993 marked, in accordance with the introductory provisions, a new stage in the European Union process and, consequently, in the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Continuing security development, the Security and Defence Policy Dimension (ESDP and later renamed the CSDP) was introduced in the then second pillar of the Amsterdam Treaty, which entered into force in 1999.

1. The Maastricht Treaty (1991) and its impact

Unlike the previous European political cooperation, the CFSP will for the first time introduce a strong political and defence-military component in the European integration. Formally housed under the then second pillar, like its predecessor the EPC, the CFSP will be independent of the institutions of the Community. Pursuant to Article 8 of the Treaty, the European Council as the main actor was to ensure the unity, stability and effectiveness of the Union's actions, with the other European institutions having only a secondary role.

The main purpose of the CFSP is to allow the EU to establish its identity on the international stage. "According to Article 5 of the agreement, by improving the role of the EU Presidency and the EU Troika,[5] the Union also seeks to

[5] It consists of the current presidency, the previous one and the one that will follow.

strengthen its presence in world politics and international organizations" (Schneckener, 2002, 7). If until then the EPC had aimed at creating a common policy of the member states, the CFSP makes it clear that the member states will have to adopt and implement the policy together. Thus, with each common position taken on a particular issue, members are legally obliged to adjust their national policies to that position. The common positions, on the one hand, define the approach that the EU has to a particular problem of a geographical or thematic nature and briefly define the general guidelines to which the national policies of the member states must conform. On the other hand, there are joint actions, which are also defined in Article 2 of the agreement and refer to certain situations where EU operational actions are considered necessary and prescribe the objectives, scope and means available to the EU. While voting on policy-making had to be unanimous, voting on an appropriate way to implement decisions had the opportunity of voting by a qualified majority (which in practice was rarely used), which was considered to be quite important for the effectiveness of the CFSP. [6]

Furthermore, as a novelty was that according to Article 4 of the agreement, where the decisions had defensive or military implications, the EU for their implementation could seek assistance from the WEU which since 1984 became an integral part of the Union's development. Maastricht also makes it clear that the CFSP will not harm the defence and security policies of individual NATO member states.

In June 1992, the WEU decided to engage in military crisis management called the

St. Petersburg Tasks, which included the following three areas: "humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping; combat force tasks in crisis management, including peace making" (WEU Council of Ministers, 1992). To this goal, the WEU will gain access to NATO assets and capabilities; which actually led to the concept of Combined Joint Task Force. [7] Thus, the WEU served as a platform for the development of a European security and defence identity outside the EU and at the same time as a link between the EU and NATO (Schneckener, 2002, 9).

"Based on the experience between 1993 and 1996, it was concluded that the EU failed to affirm its identity on the international stage and that it was more reactive than active. There were several reasons for this disappointment:" (Schneckener, 2002, 9). First, due to the late ratification of the treaty only in November 1993, the implementation of the new common foreign and security

[6] The condition of unanimity (which has historically been the basis of decision-making in the European Community) meant that if only one member separated from the common position, then the Union would not adopt that position. The only drawback to unanimity is that decision-making capabilities slow down and become ineffective as states can negotiate additional benefits in other areas and issues in return for agreeing on a common foreign policy position.

[7] Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF)

policy was also delayed in the case of EU involvement in the Balkans because the Union lacked the necessary internal structures. Second, at the expense of consistent European policy, member states have given priority to their own foreign policy goals, which in turn has led to competition and rivalry between the individual ministries of the member states and the European institutions. Then, the problem of persuading member states to agree on a common policy was noted due to the principle of consensus on CFSP issues, which was closed within the intergovernmental framework. The problem of defocusing of the General Affairs Council in dealing with the burdened agenda was also noted, which, in addition to security issues, also touched spheres on enlargement and trade.

2. The Amsterdam Treaty (1997) and its impact

On this existing basis with the Treaty of Amsterdam which entered into force in 1999 the dimension of security and defence policy was added to the second pillar of the Union. One of the most significant changes was the integration of the WEU Petersburg tasks (which included humanitarian tasks, rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and combat force tasks into crisis management, including peacekeeping) into the Treaty on European Union. Thus, the Agreement reaffirms the role of security policy and strengthens the relationship between the EU and the WEU, especially in terms of crisis management. In this regard, the two organizations were expected to maintain closer ties and further strengthen their cooperation with the possibility of "integration of the WEU into the Union, if the European Council so decides" (Treaty of Amsterdam, Article 17.1) and reaffirmed their inter-institutional connection with The Amsterdam Declaration on WEU Members (concluded with the signing of the Amsterdam Declaration), which, in addition to the obligation to coordinate the relevant governing bodies, emphasizes the possibility for the EU to use WEU resources for early warning, [8] but also emphasizes the role of the WEU as the European pillar of the alliance in NATO defence and military planning. [9]

Although it will not fully resolve the problems identified in the functioning of the Union under the Maastricht Treaty listed above, the Amsterdam Treaty will still bring some positive changes. The most significant innovation was the establishment of a High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, nominated for a five-year term (Treaty of Amsterdam, Article 18), who would also act as Secretary-General of the Council Administration. Pursuant to Article 26 of the Agreement, the Secretary-General / High Representative shall assist the Council (...) in particular in contributing to the formulation, prepara-

[8] Planning cell of ZEU, Situation Center and Satellite Center.

[9] See WEU Amsterdam Declaration on the role of the Western European Union and its relationship with the European Union and NATO. Available at: https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2009/11/18/7a07bd58-a393-457d-8fcb-9bcf20f53c66/publishable_en.pdf

tion and implementation of policy decisions and, where appropriate, in acting in favour of the Council at the request of the Presidency, of political dialogue with a third party" (Schneckener, 2002, 10). Thus, the High Representative now has the responsibility to represent the EU's common foreign and security policy and to support each Presidency of the Council of the European Union in its contacts with third countries. In his work he will be supported by the Political Planning and Early Warning Unit, which was a newly established body within the General Secretariat. This change was expected to make a positive contribution to the creation of the Union's policy and to the persistence of external action (Maganza, 1998, 178). Furthermore, the agreement legalized the procedure for appointing special representatives in conflict and crisis regions.[10]

Another internal reform concerns the role of the Political Committee, which, composed of the Political Directors of the Member States and the Commission, usually prepares the decisions of the General Affairs Council on a common foreign and security policy. According to Article 25 of the Treaty, "it will monitor the international situation in the areas covered by the common foreign and security policy, contributing to the definition of policies by expressing an opinion, and will monitor the implementation of the agreed policies" (Schneckener, 2002, 11).

The Amsterdam Treaty provided an enhanced role for the European Council. Not only was it left to him to define the principles and general guidelines, but also to decide on the implementation of the common strategies of the Union which were introduced as a new instrument in the CFSP, in the areas where the members had a common interest (Maganza, 1998, 176). The joint strategy is considered as a general framework for achieving the set goals that can be implemented with joint actions and joint positions.[11]

Under the new provisions, the Council of the EU will act by a qualified majority whenever it takes decisions based on common strategies previously decided by the European Council. This requirement will allow greater use of qualified majority voting to implement decisions, although unanimity remains the rule for major political decisions. Qualified majority voting will also be the rule for implementing any decision on joint action or joint position. The logic of these new provisions is that most of the decisions should be politically acceptable whenever they arise from another higher decision taken earlier or in the form of a joint strategy defined by the European Council or in the form of a joint action or a joint position unanimously adopted from the Council. Moreover, a security measure was established through the possibility for a member of the Council to oppose the adoption of a decision for "significant and stated reasons

[10] In this way, the practice was formalized, which was already used in Bosnia, where the Union had appointed special representatives since 1991.

[11] While the political implementation of the common positions was usually the responsibility of the Presidency, the execution of the budget and the implementation of the Joint Actions was provided by the European Commission.

of national policy" (Maganza, 1998, 177). In order to prevent the possibility of a political stalemate, "the agreement allowed a new mechanism called constructive restraint.[12] Taking advantage of this opportunity, a Member State may express its restraint by submitting a formal declaration in which it will not be bound by the decision but will accept that the decision is binding on the Union. However, if the abstaining member states together have more than one third of the significant votes, then the decision cannot be accepted" (Schneckener, 2002, 12). This mechanism increased the flexibility of the CFSP by the fact that the coalition of wills could no longer be prevented from acting, but on the other hand carried the danger of division among the members according to their different views on certain issues. However, for decisions that have military and defence implications, unanimity will remain the rule.

As in the case of the Maastricht Treaty, the ratification of the Amsterdam audits was carried away by the events. The Kosovo conflict of February 1998 will re-emphasize the serious problems of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, especially in relation to US foreign policy and the new united British and French positions on military and defence issues with their joint Saint-Melo Declaration by which Britain has in fact changed its policy by rejecting of restraint against the European crisis management component not integrated into NATO. According to this declaration, the autonomous capabilities of the EU supported by credible military forces should be created within the EU institutional framework and for that purpose it was envisaged of absorbing the security function of the WEU without duplicating NATO structures. Then, at the European Council held in Cologne on 3-4 June 1999 the Declaration on Strengthening the Common European Security and Defence Policy was adopted, with which the member states agreed to integrate the functions of the WEU and stated that by the end of 2000 the WEU as an organization would complete its goal (Schneckener, 2002, 15).

In the years that followed, the instruments of EU security and defence policy were developed. With the Treaty of Nice, which entered into force in 2001, the provisions of the Security and Defence Policy Treaties were transformed into an independent policy, the so-called European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). In doing so, the EU has met the institutional preconditions for carrying out the St. Petersburg tasks itself and conducting military and civilian crisis management.

3. The Treaty of Nice and its influence

Weaknesses identified with the Amsterdam Treaty and events such as the Saint-Melo Declaration and the Cologne Council (3-4 June 1999) and negotiations with potential 12 new members have contributed to the imposition of a new institutional reform that would enable the Union to function better.

[12] Article 23 TEU

In December 2000, an agreement was reached on the reform of the EU institutions in the longest-running summit of Heads of State and Government. This agreement was signed in February 2001 in Nice with late ratification in 2003. Ratification negotiations have resulted from member states' conflicts over the definition of the voting mechanism. At this summit in Nice, EU leaders were more concerned with domestic political reform and the harmonization of the EU draft constitution than with the CFSP. However, changes were made in that area as well. The provisions of the Security and Defence Policy Agreements have been transformed into an independent policy, the so-called European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). It was adopted and the so-called principle of extended cooperation,[13] and a decision was made on new permanent political and military structures: Political and Security Committee; EU Military Committee; and EU Military Staff.

4. Development of the Common Security and Defence Policy

The most important element of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union is the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) [14] and is an area of work of the EU Council. The roots of the EU's common security and defence policy date back to 1948 with the founding of the Western European Union (WEU), as a collective defence mechanism composed of those countries that were members of NATO. The WEU, which will soon be overshadowed by NATO, will have its reposting in 1992 with the adoption of the well-known St. Petersburg tasks to deal with possible destabilization in Eastern Europe. Then in 1996 it was agreed that the WEU should oversee the creation of a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDSI) within NATO, i.e. allow European countries (via the WEU) to use NATO assets.[15]

"The Amsterdam Agreement paved the way for the integration of the WEU into the EU and the creation of a common European defence policy, but that in no case means that the goal has been achieved" (Gocevski, 2006). Namely, in 1998, the Saint-Malo Declaration stated that "the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible military forces, a way of deciding to use them and a willingness to do so in order to respond to international crises." The Union should have resources of adequate military significance" (St. Malo Declaration, 1998, article 2). Transforming the declaration into reality will lead to a change in attitudes towards European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within NATO into a Common European Security and Defence Policy

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[13] With this principle, at least 8 member states can jointly participate in the activities and implementation of the CFSP.

[14] Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) prior to the Lisbon Treaty, European Security and Defense policy (ESDP).

[15] An agreement that would later be known as the Berlin-plus agreement.

(CSDP) within the Union. With the Cologne European Council in 1999, the role of the WEU in the EU will be merged and crisis management tasks will be set as fundamental to strengthening European security and defence policy.

At the European Council in Helsinki in 1999, EU member states set a goal for their defence capabilities, which they called the Helsinki Headline Goal. It meant the EU was ready to deploy a 60,000-strong Rapid Reaction Force in 60 days on missions that include crisis management, peacekeeping and peace making operations. However, in June 2004, the Helsinki Headline Goal was reformed to replace large deployments - which were not so easily achievable - with a series of 1,500 strong European combat groups provided by either a single nation or a group of nations known as the Headline Goal 2010.

There has been concern for some time that an independent European security pillar would reduce NATO's importance as a transatlantic forum. It initiated the EU-NATO Joint Declaration of 16 December 2002,[16] the basic principles of which include partnership. The partnership is best reflected in the March 2003 Berlin Plus Agreement, which allows the EU to use NATO structures, mechanisms and assets to conduct military operations.[17] An agreement was later signed - a security agreement - for the exchange of information between the EU and NATO, and EU liaison cells were set up at the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers for Europe (SHAPE) [18] and at the NATO Joint Forces Command in Naples. "The Security Agreement between the EU and NATO, which provides for the exchange of military documents and classified information and is a formalization of the cooperation of the two organizations in ensuring stability in Macedonia, was signed on March 14, 2003 in Athens. Twenty more documents related to the operational cooperation between the organizations were adopted. The documents are political, but not legally binding, because there are no legal mechanisms for resolving possible disputes between the two international organizations. It is a consensus reached between the member states of the two organizations" (Гризолд, 2006, 63).

The Berlin Plus Agreement consists of seven parts which cover several areas of cooperation between the two organizations (European security and defence assembly - Assembly of western European union, 2003):

- NATO-EU Security Agreement, which regulates the exchange of confidential information under the rules of reciprocal security protection;
- Ensuring access to NATO planning capabilities for EU crisis management operations;
- Availability of NATO assets and facilities for NATO-led crisis management operations, such as communication centres and headquarters. In this area of cooperation, the agreement includes modalities for the participation of EU

[16] Available at: http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2004/06-istanbul/press-kit/006.pdf

[17] Only if NATO refuses to act.

[18] The Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) is the central command of the NATO military. It is located in Casteau, Belgium, north of Mons.

international staff officers in planning and an agreement for the participation of non-EU NATO member states in EU military structures;

- Procedures for release, surveillance, return and revocation of NATO assets and capabilities; - the role of Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Powers in Europe (DSACEUR) in EU crisis management operations;

- Participation in the field of force planning: (then in preparation) a document called the Capacity Building Mechanism, which sets out common standards for force planning and will guarantee transparency between organizations;

- Cooperation in the field of military capabilities and assets: a list of NATO assets and capabilities that NATO can make available to the EU and the procedure according to which the approval for the use of NATO assets must be unanimous by all member countries of the Alliance;[19]

- Consultation agreements between the EU and NATO in the context of the use of NATO assets and capabilities in EU-led crisis management operations.

The European Union and NATO have jointly drafted the Strategy for the Western Balkans, with the basic idea - in a strategic document that will be a framework for enhanced dialogue between the two organizations and a coordinated approach to crisis management in the Western Balkans - to specify the political and economic role of The EU and NATO's security role in the Western Balkans region. "The document talks about the joint strategy of the two organizations, the so-called Western Balkans in order to preserve stability in the region based on democracy, free market, rule of law and efficient government organization" (Гризолд, 2006, 64).

As for overall co-operation between the EU and NATO, a phrase often used to describe the relationship between the two groups is "separable but not separate" (Centre for defence information, 2013): the same strengths and capabilities will be the basis for the effort. NATO and the EU, some of which may be the responsibility of the EU, if necessary. When it comes to missions, there is a "first refuse" rule: i.e. only if NATO refuses to act can the EU accept to act.

5. Integrated approach of the European Union to crisis management

The question arises about the success and the way in which the European Union realizes its conceptions of a comprehensive crisis management in practice, i.e. how what is one idea and basis for concerted action in the field of crisis management will turn into a complete strategy for integrated approach to crisis management. These are different ways of using a number of instruments and activities that are not always associated with or rather limited to crisis management understood in a narrower sense. These is a wide range of mechanisms

[19] For example, according to an article by Bram Boxhoorn, *Broad Support for NATO in the Netherlands*, 21-09-2005, Turkey's reservation regarding the use of NATO property during Operation Concordia in Macedonia, delayed the deployment for 5 months.

ranging from development assistance to post-conflict stabilization, rehabilitation of affected areas and peacekeeping. These are civilian and military capabilities that the Union uses beyond its borders to maintain peace, prevent conflict and enhance international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. They are all embodied in the expanded St. Petersburg tasks. This explanation goes beyond the EU members' separate approach to crisis management and focuses on developing the EU's crisis management capacity through European security integration and the internal structural changes that have followed. The EU experience so far through the overall security policy and more specifically through the European Security and Defence Policy and especially through the military and police crisis management missions so far creates a set of successes and failures for the application of EU policy in crisis management. In order to explain this, it is useful to point out the origins of the current set-up and possible future changes in the EU crisis management structure.

Today the application of crisis management is significantly different from what was the practice during the Cold War. Following changes in security and defence policy until the late 1990s, the European Council and the Commission continued to implement structural changes with undiminished vigour in the context of conflict prevention and crisis management. In line with the overall changes in conflict management and peacekeeping operations that have taken place in the past,[20] there have been corresponding changes in terms of expanding crisis management activities that now "incorporate aspects of traditional security together with conflict prevention, humanitarian aid, and institutional construction and development tasks. The new complexity has led to the convergence of previously separate areas of activity: the task of providing a full range of responses to the many challenges of civil strife and the weak state, sometimes forcing development specialists, aid actors, police and rule of law experts and military personnel to come together."[21] The EU - compared to other international organizations such as the UN, NATO, OSCE- seems to be in a unique position to provide an integrated approach to crisis management and peacebuilding.

When it comes to competencies, the EU's overall activities in the field of crisis management are divided into two groups: Community actions and civilian and military crisis management missions. While the former are generally in the form of long-term institution-building projects, the latter are mainly mili-

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[20] See: B. Jones and F. Cherif, *Evolving Models of Peacekeeping: Policy Implications and Responses*, External Report, UN Peacekeeping Best Practices –available at https://pksoi.army.mil/Docs/Doctrine/UN%20Policy%20Documents/evolving%20models.pdf

[21] Schroeder C. Ursula, *Governance of EU Crisis Management*, p2. Available at:: aei.pitt.edu/32601/1/40._Evaluating_EU_Crisis_Missions_in_the_Balkans.pdf

tary or civilian short- to medium-term missions aimed at operational capacity building.

Conclusion

The Amsterdam Treaty of 1998 paved the way for the integration of the WEU into the EU and the creation of a common European defence policy, but that by no case means that the goal has been achieved. The Saint-Malo Declaration will state that the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed by a credible military force, a decision-making body to use them and a willingness to do so in order to respond to international crises.

With the Treaty of Nice, which entered into force in 2001, the provisions of the Security and Defence Policy Treaties were transformed into an independent policy, the so-called European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). In doing so, the EU has met the institutional preconditions for carrying out the St. Petersburg tasks itself and conducting military and civilian crisis management.

There has been concern for some time that an independent European security pillar would reduce NATO's importance as a transatlantic forum. It initiated the Joint EU-NATO Declaration of 16 December 2002, the basic principles of which include partnership. As for overall co- operation between the EU and NATO, a phrase often used to describe the relationship between the two groups is "separable but not separate": the same forces and capabilities will form the basis of both NATO and EU efforts, thus some of which may be the responsibility of the EU, if necessary. Following changes in security and defence policy until the late 1990s, the European Council and the Commission continued to implement structural changes with undiminished vigour in the context of conflict prevention and crisis management. The EU - compared to other international organizations such as the UN, NATO, OSCE- seems to be in a unique position to provide an integrated approach to crisis management and peacebuilding.

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