

# ETHICS AND ARMED FORCES

CONTROVERSIES  
IN PEACE ETHICS AND  
SECURITY POLICY

ISSUE 02/2018

## One Europe – One Army? On the Value of Military Integration

SPECIAL

A Role Model for Combined Armed Forces

# ONE EUROPE – ONE ARMY? ON THE VALUE OF MILITARY INTEGRATION

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# EDITORIAL

On November 11, 1918, the First World War came to an end. As France's President Emmanuel Macron explained in a speech marking the centenary of the Armistice, this historic date forms an important point of reference for the European peace project. Shortly before the commemorations in Paris, he had once again called for the formation of a European army.

The idea of a European army is not new. Although the renewed initiative is vague on details, one thing is certain: The European Union is in difficult straits as far as security policy is concerned. It is now going beyond previous forms and institutions of military cooperation, and taking concrete steps to prepare for a future that is perceived as increasingly insecure. One significant measure was the decision in November 2017 to establish Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in defense.

This instrument, with a current total of 34 projects, is clearly not the "big breakthrough" Macron hopes for. Nevertheless, some politicians see PESCO as a prelude to a European security and defense union. At least in the long term, so it is said, this will and indeed must lead to a common army. For all sorts of reasons, critics regard this scenario as being unrealistic and hardly desirable.

This edition of the e-journal attempts to reflect critically on the situation. Our authors and interviewees give their views on key issues in peace ethics and security policy: What characterizes the EU as a "community of values," and what standards should the Union hold itself to, if the commitment to respect human rights, democracy, peace, the rule of law and tolerance is to remain meaningful? Does the establishment of common military structures imply a departure from the "peace power" model? Faced with right-wing populism and forces threatening its very existence, should the EU rely on the unifying effect of a security promise, instead of lending new plausibility to Europe's founding values?

Back in the 1950s, efforts to form a European army made good progress, but ultimately failed because of French opposition. Today, the question again arises of what obstacles

stand in the project's way. Aren't NATO and a European army mutually exclusive? Will the military cooperation that already exists, and is now being intensified in many individual projects, exert an irresistible pull that nobody can escape? Or is this another case of taking the second step before the first – i.e. is the Union once again creating a common instrument without first agreeing on a common strategic orientation? And what new conflict potential does this bring, both for internal relations and externally, for instance toward Russia in particular?

Last but not least, it is of course important to consider military personnel themselves, who are already involved in a wide range of European partnerships. This issue's special feature looks at the question of how far the German model of the citizen in uniform can be "translated" into the different military cultures and traditions.

The editorial team would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of this edition. I hope you will enjoy reading it and find useful insights into the question of how Europe should stand up for itself in the future, and what it should stand for.

*Dr. Veronika Bock  
Director of zebis*



# THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS VALUES

## NORMATIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OR MORAL “FIG LEAF”?

*Author:* Alexander Merkl

The European Union is said to be a “community of values”. This definition is not new. Today it even seems to have become a commonplace when discussing the EU’s moral standards. In 2012, the EU received a high-profile confirmation in this role when it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its successful contribution to the advancement of values such as peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights.

Yet this definition is not uncontroversial. Different country-specific characteristics, divergent national identities and different priorities are accompanied by the erosion of a united and clearly defined consensus on values in an age of pluralization and globalization. Thus it is appreciably more difficult to really speak of a common European bedrock of values in a convincing way, regardless of their being set down in writing in the Lisbon Treaty. Recent figures illustrate the point: A Eurobarometer survey in early 2018 showed that a narrow majority (53 per cent) of Europeans, when asked, thought that the EU member states were “close” in respect of common values. But, at the same time, 41 per cent of those surveyed were of the opinion that the EU countries were “far apart from each other” on this point.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the appeal to values too often seems to stop at a trite declaration of intentions. Codes of values conflict with the political forces of economic self-interest, strategic relations and pragmatic considerations. As a result, they are not infrequently degraded to the status of a moral “fig leaf”, pushed to the margins of relevant decision-making processes, or completely ignored.

Yet if European values are to be more than a moral fig leaf, and if they are to gain (better) acceptance by Europe’s citizens, the EU must ensure that its political actions are measured against these ethical standards at all times and in all places. But it should also set these standards itself, and explain more resolutely both what European values are, and what the European values are in each specific case.

### *Abstract*

Alexander Merkl argues that the characterization of the European Union as a “community of values” has almost become a commonplace. He therefore offers a critical examination, in which he defines values as higher-order design principles or criteria for a specific choice of actions and decision-making. In the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union refers to fundamental principles such as respect for human dignity, freedom, equality, democracy and the rule of law. These constitute the normative guiding principles – and hence the “values” – of the EU. First and foremost, the EU has an inward obligation to safeguard these principles, since (for good historical reasons) its existence and identity are based on them.

Merkl then turns to the main criticisms of such an explicit value-orientation, from which he derives some key requirements. To rebut the accusation of empty posturing and moral superiority, it is important first of all to differentiate by context, to be specific, and to flesh out and give life to abstract terms like “justice.” Secondly, the propagated values should be manifested in the constitutional nature and actions of the EU, without pursuing all-too noble goals that could cause us to lose sight of what has already been achieved or is currently possible.

European values are often described as “Christian,” but the author believes this falls wide of the mark if it is meant exclusively. Roman and Greek heritage should not be neglected, and nor should the non-Christian become, ex definitione, non-European. Merkl identifies peace as being possibly the central European value.

More clearly than in the past, peace should be understood as a constant process of conflict resolution. This is one of the tasks for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, which is declared to be based on Europe’s common founding values. If the EU – as desired – is to promote and spread its own values, and uphold them in its response to specific foreign and security policy challenges, it must orient itself in its essence and in its actions to its guiding principles. This also applies in respect of a possible common army.

## **Values as normative guiding principles**

Our starting point, therefore, is the concept of “values” – originally borrowed from economics – and the very fundamental question of what values are in purely formal terms, before we fill them with substance. This is not the place for a conclusive definition that would serve as a comprehensive theory of values. But on a very general level it can be said that values such as peace, security, happiness and many more are normative general principles. These principles guide individuals or groups in their choice of actions and in their shaping of the world. They function as a motivating determinant of human activity and achievement, and are in most cases to be protected by norms, i.e. by specific guidelines or expectations for human behavior. Their establishment is always also dependent on social, cultural, subjective and situational factors; this often impedes any extensive, widely shared consensus of values, as indicated above.

At the same time, values can certainly also be brought in as design principles, i.e. as the ultimate or most fundamental standards of guidance for forming political and ethical judgments; or as criteria, i.e. as differentiating factors for nuanced and objective decision-making, in order to guide actions and assess the practicability of norms.<sup>2</sup>

## **Values as a normative basis for the EU**

European values can therefore be understood to be those normative general principles which guide the EU's actions as a global political actor, and which it refers to repeatedly in key places in its constitutional texts. It is “striking that these values rather express the character of political and legal principles. Moreover, as core principles of modern democracies, they are not specifically European, but rather have universal significance, precisely because they are quite simply fundamental to constitutional democracies.”<sup>3</sup> The EU sets corresponding values for itself in Article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty (EUT-L), under the title “Common provisions”. In a rather rhapsodic and probably incomplete list, it states:

“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”

This explicit foundation of values, which also appears in similar diction in the preamble to the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, represents a commitment to a normative moral basis for the EU. Thus an external significance attaches to it, since it guides the Union's specific political action in all fields of international politics. But on the other hand, and primarily, it has an internal significance: European values are a fundamental political basis reflecting the (collective) identity – or better: an important political component of identity. They reflect the EU's self-image as a political community, a self-image that is mainly historically determined and is defined in specific opposition to violent chapters in European history.

***European values reflect the EU's self-image as a political community, a self-image that is mainly historically determined and is defined in specific opposition to violent chapters in European history***

The individually listed values are therefore decisive for the formation, development, continued existence and expansion of the Union. Hence a constitutive importance attaches to them for the European integration process. They are understood as universal basic values that are shared by all member states and are therefore common and uniting. They are intended to promote inner-European cohesion and the European way of life, and are themselves to be promoted (Art. 3 EUT-L). Hence only European countries which are expressly committed to these values, to respecting and promoting them, may apply to become a member of the EU (Art. 49 EUT-L). Thus the “Copenhagen Criteria” – a set of rules adopted in 1993 by the then EU heads of state and government – state as a political criterion that membership requires a candidate country to guarantee democracy, the rule of law and hu-

man rights. If, however, there is a clear risk of a serious and persistent breach of the values cited in Article 2 by a state which is already a member of the EU, the Council after hearing the member state in question and inviting it to submit its observations, in accordance with Article 7 EUT-L, and acting by a qualified majority, may decide to suspend certain rights of that state. A current example of this is the debate over respect for the rule of law in Poland.

### Abstract language of values and value ideals

For good reason, this foundation of values agreed by treaty is frequently criticized as being an ideal policy objective and empty political rhetoric, intended to demonstrate moral superiority owing to weaknesses in practical policy. There is also a widespread feeling that the content of the stated values, all too frequently, is left undetermined. This accusation arises since discussions about values primarily take the form of agreements on abstract principles. The resulting abstract language of values is an unresolved problem, not only for ethical reflection but also when it comes to transferring these same values into European societies and implementing them in political practice. Too often, it simply remains unclear what these values are in general terms, and what the individual proclaimed values are supposed to mean in detail and in the respective context.

### *European values must shape the being and actions of the EU, its structures, institutions and member states in practical and specific ways*

For, of course, who seriously wishes to question that human dignity is inviolable, that it should be respected and protected? But what specifically defines the “decent life” that is so often talked about (not only in peace ethics)? What are the corresponding minimum standards for a decent life, without referring only to current challenges concerning refugees and migration? And furthermore, one can ask: Will the EU as a community of states and in the form of its indi-

vidual member states always live up to this commitment to values?

Justice is certainly also one of the central pillars of our European moral compass. But what (form of) justice are we actually talking about? Legal justice, distributive justice or transactional justice, as Aristotle distinguished long ago? Equal opportunities, fair participation, the capability theory of justice or intergenerational justice – referring to the latter not only in the context of the challenges of climate change? Here too, there would need to be a constantly renewed evaluation of whether the EU was really always acting justly through its practical measures.

Finally: Who could refuse to make a stand for the upholding of human rights based on human dignity – but for which human rights specifically? The human right to freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of religion, to seek asylum against persecution, to equal pay for equal work, to be protected from slavery (including its modern forms)? Again, the question arises: Does the EU, including its institutions and member states, meet these expectations?

There is no easy and certainly no general answer to these possibly provocative questions. They might even fall short altogether. But hopefully they can raise awareness of at least three aspects:

- firstly that a theoretical and abstract appeal to values does not get us very far; that European values must shape the being and actions of the EU, its structures, institutions and member states in practical and specific ways.
- secondly that it is always necessary to clarify what exactly we are talking about. Within the European Charter of Fundamental Rights further distinctions can be found, e.g. for abstract values such as freedom and equality. It cites classical negative rights to liberty such as the protection of personal data, freedom of thought, freedom of assembly and of association, and the freedom to choose an occupation. In the section on equality, it refers to the two general principles of equality before the law and the prohibition of discrimination based on genetic features or sexual orientation. Other values such as the protection of human rights are developed further in the European Convention on Human Rights.

- thirdly that values also have an inherently idealistic character, which conflicts with pragmatic political reality, without wishing to dismiss them a priori as being in any case unattainable objectives. Ideals are fulfilled gradually, and frequently at the end of a long and difficult path. We are moving toward this ideal, which determines our direction, and the EU has already covered a very long distance in this respect. A touch more modesty and insight into the reality of Europe's own inadequacy is therefore advisable, just as it is equally important to persistently adhere to a clear and well defined common European value-orientation. Despite all the justified criticism, value neutrality cannot be an option.

## **Are European values Christian values?**

Also readily to hand is a (closer) definition of European values as Christian values, which should be preserved and in many places rediscovered. This is certainly by no means incorrect, as a glance at the preamble of the Union Treaty shows:

“Drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law [...].”

Yet we should firstly be warned against a dishonest and one-sided monopolization of European values as Christian values; it is important to differentiate and to avoid exclusion. Secondly, there is a need for greater precision, otherwise the discussion of Europe's Christian values remains on too general a level.

It can hardly be doubted that Europe and the EU do have a special Christian character. But for the sake of the wider picture, it is still worth mentioning that trinity which the Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, was not the first to mention: Both Europe and the EU have been shaped by the Christian faith, Roman law, and Greek philosophy. This triad was pointed out by the first President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Theodor Heuss: “There are three hills from which the West took its origins: Golgotha, the

Acropolis in Athens, and the Capitol in Rome. All have influenced the West spiritually and intellectually, and all three should be regarded as one unit.”<sup>4</sup> Addressing the German Bundestag in September 2011, Benedict XVI used exactly the same metaphor: “The culture of Europe has arisen from the encounter between Jerusalem, Athens and Rome – from the encounter between the faith of Israel, the philosophical reason of the Greeks and the legal thought of Rome. This triple encounter forms the inner identity of Europe.”<sup>5</sup> Thus for Heuss and Pope Benedict, the Christian faith is one essential source of European culture and the European value-culture, but not the only one.

## ***We should be warned against a dishonest and one-sided monopolization of European values as Christian values. It is important to differentiate and to avoid exclusion***

European values therefore reside within and are inspired by the Christian faith in a special but by no means exclusive way. Consequently, the adjectival attribute “Christian” must not become monopolistic. It must not be associated with an exclusivity claim: European and Christian culture, European and Christian values must now leave room for the “non-Christian” as well.

## **Peace as a central value**

Peace can be considered one of, if not the central European value. Results from the recent Eurobarometer survey mentioned earlier show that Europeans believe peace is the value that best represents the European Union (39 per cent). It is also the value most important to them personally (45 per cent). Even though value perceptions vary widely, this is still a very clear result, and in view of European history it is only logical.

Peace is not only a basic value, but also an original essential feature of the EU. The EU was brought into being after two devastating World Wars, starting with the European Coal and Steel Community, as an economic union. But it was also a peace and reconciliation project. Possibly the Europeans would not have managed

this themselves without external impetus, and certainly economic interests and control were initially the main concerns. Nevertheless, the EU was meant to bring peace to the European nation states, and it did so, even though this was initially limited to the Western European countries. But challenged on various occasions over the decades, and not just by the Cold War and the Balkan conflicts, its character as a peace project has permanently changed. Today, more than ever, the EU has to ask itself what peace means, and how this peace can be established and maintained.

Thus there is more to it than the absence of armed and violent conflicts, important though this is. More than anything else, peace is above all a dynamic, continuous and suspenseful process of cumulative conflict resolution that

## *Today, more than ever, the EU has to ask itself what peace means, and how this peace can be established and maintained*

is guided by clear principles. It focuses on causes, seeks to reduce violence, and constantly presents new tasks. The EU now has to orient itself to this process, particularly in its foreign and security policy. At the moment, however, its foreign and security policy is focused more on ideas such as security and resilience than on the concept of peace itself.

### **Value orientation in specific terms: European foreign and security policy**

Not only for the orientation to the central value of peace, but also for the practical implementation of the entire code of values, the European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) represents a widely diversified, highly topical and relatively recent area of application and proving ground. It has been constantly developed and strengthened, particularly since the beginning of the 1990s, via the individual “treaty stages”.

Despite the remaining justified criticism and hitherto unresolved implementation problems, which we do not need to mention individually here, there is currently no lack of further approaches and inputs in the field of foreign and security policy. These are also accompanied by changed terminology. Some important defense decisions were taken in 2017, with the launch of a European Defence Fund, and agreements to participate in Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO).

Recognizing these current trends, CFSP and its operational part, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), are at core expressly intended to help safeguard the EU's fundamental values and interests, and hence contribute to peace and security in the world. This is meant to raise the EU's profile as a reliable stabilizing factor and partner, and as a model in a globalized world. Hence the transfer of general European founding values to the specific application area of foreign and security policy in Art. 21 EUT-L is hardly surprising:

“The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.”

As part of this expressly stated “values-led foreign policy,”<sup>6</sup> the EU is pursuing two main

aims: firstly to promote and spread European values beyond the EU's borders, as indicated in Art. 8 EUT-L; secondly to adhere to these values in the context of the EU's specific foreign and security policy challenges. On June 28, 2016, the EU published its key security policy strategy document "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe," also known as the Global Strategy. It cites the following examples of such challenges: counterterrorism, climate change, migration and refugees, and several more.

The values set out in Article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty are at first abstract and unspecific. If they are to be genuine European values and common guiding principles, they will need to specifically shape the identity and actions of the EU as a whole, of its member states individually, and also those of potential executive organs such as a European Army with regard to these problem areas.

1 European Commission (2018): Standard Eurobarometer 89, Spring 2018. Report: European citizenship. <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/83538> (accessed November 7, 2018).

2 Cf. Merkl, Alexander/Schlögl-Flierl, Kerstin (2017): *Moraltheologie kompakt. Ein theologisch-ethisches Lehrbuch für Schule, Studium und Praxis*. Münster, pp. 10–12.

3 (Translated from German). Mandry, Christof (forthcoming): "Das Wertefundament als ethisch-normative Grundlage der Europäischen Union – 'empty rhetoric? Kritik und Verteidigung." In: Merkl, Alexander / Koch, Bernhard (eds.): *Die EU als ethisches Projekt im Spiegel ihrer Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik* (Studien zur Friedensethik 63). Baden-Baden/Münster.

4 (Translated from German). Heuss, Theodor (1956): *Reden an die Jugend*. Tübingen, p. 32.

5 (Translated from German). Benedict XVI. (2011): Rede im Deutschen Bundestag am 22. September 2011. <https://www.bundestag.de/parlament/geschichte/gastredner/benedict/rede/250244> (accessed October 27, 2018).

6 (Translated from German). Algieri, Franco (2010): *Die Gemeinsame Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik der EU*. Vienna, pp. 158–164.

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# PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

## MILESTONE ON THE ROAD TO MILITARY POWER, OR RESTART FOR THE EU AS A FORCE FOR PEACE?

### Abstract

*Over the last twenty years, the EU has significantly raised its profile in the security and defense policy arena. But there is a mismatch between its claim to be a “global security provider” and the military capacities that this would require. Bernhard Rinke begins by explaining why the instrument of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), as provided for in the Lisbon Treaty (2009), was not activated until the end of 2017. From the peace ethics perspective, it is not so much the foreseeable improvement in military capabilities that is of interest, but rather the question of the model on which these capabilities are based. There are two conflicting options: that of the conventional world power, which averts threats and can advance its own interests due to its military strength, or the concept of the “force for peace”, which relies primarily on civilian, cooperative and rule-based conflict management, including prevention.*

*In the author’s view, it cannot be clearly determined which of these normative concepts the EU sees itself bound by, or whether recent developments in the field of military cooperation reflect any change in direction. The Global Strategy of 2016 does not define the EU as a purely civilian power. Instead, it emphasizes an integrated approach to conflict, while conceding that “European security and defence must become better equipped.” Nevertheless, politicians certainly regard PESCO as being a major step toward a “security and defense union.” The possibility for this to initiate a long-term shift to the role of conventional world power cannot be completely ruled out, Rinke believes. But at least the much lamented “shortcoming” of the EU – the drawn-out intergovernmental consultation and decision-making process – is actually more of a virtue, since it serves as a kind of “protection mechanism against a conventional policy of military power.”*

**Author:** Bernhard Rinke

The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was created in response to the EU’s large-scale inability to take military action in the Kosovo war at the end of the 1990s. Since then, the EU has significantly raised its profile in this policy area. Numerous institutions for international crisis management have been established and expanded, and a series of civilian and military crisis management operations have been carried out.<sup>1</sup>

Yet there has been a clear gap between the EU’s declared aspiration of assuming responsibility as a security provider on the global policy stage and the stark raw political reality; between expectations of the EU and its actual (in)ability to act as a civilian-military crisis manager. Time and again, this has given rise to complaints. It has even been said, repeatedly, that the EU is irrelevant in matters of security policy because it ultimately lacks the military capabilities that the role of global security provider requires.<sup>2</sup>

When the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in 2009, it was meant to provide a remedy by turning the ESDP into the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). At least a renewed attempt was made to improve the EU’s military capabilities, via the instrument of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). According to this, the EU member states “whose military capabilities fulfill higher criteria” and “which have made more binding commitments to one another [...] with a view to the most demanding missions” under the CSDP should use PESCO as a deeper form of security and defense policy cooperation (cf. Art. 42 (6) and Art. 46 of the EU Treaty as well as the annexed Protocol no. 10). Thus PESCO is a permanent framework for action, based on the EU Treaty, which still needs fleshing out by the participating states.

However, the Member States did not make use of this possibility until the fall of 2017. In the words of the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, Permanent Structured Cooperation was the Sleeping Beauty of the Lisbon Treaty.<sup>3</sup> This was mainly down to the absence of political leadership from the “Big Three”.<sup>4</sup> France and the United Kingdom initially – even deliberately – opted for bilateralism outside of EU structures to improve their military

capabilities. At the end of 2010, they agreed to cooperate on major defense projects, hold regular consultations on security policy issues, and set up joint intervention forces. For the German federal government, the main focus of its European policy was managing the European debt crisis. Meanwhile the smaller member states, which in any case were not key military players, feared becoming even more dependent in the defense policy field, and subject to the informal directorate of the aforementioned “Big Three.” Thus, to begin with, there was simply a lack of will to “wake up” PESCO.

### Fresh momentum on the path to integrated European armed forces

Radical changes in the EU’s strategic environment and associated new challenges first led to a change in thinking, and put the EU’s ability to act in matters of security policy back on the agenda. There is certainly considerable pressure to act:

Firstly, Europeans feel pressured by U.S. President Donald Trump. He has been much more emphatic than his predecessors in demanding higher military spending by the Europeans, and openly called the United States’ NATO alliance obligations into question during his electoral campaign. At the same time, a strategic (re-)alignment of the United States is becoming increasingly clear, as it turns away from Europe and toward the Asia-Pacific region – particularly China, which it perceives as a rival. In many quarters, the impression prevails now that the U.S. security guarantees can apparently no longer be taken for granted, and that the EU finally needs to take its fate into its own hands. Meanwhile the pressure to act has undoubtedly increased, since the EU is facing a series of crises on its borders, encompassing political instability, violence and terror. On its eastern flank, with the Ukraine crisis, it is confronted with the Russian annexation of Crimea and Russia’s rising ambition to be accepted as a great power. In addition, for many years, large parts of the Middle East and North Africa have been shaken by violence and Islamist terrorism. Finally, within the EU, the so-called “Brexit shock” has to be taken into account.<sup>5</sup>

As a result, efforts toward more closely integrated and more effective European armed forces have gained fresh momentum. On November 23, 2017, the foreign and defense ministers of

*The impression prevails now that the U.S. security guarantees can no longer be taken for granted*

23 EU member states signed a notification to the European Council of Ministers and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in which they declared their intention to participate in Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO).<sup>6</sup> To deal with security policy challenges more effectively than before, cooperation within the CSDP framework is to be driven forward and significant advances to be made in improving the defense and intervention capabilities of participating states. At its session of December 11, 2017, the Council of the European Union approved the formal establishment of PESCO and adopted the list of participating states. Furthermore, an initial list was agreed comprising 17 projects to develop joint defense capabilities (such as creating a European Medical Command, setting up an EU Training Mission Competence Centre, and forming joint combat units by regions),<sup>7</sup> along with national implementation plans and their evaluation by the Council at the EU level.

PESCO has therefore been brought to life – the Sleeping Beauty of the Lisbon Treaty is awake now. Yet since PESCO is not a substitute for policy, our examination of it must not stop at an analysis of military capabilities and the resulting possibilities and limits for action by the EU. If the debate goes no further than that, it at any rate runs the risk of losing sight of the ultimately central aspect – namely the crucial question of what political goal Permanent Structured Cooperation is really supposed to serve.

### Role models for the EU’s security policy posture

The debate over efforts to improve the EU’s military capacity to act must not be separated from

the normative question of which model the EU should pursue as a foreign and security policy actor.

Given the shifts of power in the international system and new threat scenarios, should the EU transform itself into a conventional kind of world or military power, with comprehensive political and military capacities to act?<sup>8</sup> To supporters of this position – also referred to as the “global power” theory – the Union at any rate appears to be a “vulnerable island of stability,” surrounded by an anarchic international system characterized by “instability and unpredictability.”<sup>9</sup> This calls for the will and ability on the part of the EU firstly “to preserve peace on the European continent and also to restore it in the face of aggressors,”<sup>10</sup> and secondly to assert its legitimate own interests on the global level, if necessary by military means.

Or should it follow the “force for peace model,” where the task of civilian conflict management is brought into balance with a military role in averting threats to world peace and maintaining international security? According to Hans-Georg Ehrhart, the EU under this model is “neither an actor relying exclusively on civilian means, nor does it pursue military power politics in the style of a conventional great power. Instead, it is an international actor that uses the full range of its capabilities for the prevention and constructive management of violent conflicts.”<sup>11</sup> Until now, however, it has only been a “force for peace in progress.” Ehrhart believes that an “EU as a force for peace” should in any event

- first have a normative orientation to cooperative security and peaceful change;
- second give clear priority to preventive strat-

egies, but without excluding rule-based coercive intervention;

- third have at its disposal the necessary civilian and military instruments for constructive conflict management;
- fourth cooperate closely with societal actors, especially with non-governmental organizations, and
- fifth maintain extensive cooperative relationships with international and regional security organizations, particularly with the United Nations which can authorize military interventions.”<sup>12</sup>

### The direction is still unclear

So what does Permanent Structured Cooperation mean for the EU’s role as an actor in the international context? Is it a milestone on the road to the EU as a military power, or a “restart for the EU as a force for peace?”<sup>13</sup> Anyone who expects a clear answer to this question will be disappointed, since the findings are ambivalent.

On the one hand, some interpretations point in the direction of the EU becoming a military power. The German defense minister Ursula von der Leyen welcomed the waking of the PESCO Sleeping Beauty as a milestone on the road to the “long-term goal of a common European Security and Defence Union,” as formulated in the 2016 *White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr*.<sup>14</sup> On the occasion of the PESCO notification, she declared: “Today is a great day for Europe. [...]. Today we are founding the European security and defense union.” And she added that in her view, PESCO is “a further step towards an army for Europe.”<sup>15</sup>

Whether the time for the idea of a European Army has now actually come, or whether this is rather just a “chimera,”<sup>16</sup> is at least a contentious issue – no less contentious than the question of whether the establishment of a security and defense union can contribute to peace in any way at all.

Long before Permanent Structured Cooperation was agreed, significant doubts had been cast over the assumption that establishing a defense union could yield peacebuilding consequences. Decades ago, for example, the integration theorist David Milatny expressed concern that such a process might

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even increase the potential for conflict in the international system.<sup>17</sup> And back in the mid-1990s, it was warned that “military alliances” – meaning the development perspective of the EU – were poorly suited to “overcoming the anarchy of the international system and helping the ‘strength of the law’ to achieve a breakthrough. On the contrary, they prototypically embody the ‘power of the strongest’ and, as ‘self-help institutions’, are an integral part of this anarchy.”<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, the EU obviously sees itself less as a military power in progress, and more as a force for peace, when it claims the need to assume responsibility in the world as a global security provider. This can be seen particularly clearly in the description of the EU as a civilian and military crisis manager. Thus the “Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy,” in view of past failures of military invention, contains a reminder that the EU’s strength lies in peacebuilding through civilian means. At the same time, Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, states in her foreword to the Global Strategy that the “idea that Europe is an exclusively ‘civilian power’ does not do justice to an evolving reality.”<sup>19</sup> Above all, however, this key document contains a clear commitment to an integrated approach to conflict resolution:

“When violent conflicts erupt, our shared vital interests are threatened. The EU will engage in a practical and principled way in peacebuilding, and foster human security through an integrated approach. Implementing the ‘comprehensive approach to conflicts and crises’ through a coherent use of all policies at the EU’s disposal is essential. [...]. The EU will act at all stages of the conflict cycle, acting promptly on prevention, responding responsibly and decisively to crises, investing in stabilisation, and avoiding premature disengagement when a new crisis erupts.”<sup>20</sup>

However, to move “from vision to action,” an emphasis is placed, here too, on improving the EU’s military capacity to act:

“In particular, investment in security and defence is a matter of urgency. Full spectrum defence capabilities are necessary to respond to external crises, build our partners’ capacities, and to guarantee Europe’s safety. [...] [T]o acquire and maintain many of these capabilities, defence cooperation must become the norm.”<sup>21</sup>

For: “In full compliance with international law, European security and defence must become better equipped to build peace, guarantee security and protect human lives, notably civilians. The EU must be able to respond rapidly, responsibly and decisively to crises [...].”<sup>22</sup>

## ***The foreign and security policy decision-making structure in the EU is still a hindrance to any role as a military power***

From this perspective, the establishment of PESCO in the fall of 2017 looks like a step toward implementing the EU Global Strategy.

Anyone who now formulates the objection that the military buildup measures under PESCO are nevertheless turning the EU into a military power might wish to consider that the foreign and security policy decision-making structure in the EU is still a hindrance to any role as a world or military power. Even the Lisbon Treaty’s reforms to the EU’s external relations have done nothing to change the continuing intergovernmentalism of the EU’s foreign, security and defense policy, which is therefore likely to act as a brake on such ambitions. At least “the consensus principle [...] is an obstacle to swift decisions, decisive mobilization of power resources, and their concentration on a point – therefore precisely the capabilities that characterize a military power.”<sup>23</sup>

Accordingly, from the peace policy perspective, the continued intergovernmental decision-making structure is by no means the central problem of the CSDP – despite frequent mantra-like claims to the contrary. This decision-making structure rather appears to act as a kind of protection mechanism against a conventional policy of military power, which at least seems to guarantee that the pros and cons of interventions, and the associated interests, are extensively debated.

Nevertheless, of course the possibility cannot be ruled out that the EU will in the future use its capabilities built up under PESCO primarily or increasingly for conventional military power projection, to assert its own interests.

In other words, the realization of “Europe as a force for peace” remains a challenge and a mission. It is still a project – at least if the EU wishes

to maintain its ambition “to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world” by means of progressive realization of the CSDP, as it states in the preamble to its founding treaty.

1 For an overview of current and completed military and civilian operations, see [https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations\\_en?page=1](https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations_en?page=1) (accessed October 17, 2018).

2 See for example Bahr, Egon (2014): “Braucht die Europäische Union eine eigenständige Sicherheitspolitik?” In: Staack, Michael/Krause, Dan (eds.): *Europa als sicherheitspolitischer Akteur*. Opladen, Berlin, Toronto, pp. 15ff.

3 Cf. speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the Defence and Security Conference Prague: In Defence of Europe. [www.europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-17-1581\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-17-1581_en.pdf) (accessed September 24, 2018). The following section is based on Rinke, Bernhard (2015): “Formen differenzierter Integration und ihre Konsequenzen in der GASP/GSVP.” In: Stratenschulte, Eckart D. (ed.): *Der Anfang vom Ende? Formen differenzierter Integration und ihre Konsequenzen*. Baden-Baden, pp. 165–185.

4 Ibid., pp. 174f.

5 Cf. Fiott, Daniel / Missiroli, Antonio / Tardy, Thierry (2017): Permanent Structured Cooperation: *What's in a name?* (European Union Institute for Security Studies. Chaillot Papers No 142.) Paris, p. 20. See also: Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy, p. 3. [https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top\\_stories/pdf/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf) (accessed November 4, 2018) .

6 Notification on Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) to the Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, [www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31511/171113-pesco-notification.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31511/171113-pesco-notification.pdf) (accessed September 1, 2018). The document was initially not signed by the foreign and defense ministers of the following states: Denmark, Ireland, Malta, Portugal and the United Kingdom. Denmark is not participating at all in the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy.

Malta did not want to meet the PESCO participation criteria. The United Kingdom will in any case be exiting the EU, after a referendum on June 23, 2016 returned a “leave” vote of around 52 per cent. Ireland and Portugal signed later.

7 Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) first collaborative PESCO projects – Overview. [www.consilium.europa.eu/media/32082/pesco-overview-of-first-collaborative-of-projects-for-press.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/32082/pesco-overview-of-first-collaborative-of-projects-for-press.pdf) (accessed September 1, 2018).

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Giessmann, Hans J./Rinke, Bernhard (eds.): *Handbuch Frieden*. 2nd edition. Wiesbaden.

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16 Cf. on this point the essay by Hans-Georg Ehrhart pp. 21–26 in this issue.

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19 Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, June 2016, p. 04. [https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top\\_stories/pdf/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf) (accessed November 5, 2018).

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For a long time, the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) was a policy area in which there were no particular events to report. This undoubtedly has to do with the fact that defense policy is considered a bastion of national sovereignty. Security and defense are a central *raison d'être* for the nation state. Any substantial transfer of competences to the EU, and in particular any subjection of a security-sensitive policy area to the principle of majority voting, would have to be regarded as a loss of national sovereignty and as a further step toward the European Union becoming a state. This is highly controversial within Europe, and even those states which have so far been decidedly pro-European have shown themselves to be extremely reticent if not directly hostile on this issue. Therefore, the CSDP so far has not only been thoroughly intergovernmental in nature, but also characterized by a high degree of inertia. Despite various initiatives, programs and instruments, the essential aspects of security and defense policy are still under national responsibility, especially armaments policy and the core military areas.

### **Europeans have only a limited power to act in terms of security and defense policy**

In recent years, however, the security situation has changed considerably, not only on the global stage but also in Europe's immediate neighborhood. In this new context, it has become impossible to ignore that the EU Member States are not very well placed to act in security matters, particularly not in respect of their crisis intervention capability. Inefficiency, a lack of material and personnel, serious gaps in key military and logistical capabilities, little response capacity and slow coordination processes make the Europeans weak players, both individually and together. This has been seen in many cases – for example the Libya intervention, the Crimea crisis, and the civil war in Syria. For quite some time now, the United States has been pressing its European NATO partners to make considerably larger contributions to the NATO shield over Europe, and to also play a greater role in global crisis management. Russia

# THE EUROPEAN UNION SHOULD STICK TO ITS PEACE-ORIENTATION

## *Abstract*

*The changed security situation and the EU Global Strategy formulated in response to it have led to new initiatives in the particularly sovereignty-sensitive area of security and defense policy. Christof Mandry's essay attempts an assessment of these developments that looks beyond overhasty euphoria or fundamental rejection.*

*Mandry's analysis is based on a consideration of the EU as a community of values. This has firstly an internal impact: The commitment enshrined in the EU's constitution and specific policy areas to human dignity, freedom, democracy and the rule of law is a lesson learned from the experience of two world wars in Europe. This idea has been successfully realized in a peaceful, democratic and social model of European society. In terms of the EU's external relations, the values-orientation implies refraining from the direct exertion of power, and strengthening global peace and the rule of law.*

*Mandry then examines the question of whether "greater coordination and cooperation, with operational strengthening [of the CSDP] through [...] PESCO" makes external action by the EU more consistent in keeping with such purposes – or whether it might lead the Union to act contrary to its values and pursue interest-driven policies, including by military means, under a cloak of humanitarianism. In fact, the author argues, this possibility cannot be totally dismissed, even if the current state of affairs offers little to support such scenarios.*

*While Mandry does not in principle reject a CSDP that includes a military capacity to act, in his view this misses the mark for the EU as a "force for peace." Instead of succumbing to the temptation of wanting to "create" peace through (military) intervention, it is essential firstly to revitalize the common value basis and oppose resurgent nationalism, authoritarianism and illiberalism by providing a "new plausibility" for the idea of European integration. Secondly, especially in view of the current crisis of multilateralism, it is important to support the maintenance and development of a "to some degree functional international framework", which as far as possible allows conflicts to be resolved peacefully and with respect for human rights.*

is causing concern among the eastern states of Europe. The trouble spots of Africa and the Middle East have literally come knocking on Europe's door, in the form of migration movements. The United Kingdom's exit from the EU will mean a further loss of importance for European security and defense policy. It really does seem likely that the times are over when the peace dividend generated in Europe under the protection of NATO – i.e. mainly the United States – could be enjoyed here, undisturbed by all global conflicts.

### **Readiness for a substantial EU military policy?**

It now appears that the changed circumstances have finally given the EU Member States a wake-up call and a new willingness to act in CSDP matters. The EU Global Strategy was published in 2016. Employing the term "strategic autonomy", it holds out the prospect of the EU at least partially emancipating itself from the United States, and developing its own, much more effective intervention capabilities. These are to be used mainly for stabilization in the eastern and southern neighboring regions, as well as in the context of medium and long-term regional partnerships. The Lisbon Treaty provides for the possibility of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)

### ***EU member states are not very well placed to act in security matters, particularly not in respect of their crisis intervention capability***

in security and defense. While this has not been implemented, it has gradually taken on concrete form since 2017 – and is celebrated as the kiss that wakes a "sleeping beauty" (President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker). According to the declared intention, such "ambitious" cooperation between capable and willing defense partners could lead to an EU army. That is what some hope and others fear.

In fact there are still many unresolved questions. Their answers will determine how ambitious, how efficient and how effective in terms of action PESCO will really be for the EU's effective security and defense policy, or whether the giant snake that is the EU has not simply grown longer,

fatter and more unwieldy. At any rate, there are signs that efforts are being made to overcome the CSDP's slowness of action, and that the EU is tending to be more proactive in the fields of security, armaments and armed forces, and thus adopt a more perceptible intervention role. These new activities are essentially to be welcomed, in so far as they represent progress by the EU on the path of integration in a particularly sovereignty-sensitive area – a path which could lead to something like an integrated common EU defense policy. But beyond the euphoria at the fact that Europeanization seems to be continuing at all – which one has to feel happy about, in view of Brexit and widespread euro-skepticism or even euro-antagonism in the member states – there is no getting round the double question of how we should evaluate the direction that Europeanization has taken here.

### **The European Union is a community of values**

The EU is rightly seen as a European project that does not primarily derive its motivation and legitimacy from the interests of European states in securing a position of power for themselves in the global concert of great powers. On the contrary, European integration is the consequence of the bloody failure of such a view of politics. The EU should be understood from the ground up as a peace and reconciliation endeavor, by which Europeans learn a fundamental lesson from the bitter experiences of the 20th century. Never again war in Europe. Never again ruthless striving for power. Never again disregard for human dignity. For these reasons, the EU expressly characterized itself in the Lisbon Treaty as a community of values, and committed both its constitutional structure and its specific policy to a value basis. Article 2 of the Lisbon EU Treaty states: "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail." Article 21 of the EU Treaty commits the Union's action on the international scene to these values and other principles.

It was certainly with some justification that the EU received the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize. Since the end of World War II, Europeans have lived through a historically unparalleled period of peace, security and prosperity – an achievement which after 1990 was extended by and large to wide regions of the now undivided continent. Of course, peace in Europe is to an appreciable and perhaps decisive extent due to European integration having taken place under the protection of NATO and the United States, as the West's guarantor power. But this is true mainly if we primarily regard peace as being the absence of war. The great achievement of European integration, meanwhile, is to have used the protection against external threats to shape a peaceful, democratic and social model of European society internally. Peace can be shaped too – a political task that goes beyond border security externally and police work at home. European integration succeeded because it was possible to bring about reconciliation between former European enemies, through political trust-building, through economic and cultural cooperation. The EU represents a political model which realizes peace, the rule of law, democracy, human rights, freedom and justice as fundamental values and principles. These values are by their nature universal. In EU politics, they are realized in a specific way that reflects the particular historical experiences and traditions of the European nations. The legitimacy of the EU depends on these values. If they were to be given up, the EU would be a purely interests-oriented, special-purpose political organization, which its members would use or ignore according to their perceived national interests. The current EU crisis is therefore mainly an internal crisis. Member states which vote to turn away from democracy, the rule of law, human rights and peace-orientation are at the same time declaring themselves to be against European integration, and undermining the legitimacy of the EU. It is undeniable that the constituent basis for a united Europe is currently being called into question just as much from the inside as it is under threat from the outside.

## The EU – a foreign policy force for peace?

As a community of values, the EU is committed to its fundamental values in its external relations, too. It cannot regard itself as merely a power player for pooling European interests. Rather, it must pursue those interests within a value-based framework, in such a way that global peace and the rule of law are not harmed but ideally strengthened. What this means more precisely is discussed in the political debate using terms such as “force for peace,” “soft power” or “ethical power.” A basic idea behind the concept of normative power is that through its for-

*It is undeniable that the constituent basis for a united Europe is currently being called into question*

eign policy action, the EU changes internationally accepted ideas of what constitutes legitimate policy and legitimate institutions. In this way, without directly exerting power, it has a positive impact on international systems of governance. In 2016, the Global Strategy reaffirmed the EU's support for peace, democracy, human rights, prosperity and a rule-based world order. At a time when unilateralism and contempt for international law appear to be in vogue, this is an important and valuable normatively based conception of the EU's role. Without a doubt, one can rightly argue that in reality the EU has not sufficiently lived up to this commitment so far, and that there have been quite a number of occasions on which it has acted to the contrary in external affairs. The often-stated lack of coherence in external policy is surely due in part to the opposing interests of member states and the nature of the CFSP, which in the end comes down to a policy of the smallest common denominator.

The accusation that the peace-and-values orientation of EU foreign policy ultimately has a mainly rhetorical significance, and falls substantially short of expectations, is in our context of course only one side of the criticism. Supporters of the new impetus in the CSDP could argue that greater coordination and cooperation, with operational strengthening through instruments such as PESCO, give the EU exactly the tools to enable more consistent and more

efficient action on the international scene. But a different criticism raises doubts about precisely this point: namely, that the orientation to peace and the rule of law in the Union's foreign policy is due precisely to its inefficiency. Precisely because the CFSP and especially the CSDP have not been communized to any great extent, and are largely the result of complicated compromises among member states, the EU is deemed to be an international player with a limited ability to act, tied to a peace- and rule-oriented policy style. In short, the EU is considered to be a power for peace because its very constitution makes it completely unable

## *To enforce democracy and human rights may necessarily require the use of military force, and therefore stands in potential conflict with the peace-orientation*

to pursue power politics. Hence, so the argument goes, the increased ability to act in security and defense policy should be viewed highly critically from a peace ethics perspective. Won't the EU increasingly switch over to interest-driven power politics, now that PESCO has given it the possibility to do so? Will an EU army encourage an abandonment of the peace-orientation? Is the CSDP in danger of going down the wrong path? This criticism also highlights a tension within the values of the Union. Not only does it pursue peace, it also supports the implementation of liberal values such as democracy, human rights, equality and freedom. Yet to enforce democracy and human rights may necessarily require the use of military force, and therefore stands in potential conflict with the peace-orientation.

### **Will an EU army lead to an abandonment of the peace-orientation?**

The argument should be taken extremely seriously. It evidently alludes to the problematic, in some cases disastrous, history of humanitarian intervention in the recent past. The reasons given for military intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, in both cases included protecting human rights, liberation from tyranny, and the establishment of democracy. Yet this intervention has produced con-

flicts that remain unsolved to this day. In the minds of many observers, there is now a general suspicion that human rights policy is ideologically driven. Indeed, there is no way in principle to prevent new scope for action under the CSDP from being used in ways that conflict with the values of the Union. First of all, this risk could materialize if PESCO became a blueprint for EU member states opposing European values: They could use the possibility to form clusters provided in the Lisbon Treaty for their own individual purposes. PESCO forms a legal and political framework for binding, "ambitious" cooperation between states that can muster the corresponding political will, next to military and other capacities, for a defined cooperation of this kind. The internal and external situation for the EU could produce a risky mix if governments politically skeptical of Europe and human rights banded together to counter a threat they perceived at the borders – whether migrants or another state – by means of joint operations. No scenario like this is in sight at the present time. The first projects set up under PESCO have tended to be less ambitious; they relate predominantly to the armaments industry or to logistics. It also seems that the possibilities for clustering by selected member states have not been used so far. This could change, admittedly. By providing in principle the framework for cooperation at different levels of intensity by individual member states, PESCO helps to make the previously sluggish CSDP more dynamic. On the other hand, this brings the danger of creating divisions among member states. If military operations by a subset of EU states were to set a precedent and also be questionable in respect of their compatibility with fundamental values of the Union, they could jeopardize not only the CFSP but also the cohesion of the EU as a whole.

### **In peace policy, the goal cannot be separated from the means**

Even if such scenarios do not come to pass, skepticism toward the vision of an EU army is appropriate on grounds of peace ethics. There is a suspicion that the expansion of security policy and in particular of military capacities to act will lead to a conflict with the EU's present peace-orientation even if the Union's liberal values are respected. Indeed, it is precisely the self-imposed commitment to values such as democracy, free trade and human rights

that puts the peace-orientation at risk, because it provides the legitimization for military intervention. Wouldn't increased efficiency and effectiveness in the CSDP field lead to an interest-driven policy that pursues expansion of the European sphere of influence, under the cloak of spreading human rights and democracy – just because it can? This objection should be taken seriously, too. It is based on a widespread misunderstanding. As a matter of fact, in peace and human rights policy, goals and means cannot be considered independently of one another. Peace cannot be brought about through violence, nor can human rights be established by unethical means. Instead, both tend to be delegitimized by the use of force. This can be seen most convincingly if peace and human rights are not regarded as specific events, like the end of a civil war, nor the collapse of a dictatorship as a result of military intervention. Peace and human rights should instead be seen as the organizing principles of a just and humane society and state. They require implementation in government and societal institutions – for example, in institutions of law and politics – and they are dependent on mentalities, attitudes and opinions among citizens for their existence and functioning. For this reason, they cannot simply be made the object of instrumental external actions. Peace, security and human rights cannot therefore be spread or supported by measures that do not themselves live up to these values, but which instead can only make these values appear a cynical pretext for implementing completely different interests.

There is no doubt that the relationship between peacekeeping and human rights policy is extraordinarily complex. It is probably unconvincing to rule out the use of military force in principle for all situations. Hence an EU CSDP is not in principle unreasonable or illegitimate. Yet the experiences of humanitarian military and non-military intervention over past decades show that it is incomparably easier to intervene militarily and stop acute violence and human rights violations, than it is to restore a functioning, stable and democratic social order once it has been seriously damaged. Moreover, the following question has not been satisfactorily answered at international level so far: How can international conflicts, regional destabilization and gaping development disparities be prevented or contained in time, so that they do not develop

into supra-regional and global security risks – while simultaneously respecting fundamental human rights and values? How should the international order function to ensure that security risks become

## *Peace cannot be brought about through violence, nor can human rights be established by unethical means*

less likely, or that their respective importance diminishes? And what role could the European CSDP play in this? Moreover: Would it even be able to play this role, given how the EU is internally constituted?

### **The EU should give attention to its internal condition**

Delight at progress in the CSDP arena should not lead us to overlook the fact that the internal state of the Union is worrying at the moment. Views on the purpose of European integration and what its essential foundations consist in are widely divergent. This is likely to be reflected in the CSDP also, where it has to be seen which common situation assessments and action decisions the European partners are willing to agree on. If a hard Brexit takes place in 2019, if anti-European parties win a majority in the European elections, if even more Member States adopt skeptical or hostile positions toward the EU, the unity of the Union could be seriously at risk. Even if such a gloomy scenario does not arise, a consistent CSDP could still be a real challenge. The actual task for the EU – ultimately the task of Europeans – is to overcome the fundamental crisis of the EU. The Union's crisis is not only an institutional one, it is also a crisis of democracy and the rule of law in Europe. If it is not overcome, Europe itself, as it is feared, might become a trouble factor. The resurgence of nationalism, which was thought to have disappeared, and policies driven by ethnocentric interests, do not make the European states predictable actors. The value of the CSDP will also have to be measured by whether and to what extent it helps to prevent foreign policy irrationalism. Democracy and European integration have spread hand-in-hand across Europe since 1948. Today they should be defended together. The EU and the political vision behind European integration require a

new plausibility. This means that answers will have to be found to the security needs and interests of European citizens. They see their security threatened not only by Russian great power politics and unregulated migration, but also by the pressure of economic, social and cultural transformation they are exposed to in their societies. There are good reasons to assume that the challenges of social transformation can ultimately be better managed within the European framework than by every nation going it alone. However, this point of view has to become plausible in a new way.

### Current tasks for the EU as a force for peace

The changed foreign policy security situation, to which the EU is responding with its Global Strategy, has many aspects and causes. Some of these are rooted in genuine conflicts of interest between great powers, others in regional problems, others again are ideological in nature. The EU would no doubt be overstretched if it wanted to tackle the causes of these conflicts. And in any case its present role conception as a force for peace has set a completely different emphasis. Since there will always be international conflicts, it is important to develop and strengthen a resilient and to some degree functional international framework, within which these conflicts can be resolved in a way that is as constructive, consistent with human rights, and little harmful as possible. The United Nations' system of governance, which for a long time shaped the post-war period, evidently has its best days behind it. It requires fundamental reform, for example to do away with the veto powers' mutual blocking capabilities. Something like a global rule of law is beginning to emerge in various fields, but this still requires considerable development. It will depend

on convincing international actors once more of the purpose of multilateralism, and moving them to participate in reform of the international order. It is not just a "task of the century", requiring determined and sustained effort, but also one of the key forms that peace work assumes today, and is appropriate for a peace power. The challenge is all the more urgent since hardly any important powers are currently addressing it: The United States is currently counting on a policy of unilateral pressure, Russia and China have little interest in arrangements that do not directly serve their interests – which really leaves only Europe as a player important enough to take on responsibility for the future of the international order. This sounds utopian, given the current state of the Union. Ultimately, it would also require intra-European differences to be overcome, such as those between members or withdrawal candidates (France and the UK) who currently have a permanent seat on the UN Security Council as victorious powers in the Second World War, and those without such a seat. Accordingly, attitudes to reform of the UN or the international order in general are likely to differ a great deal, and go in different directions. But in any case the EU will have no choice but to mobilize the trust between Member States gained over the course of its history to date, for its current and future foreign policy. After all, the CSDP, which is currently taking on a new form, also works on the basis of mutual trust – or it will remain ineffective. It is to be hoped for the Union that Member States' overall commitment to a common policy gains new impetus. This will not be possible without revitalizing the value basis. But by doing this, the EU would put the conditions in place, among its members and in its own policy-making, for a more consistent attitude towards the fundamental values of peace, freedom, human rights and democracy – both internally and externally. That certainly would be a truly substantial contribution by the EU to global peace.

### The Author



After previous academic roles at Tübingen, Berlin, Erfurt and Saarbrücken, Christof Mandry became Professor of Moral Theology and Social Ethics at Goethe University Frankfurt in 2015. His main research interests are in the fields of political ethics (societal pluralism, European Union, migration), lifestyles and the identity of moral persons, and bio- and medical ethics (ethics in healthcare, decision-making issues in medical ethics).

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# EUROPEAN ARMY REALITIES AND CHIMERAS

*Author:* Hans-Georg Ehrhart

The recent NATO summit, held on July 11-12, 2018, once again didn't turn out as bad as expected. It started with a burst of theatrical thunder from U.S. President Donald Trump. He criticized the supposedly unfair sharing of the burden among NATO members, reminding the allies of their agreement to target spending two percent of GDP on defense. NATO, and transatlantic relations even more so, have experienced a crisis of trust and purpose since Trump came to office. This in turn, in an EU that is itself mired in crisis, has amplified calls for strategic autonomy. The way to achieve such autonomy, protagonists argue, with reference to the Lisbon Treaty, is to develop the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The creation of a European army has been a talking point for some time now,<sup>1</sup> along with the need for a "European pillar" in NATO<sup>2</sup> and the goal of a European Security and Defence Union.<sup>3</sup> In its current coalition agreement, the German federal government promises to "develop a European defense union" and take further steps along the road toward an "army of Europeans."<sup>4</sup>

Supporters say that if defense was also brought within the Community framework – like customs and currency policy – then everything would be different. So wouldn't an integrated European army be the solution? Wouldn't this solution lead to a more efficient use of defense budgets, be a step forward for integration, be more effective on the world stage, and be more useful for security policy purposes? The European Parliament published a report in which the costs of EU defense policy fragmentation are estimated at 136 billion euros per year.<sup>5</sup> Egon Bahr, for his part, thought that creating a European army would enable Europe to break out of its role as a security protectorate of America.<sup>6</sup> Faced with the erratic policies of a Donald Trump presidency and the associated uncertainty of the American security guarantee, that would be an enticing prospect. So why is it that Europeans so far have not succeeded in developing an independent security and defense policy? A look back into history will provide some initial answers.

## Abstract

*Hans-Georg Ehrhart begins his essay by highlighting a "crisis of trust and purpose" in transatlantic relations since U.S. President Trump came to office. This has amplified calls within the EU for strategic autonomy. Supporters of development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) toward the formation of a European Army promise defense budget savings as well as integration and security advantages.*

*Next, Ehrhart offers a brief historical overview. The failure of the European Defence Community project between 1950 and 1954 was followed in the 1980s by an attempt to revitalize the Western European Union (WEU). In 1999, feeling the ramifications of the Balkan conflicts, the EU decided to develop the CSDP. The author divides this process into three phases. First, the creation of the legal bases and institutions for the implementation of crisis management operations. Second, the operational phase with civilian and military missions, based on the first European Security Strategy (ESS) that was adopted in 2003. And finally the EU Global Strategy of 2016, which led to the initiation of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO).*

*In light of individual EU Member States' deficiencies in particular military capabilities, for example, Ehrhart believes there is no reason to oppose greater European security and defense policy cooperation. But in his view there is no reason either for this slow but steadily advancing process to necessarily lead to a European army. Nor does this follow from the Lisbon Treaty. What's more, there is no way that it can be realized, he argues. Creating a European Army would first of all require the EU to be federal in nature. Yet the political will for this is lacking (not only in Germany). Different security cultures and anticipated national opposition to the loss of competences – e.g. from the military or national defense industries – also stand in the way of this happening. Finally, according to Ehrhart, the existence of joint armed forces might sooner or later encourage conventional great power politics, particularly since it is still completely unclear how the necessary parliamentary control over such a European army would be implemented. Thus a European army is definitely not the right way to achieve the desired strengthening of Europe as a power for peace.*

### A look back into history

The European army project, as a long-term goal, is supported in particular by Germany's governing parties. But it came close to realization once before, between 1950 and 1954. At that time, France was the driving force behind both its initiation and its failure. After the end of World War II, the Cold War led to a change in threat situation, with an increasing focus on the Soviet Union rather than Germany. The Treaty of Brussels, signed in 1948 by France, the United Kingdom and the Benelux countries, was still directed against possible aggression by the Soviet Union and Germany. In 1949, France became a founding member of NATO. Under American pressure to build up Western Europe as a "dagger" aimed at the Soviet Union, from 1950, Paris pursued a policy toward Germany and security that was based on "security and control through integration."<sup>7</sup>

*If a European army was not acceptable even in historically favorable circumstances, then the present-day chances of success cannot be good*

First of all, in 1952, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries established the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). At the time, these sectors were important both economically and for defense. The ECSC placed them under the control of a "High Authority". The Treaty establishing the European Defence Community (EDC) was signed in 1952 by all participating states. However, in 1954, following tough international negotiations, France failed to ratify the treaty. In the French parliament, there was no longer a majority willing to accept a considerable loss of national sovereignty in this vital policy area. In 1953, a draft constitution had been drawn up for a European Political Community (EPC), with strong supranational traits. This became obsolete with the failure to ratify the EDC treaty in 1954. The end of the Korean War and the death of Stalin, as well as the outcomes of the Geneva Conference and the fading prospect of German reunification, had changed the security situation for Paris. As

an "alternative solution," the Federal Republic of Germany joined NATO and the Western European Union (WEU), which emerged from the Treaty of Brussels. Whereas NATO would now be in charge of external military security, the main task for the WEU was armaments control with respect to West Germany. These developments marked the failure of the only previous attempt to create a European Army. But if a European Army was not acceptable even in the historically favorable circumstances of that time, then the present-day chances of success cannot be good.

In the 1980s, an ultimately unsuccessful attempt was made to reform the WEU, which had largely lain dormant for thirty years, and to use it as an institutional framework for developing European defense capabilities. This process started with the removal of all unilateral conventional armaments restrictions that still applied to the Federal Republic of Germany. A number of bilateral and multilateral steps in military co-operation followed, along with an agreement to consult in all military matters. In the 1992 Maastricht Treaty and 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, the WEU still featured as the military arm of the EU. But it was eventually replaced as a result of the decision in 1999 to develop the CSDP within the EU framework.

This decision was preceded by the Balkan conflicts in the 1990s, which brought the realization that most EU states were incapable of military intervention in their own back yard. France had originally sought to establish European autonomous defense capabilities within the WEU framework, while the United Kingdom had opposed the idea, fearing it would weaken NATO. But in response to the Kosovo War, the two countries signed the Saint-Malo declaration in 1998. This endorsed the creation of intervention capabilities within the EU framework. Yet the main purpose here was not and is not to form a European army to guarantee the defense of Europe, but rather to improve military capabilities for international crisis management. Moreover, this initiative was mainly targeted at Germany, which in the view of Paris and London was investing far too little in military capabilities.

## CSDP in progress

The Common Security and Defence Policy initially developed very rapidly. It was described in the beginning by the then High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Javier Solana, as the “integration project of the next decade.”<sup>8</sup> The process started with the 1999 European Council meetings in Cologne and Helsinki, and can be divided into three stages. In the first phase, the essential institutions were established. Then the operational phase began. The third stage has been running since 2016, and places a greater emphasis on building civil and military capacities. Although this was on the agenda from the outset, and is also the main reason why the CSDP was initiated, the results have fallen far short of expectations, not least because of the financial crisis that broke out in 2008.

In the Amsterdam Treaty and in the Treaty of Nice, the EU created the legal bases for the implementation of crisis management operations. Firstly, the office of the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy was created. The holder of this post also chairs the Foreign Affairs Council. Secondly, the High Representative (HR) was provided with a policy unit – a small staff that has now grown to become a veritable European diplomatic service, the European External Action Service (EEAS). Thirdly, the Petersberg tasks were incorporated into the Treaty on European Union.<sup>9</sup> As a result, civil and military crisis management became a task area for the EU. Next, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) was created, as a key element of the crisis management system. It comprises Permanent Representatives of the member states and one representative of the Commission. Under the responsibility of the Council, it ensures political control and strategic direction of crisis management operations. A separate committee for civilian crisis management was formed (Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management – CIVCOM), comprising representatives of member states and the Commission. CIVCOM advises the PSC. The military committee (European Union Military Committee – EUMC) is composed of member states’ Chiefs of Defence, and is the top military body in the Council’s political and military structures. EUMC advises the

PSC in all military matters. It is supported by a working and advisory body, the European Union Military Staff (EUMS). The EEAS incorporates two support staffs for civilian and civilian-military crisis management: the Civil Planning and Conduct Capability, a kind of headquarters for civilian crisis management, and the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate, which is in charge of integrated civilian-military planning.<sup>10</sup>

## *The operational phase of the CSDP began in 2003 and to date comprises 34 civilian and military operations*

The operational phase of the CSDP began in 2003 and to date comprises 34 civilian and military operations. At first, these were carried out on the basis of the first European Security Strategy (ESS), adopted in 2003, which identified five key threats: terrorism, state failure, regional conflicts, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and organized crime. Currently, six military and ten civilian operations or missions are running, with a total of around 5,000 deployed personnel. Most of these operations involve a small number of staff and are civilian in character. Eight are currently taking place in Africa, and six in Europe. Of the military operations, none are in the military high-end spectrum. The most demanding military operation in terms of size was the Bosnia and Herzegovina mission, with a deployment of 7,000 staff at times.<sup>11</sup> The most demanding operation in terms of the theater of operations was EUFOR Chad/CAR, with a force of nearly 4,000. The most demanding civilian mission (EULEX) took place in Kosovo, with up to 2,000 troops.<sup>12</sup>

The third phase started with the new EU Global Strategy (EUGS) in 2016. This replaced the ESS and is guided by five priorities: security of the Union, state and societal resilience, an integrated civilian-military approach to conflicts and crisis, cooperative regional orders, and global governance.<sup>13</sup> Other important milestones are the adoption of a roadmap for strengthening European defense capabilities (2016), the European Parliament’s call to develop a European Defence Union (2016), the adoption of a European Defence Action Plan by the European Commission in the same year, the decision to launch a

European Defence Fund (2017), the adoption of a reflection paper on the future of European defense by the European Commission, the decision to establish a permanent military headquarters for non-executive military operations, the beginning of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), initially with 17 projects, a national implementation plan with an annual review as well as a strategic review in 2021 and 2025, and the agreement to set up a program for the development of the European defense industry (2018).

### **More of a chimera than a realistic goal**

The outlined steps to develop the CSDP show two things: It is developing in steps, and it is developing slowly. The hoped-for big breakthrough leading to a European army has not happened yet. How does this aim fit with the Lisbon Treaty? Firstly, article 4 of the Lisbon Treaty states that “national security remains the sole responsibility of each Member State.” On the other hand, the treaty is designed to be flexible. Its preamble specifies the goal of “an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe.” As the goal of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), article 42 cites “the progressive framing of a common Union defence policy,” which could “lead to a common defence.” What this actually means in terms of integration remains unclear, since a common defense is conceivable with or without a European army. What political form the EU should assume is also an unanswered question. Nevertheless, there are a number of good reasons against a European army.<sup>14</sup>

With its decision of June 30, 2009 on the Lisbon Treaty, the German Federal Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*) confirmed the powers granted by Article 23 of the German Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) to take part in a European Union designed as an association of sovereign states. Conversely, it made it clear that the “Basic Law does not grant powers to bodies acting on behalf of Germany to abandon the right to self-determination of the German people in the form of Germany’s sovereignty under international law by joining a federal state.” This step is “reserved to the directly declared will of the German people alone.”<sup>15</sup> The classic finality question of the Euro-

pean Union – should the EU lead to a federal state (including an integrated army) or should it remain a *sui generis* structure in the form of an association of states – is decided de facto in favor of the second objective. Although the Court’s decision does not block the possibility of German statehood being absorbed into a European federation, the judges have set an extremely high hurdle: It would require a new constitution that expressly contains a relinquishment of sovereignty, to which the German people would have to give their direct consent.

There is another constitutional argument against a European army: back in 1994, the German Constitutional Court ruled that the *Bundestag* must give its consent before any overseas deployment of the German armed forces. The German army is a “parliamentary army” (*Parlamentsheer*) for good reason. Even if the EU were to develop into a regional system of reciprocal collective security, the Court found, any supranationalization of the decision concerning a specific deployment of the armed forces would be impermissible owing to the Basic Law’s precepts of peace and democracy. At the same time, the Court’s decision states that this “does not raise an insurmountable obstacle [...] to a technical integration of a European deployment of armed forces.”<sup>16</sup> It gives the examples of joint general staffs and the formation of joint forces.

A further counter-argument is that while the German political parties talk about the goal of a European army, this is not something that they ultimately want, at least not as an element of a European federal state. All parties have now removed this goal from their policy agendas. Notwithstanding the fact that any European army worthy of its name would really require the EU to be federal in nature, the desired military integration raises questions that German policy-makers prefer to avoid answering. Where is a more strongly communitarized CSDP supposed to lead? If a European federal state is no longer the goal, how then is the European army to be politically led? What are the consequences for the relationship with NATO? Faced with a lack of European consensus, would this army be deployable at all when it comes to the use of military force? The missing answers suggest that the call is just empty rhetoric. If it was truly meant seriously, the governing

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parties would have to give concrete answers to the questions raised above, and launch suitably ambitious initiatives.

Even if the German federal government were to seriously pursue the goal of a European army, the project would remain a chimera owing to resistance from allies. For the EU's neutral members, this route is immediately barred on constitutional grounds. While it is not a problem for them to take part in the CSDP, they do not want to give up their neutral status. They certainly do not want to be absorbed into a European federal state. The United Kingdom and France do not want this either, any more than do the central European EU members. Moreover, none of the allies want to call NATO into question, because they know that NATO and a European army are in fact mutually exclusive. A properly functioning European army would make NATO obsolete.

The partners' lack of will to build a European defense is not only a question of political voluntarism. Rather, it has its roots in the different security cultures. This is where President Macron's European intervention initiative comes in, which is located outside the EU.<sup>17</sup> Whereas the German public, based on historical experience, is highly skeptical of intervention, and the executive's corresponding scope for action is restricted by the constitutionally enshrined requirement for parliamentary approval, things are different in France. The people of France are less skeptical of intervention, and the French president has greater scope for action in security policy. In addition, the foreign policy elites have a different self-image that derives from their former world power status, their relations with former colonies, their status as a victorious power in World War II and as a nuclear power, and their national desire for independence.<sup>18</sup>

The corporative self-interest of many actors in the EU states is also opposed to the creation of a European army. Thus the national defense ministries would lose importance or even disappear entirely. This might save money, but it would generate political resistance. The same applies to significant sections of the armed forces. For many years, there has been an observable difficulty in changing the role of branches of the military in favor of overarching and integrated structures ("jointness"); this alone indicates that the obstacles are very large. Defense industry stakeholders

have little desire to share the national cake with others, either, not to mention the defense sectors that have so far been protected by the employee representatives. This corporative resistance exists in all EU states that have corresponding structures.

Even if the counter-arguments listed thus far were groundless, there are still substantial normative reasons against a European army. Wouldn't an EU with common armed forces be a classical great power, only in European guise? Wouldn't that increase the security dilemma? After all, the stronger the intervention capacities and the greater the will to intervene militarily as a world order power, the more likely it is that there will be opposing reactions. Even if there are no hegemonic intentions today, that could change over the course of time.

In light of these possibilities, central importance attaches to parliamentary control of the armed forces. How would democratic control of the military by the European Parliament be guaranteed? Certainly the requirement for parliamentary approval could not be enforced as fully as it is currently in Germany and Sweden. But even then,

### ***The partners' lack of will to build a European army is not only a question of political voluntarism. Rather, it has its roots in the different security cultures***

the EU could decide to take military action that a majority in Germany opposed. This is already unacceptable on democratic grounds. What is ultimately at stake is a decision over life and death. Thus a democratic process is required which enables critical public debate and makes bad decisions from the top less likely.

### For Europe as a force for peace

The call for a European army is unrealistic, misleading and provincial. What would really be its value in terms of peace? Yet effectiveness, efficiency and usefulness considerations are not without value. The counter-arguments set out above are not arguments against more European cooperation in security and defense policy. The EU needs its own foreign and security policy. Its members have weaknesses in their military structures, in certain capabilities, and in the coordination and consolidation of relevant areas. But these weaknesses can be addressed without a European army. Moreover, complaints about the lack of military capabilities seem somewhat overdone, considering that the member states' combined military spending is more than three times that of Russia, and the EU as a whole is the world's second biggest military power. Yet the crucial question is: What political purpose are the military capabilities supposed to serve? The call for a European Army is putting the cart before the horse. It describes more of a chimera than a vision. Better cooperation in foreign, security and defense policy should be aimed at developing not an integrated military and world power, but a Europe as a force for peace,<sup>19</sup> which leaves the decision to take part in military operations to the member states and national parliaments.

1 In 2012, eleven EU foreign ministers presented an initiative which set out, among other things, the case for a European defense policy. In addition, it noted: "For some members of the group, this could ultimately include a European army" (translated from German). Abschlussbericht der Gruppe zur Zukunft Europas, September 17, 2012. <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/626324/publicationFile/171784/120918-Ab schlussbericht-Zukunftsgruppe-Deutsch.pdf> (accessed July 18, 2018).

2 Strabenow, Michael: "Der europäische Pfeiler." In:

*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 9, 2018, p. 1.

3 Cf. German Federal Government (2016): *White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr*. Berlin, p. 139.

4 (Translated from German). Coalition agreement between CDU, CSU and SPD, 19th legislative term, p. 17. [https://www.cdu.de/system/tdf/media/dokumente/koalitionsvertrag\\_2018.pdf?file=1](https://www.cdu.de/system/tdf/media/dokumente/koalitionsvertrag_2018.pdf?file=1) (accessed July 18, 2018).

5 European Parliament: *Cost of Non-Europe Report*. (CoNE 4/2013.) Brussels 2013, p. 75.

6 Bahr, Egon (2014): "Braucht die Europäische Union eine eigenständige Sicherheitspolitik?" In: Staack, Michael/Krause, Dan (eds.): *Europa als sicherheitspolitischer Akteur*. Opladen, p. 18.

7 (Translated from German). Ehrhart, Hans-Georg (1988): *Die „deutsche Frage“ aus französischer Sicht (1981–1987)*.

Munich, p. 93. Ehrhart provides a detailed account of the process which is only outlined here.

8 (Translated from German). Solana, Javier (2000): "Die Gemeinsame Europäische Sicherheits- und Außenpolitik – Das Integrationsprojekt der nächsten Dekade." In: *Integration*, no. 1, p. 1.

9 At this time, the Petersberg tasks consisted of humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. The Lisbon Treaty added joint disarmament operations, military advice tasks, and stabilization tasks.

10 Cf. Ehrhart, Hans-Georg (2010): "Die EU als internationaler Akteur und ihr Beitrag zu einer europäischen Friedensordnung." In: Staack, Michael (ed.): *Gesamteuropäische Friedensordnung 1989–2009*. Bremen, pp. 35ff.

11 EUFOR Althea currently still has 600 staff deployed.

12 EULEX is currently operating with a force of 500.

13 European Union Global Strategy. <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-promote-citizens-interests> (accessed July 18, 2018).

14 This section is based on Ehrhart, Hans-Georg (2014): "Eine Europäische Armee: eher Chimäre als Vision!" In: *Friedensgutachten 2014*. Berlin, pp. 87–99.

15 Decision by the German Constitutional Court of June 30, 2009, paragraph 228. [https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2013/10/15/8facbcac-b236-47c8-9db3-e2199d825cfb/publishable\\_en.pdf](https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2013/10/15/8facbcac-b236-47c8-9db3-e2199d825cfb/publishable_en.pdf) (accessed October 17, 2018).

16 Ibid., paragraph 255.

17 Macron, Emmanuel: Initiative pour l'Europe, December 26, 2017. <http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/initiative-pour-l-europe-discours-d-emmanuel-macron-pour-une-europe-souveraine-unie-democratique/> (accessed July 18, 2018).

18 Cf. Ehrhart, Hans-Georg (2017): Große Ambitionen und viele Fragen: zur nationalen Verteidigungs- und Sicherheitsstrategie Frankreichs und zur Zukunft der Europäischen Verteidigung, IFSH opinion of November 15, 2017. <https://ifsh.de/news/details/of/news-1491/> (accessed July 18, 2018).

19 On this point, cf. Ehrhart, Hans-Georg (forthcoming): "Friedensmacht." In: Gießmann, Hans J./Rinke, Bernhard (eds.): *Handbuch Frieden*. Wiesbaden; Ehrhart, Hans-Georg (2011): Quo vadis, EU? Force for Peace or Military Power? ZEUS Working Paper 1. [https://ifsh.de/file-ZEUS/pdf/Ehrhart\\_The\\_EU-A\\_Force\\_for\\_Peace\\_16082011.pdf](https://ifsh.de/file-ZEUS/pdf/Ehrhart_The_EU-A_Force_for_Peace_16082011.pdf) (accessed July 18, 2018).

### The Author



Hans-Georg Ehrhart, Dr. phil., M.A., was born in 1955 and studied political science, sociology and philosophy in Bonn. He completed several research residencies, and was a senior visiting fellow at the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) in Paris (2001). From 1987 to 1989, he worked as a researcher in the security and disarmament working group at the research institute of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES). In 1989, he joined the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy (IFSH) at the University of Hamburg, where he was head of the

Center for European Peace and Security Studies (ZEUS) from 2008 until 2018. In 2018, he became a Senior Research Fellow at IFSH.

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**Author:** Sophie Lefeez

Until the end of 2017, the European Union (EU) had excluded military affairs from its scope. As they were considered as purely national matters, the EU did not have the legitimacy to develop a policy regarding the defense industry – as it had done with all the other industries. The field has experienced a big boost over the last two years, apparently with widespread enthusiasm. It raises hopes of an integrated market in armament too and of member states working together in harmony for the benefit of all. This ideal image may turn out to be mere wishful thinking as major shortcomings in the plan can be identified right now. As we shall see, commonalities are not that frequent among European member states, so sharing equipment or development tasks does not automatically lead to the expected savings. Besides, national strategic ambitions and national industrial strategies diverge. The European Commission's plan will make winners and losers at a time when some European citizens question the value of remaining in the EU in the years to come. Before exploring these two limits, we will detail how and why the Commission has crossed the defense boundary.

## How the Commission recently took up defense matters

Defense issues were only a state's matter. This was stated in article 223 of the Treaty of Rome (1957) and reinforced in article 296 of the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) and article 346 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Yet, the Maastricht Treaty opened the door to a cooperation on defense issues: "The common foreign and security policy shall include all questions relating to the security of the Union, including the progressive framing of a common defense policy, in accordance with the second subparagraph, which might lead to a common defense, should the European Council so decide" (Title V, Article 17). The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union opened the door even wider: "The Union shall have competence, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty on European Union, to define and implement a common foreign and security policy, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy." (Title 1, Article 2.4).

# LOOKING FOR STRATEGIC CONVERGENCE IN THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE INDUSTRY

## Abstract

*In her essay on the development of a Common Security and Defence Policy, Sophie Lefeez focuses on the economic arguments rather than the political reasons. High development costs for new armaments mean that even the financially strongest players are compelled to cooperate. The European Commission hopes that a consolidated European defense industry will generate significant cost savings, with a few large companies producing military equipment and weapons in appropriate quantities for all member states.*

*The author describes this idea as "wishful thinking." It is an illusion, she argues, to believe that simply assembling the best individual parts from a variety of European suppliers will yield the best end product. This technical analysis approach completely ignores the different soft skills in the various companies and the fact that armaments are not consumer products. They are highly specific products shaped by different security policy "cultures."*

*The differences between the member states and their specific needs and values are particularly evident in this field. Lefeez provides examples to show that the hoped-for economies of scale cannot be realized, or only to a much lesser extent, if ultimately each cooperation partner wants to buy a defense product that is exactly tailored to their requirements.*

*She then divides the member states into groups: the big players with a strong defense industry, including Germany and France; those with medium-sized defense firms and limited political ambitions, such as the Czech Republic, Belgium and Poland; and the neutral countries. This potentially gives rise to conflict. For example, the plan to strengthen the big companies, secure jobs and boost competition among suppliers could lead to further rifts between western and eastern member states.*

Things evolved on November 30, 2016, when the European Commission published the European Defence Action Plan. Several measures were put forward in order to support defense research and development and urge states to cooperate. The Commission was actually following up on the conclusions of the European Council and on its own communication in July 2013 entitled “Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector,”<sup>1</sup> where it had set out a range of actions to support competitiveness and encourage investment in innovation for Europe’s defense sector. As stated in the Action Plan, “the overall objective of the initiative is to contribute to ensuring that the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) remains integrated, competitive, innovative, and sufficiently broad to support these priorities and the development of the military capabilities that Member States may need to meet future security needs.”<sup>2</sup>

In June 2017, the European Commission published a reflection paper on the future of European defense where it argued that the EU had brought

### ***The goal is to have European “champions” mass-producing military equipment at lower prices thanks to economies of scale***

peace in Europe and shall take on more responsibilities: “It is time to consider concrete ambitions with respect to the future role of the Union in security and defence.”<sup>3</sup> That same month it launched the European Defence Fund (EDF)<sup>4</sup> to provide financial support, ranging from the research phase to the acquisition phase of military equipment and technologies. The EDF includes the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP), which was created to provide the European defense industry with financial support during the development phase of new products and technologies in areas selected at European level. Meanwhile the countries willing to go further seized the opportunity offered by the Treaty of Lisbon (2009) and started the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). In reality, almost every member state is part of a project under PESCO – only Malta, Denmark, and the United Kingdom are not.

Still, in June 2017, the European Council favorably welcomed the Commission’s reflection paper

and pledged its support to the measures proposed, which aim to integrate the various national defense industries (EDF, EDIDP, PESCO).

There are several reasons why the EU eventually allowed itself to intervene in the defense realm. Politically, the EU’s security situation had deteriorated significantly at the beginning of the 2010s with conflicts and crises erupting in Europe’s immediate neighbourhood. This induced European states to enter the defense field. Economically, as the Commission states, “The costs involved in developing new defence and space capabilities are so great that it is often beyond the scope of even the biggest countries to develop on their own.” This fact had been recognised by the French General Directorate for Armament (*Direction générale de l’armement – DGA*) as soon as 2009.<sup>5</sup> However, most national defense budgets have been shrinking and even the goal of investing two per cent of the GDP in defense will not provide enough resources to afford the equipment. This scissors effect “is aggravated by the persisting fragmentation of European markets which leads to unnecessary duplication of capabilities, organisations and expenditure,”<sup>6</sup> as stated by the Commission.

The goal is to have European “champions” mass-producing military equipment for the two dozen member states at lower prices thanks to economies of scale. Such champions will emerge through a restructuration of the European industrial fabric, which means some countries will lose their prime contractors and only a handful (or even one?) will remain in each sector (land, naval, and aeronautical). These prime contractors will build their products by tapping into technical bricks originating from the best firms in Europe.

The underlying belief is that the best products can be created by assembling the best components. This belief neglects the integration phase – just like the analytical principle in science, which purports that in order to solve a complex problem, it suffices to cut it in small pieces and to deal with each part separately, without giving any consideration to the integration phase.<sup>7</sup> Yet complexity rests precisely on this reintegration phase. Overlooking it may lead to bad products no matter how good the individual elements are. By encouraging big companies to select their suppliers on technical criteria only, the Commission disregards the fact that European companies speak different languages and

have different cultural habits<sup>8</sup> – in a word it disregards soft skills and their key role in making things go smoothly.

In this desired world depicted by the European Commission and supported by the European Council, some member states shall lose pieces of their defense industry and work shall be divided mainly on hard skills criteria. Not only soft skills are neglected, but the political dimension is dramatically absent of this vision, since having a defense industry is essentially a matter of sovereignty and autonomy.

### Sharing enough to share military industry?

In fact, the European Commission applies the same logic to the defense industry as it has applied to all the other industries. It does not see why it should not support this industry's competitiveness as it does with other industries. And it cannot see why making armament is different from making refrigerators or chocolate bars.

Yet armament is a specific product. It is designed only because a request has been made and its features must meet the demand – contrary to most commercial products which are supply-driven and are marketed to create the need they fulfil. The demand for armament is shaped by military culture, which is reflected in the doctrine. That is why when a piece of equipment is bought, a force does not just introduce “a piece of equipment,” but also foreign practices as the equipment embodies cultural values, and this is true for every artefact. So is it wise to only consider the economic aspect of a military cooperation?

A look at PESCO shows that among the seventeen firstly adopted projects, fourteen deal with medicine, communication and cybernetics, logistics and transport, energy, disaster relief, maritime surveillance, and training – no big strategic ambition there. One project can qualify as ambitious: it aims to enable the EU to hasten the deployment of forces in peacekeeping operations (European Union Force Crisis Response Operation Core – EUFOR CROC). But the ambition lies in the complexity of the task more than in the leadership the EU wishes to assume. One is a purely armament topic: indirect fire support. Initially rejected, it was rescued for it was the only project led by a Visegrád country.<sup>9</sup>

These facts highlight how difficult it can be to agree on collective projects in the defense realm when members are numerous.

In November 2018, seventeen new PESCO projects were adopted. Some had been discussed but were finally rejected in the first round, like the Geo-Meteorological and Oceanographic Support Coordination Element project led by Germany. Others are actually already launched, like the European Medium Altitude Long Endurance Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems.<sup>10</sup> All in all, few projects aim at filling up identified European capacity gaps (heavylift helicopters and aircraft, tankers ...).

What is more, projects with strategic ambitions do not all make economic savings. The Italian–French FREMM frigates programme enabled France to save 30 million euros, i.e. one or 1.5 per

### *The European Commission cannot see why making armament is different from making refrigerators or chocolate bars*

cent of the total cost. In a parliament hearing, Pascal Bossier, former boss of Naval Group, asserted that “the FREMM programme could undoubtedly have been realised in a purely French environment, with non-existent consequences in terms of time and infinitesimal consequences in terms of cost.” This is an extreme example because only 15 per cent of the programme content was common. It illustrates that success is not compulsory in cooperation programmes. Economies of scale can be drastically limited when specifications are too divergent (like in the A400M transport aircraft) or when versions are numerous (like the NH90 helicopter: 24 versions were developed). As a result, economic gains are lower than expected. In fact, “cooperation, especially when poorly managed, is an extra cost in itself,” notes the French National Audit Office (*Cour des comptes*) in a 2018 report on the European cooperation in armament.

Limited economies of scale should not come as a surprise since national ambitions and cultural practices are not (or not yet?) standardized among European countries. The Italian navy needs frigates mainly for coastal patrol, while the French navy has worldwide ambitions. Most countries in Europe care primarily about their own safety whereas

France and the United Kingdom maintain expeditionary forces. These differences in ambitions translate into differences in equipment. Moreover, topography and climate explain some other differences: you do not fight in snow like you fight in a desert; you do not fight in mountainous areas like you fight on a plain.

By underestimating national specificities, the European institutions are pushing a union with glowing promises of economic savings and competitiveness, assuming that a political union will stem from it, except that there is no certainty that politics originates from economics,<sup>11</sup> while it is certain that cooperating does not automatically result in economic savings.

### Diverging expectations towards the EU

The standardization in military equipment desired by European institutions – and which will pave the way to strengthened oligopolies in the defense industry – seems all the more difficult to achieve when we look at the states concerned.

Let us do a brief typology.

Firstly, there is a group of countries with powerful defense industries. These are roughly speaking the so-called Letter of Intent countries: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. They support the Commission's projects out of two interests. Politically, countries with big industries usually want to preserve their strategic autonomy, but they can no longer supply themselves on a national scale. The range of technical expertise they have to master has indeed become too wide, and the cost is too high. So, cooperating for states and becoming multinational for firms have become unavoidable. Consequently, such countries look for a secure environment and trustworthy partners to cooperate with. The EU looks like the obvious place to go – and for now they have no other place to go anyway. The Commission's project fulfills a second interest: it promises to help big companies to remain competitive, and to save jobs as a side effect. Prime companies are likely to remain prime companies since they are already major actors on a global scale, and since the project will supposedly help them find the best suppliers. With regard to SMEs, the states are probably prepared to sacrifice some of them for the sake of the prime companies'

competitiveness – as some economists publicly recommend.<sup>12</sup>

The second group is made of countries with middle-sized industries and limited political ambitions. It includes countries from central, eastern, and northern Europe. Their strategic ambitions are confined to securing their borders and supporting NATO operations. Like the first group of countries, they support their national defense industries and carry out research in science and technology to boost their GDP. Most of them would be happy to purchase exclusively from national firms and they only use foreign skills when such skills are unavailable nationally. Their prime companies have clients abroad usually – but not exclusively – on niche markets. Indeed, first group industries tend to produce high-performance products and sell them at a high price. Second group industries are more modest in technical performance and in price. Yet their products are “good enough” and have an appealing quality–cost ratio to a certain amount of states worldwide. Saab in Sweden and Aero Vodochody in the Czech Republic are examples for aircraft and Tatra Trucks is an example for land vehicles. Their equipment manufacturers export on the global market too. Some actively work for or with American companies: Sabca in Belgium, Guardtime and Milrem in Estonia, PZL Mielec in Poland, Aero Vodochody in the Czech Republic, and Nammo in Finland. Their interest in an integrated European defense industry mostly lies in the economic gains they can attain – and in this respect the American market can be as attractive.

These countries are aware that their prime companies are unlikely to become European champions tomorrow. Does this provide grounds for the first group to hasten or cause the death of second group prime companies? Or to cause their transformation into equipment manufacturers? To survive they are likely to turn their back on the European market and consolidate their market elsewhere. The Commission would have missed its goal of reducing the number of European competitors.

Due to their history, some central European countries are sceptical about the Commission's initiatives. If they see the point in achieving a division of labour within the EU, they do not understand why it cannot provide work to everyone like in the Soviet system. The economic logic spreading from western Europe brings member states into compe-

tition with one another while claiming they form a union, and they believe there is a paradox there. They are in favour of keeping minimal competition in order to avoid monopolies, and maintaining a network of subcontractors where almost everyone can find its place.

Finally, Europe includes neutral countries with a defense industry, namely Austria, Finland, and Ireland. Will the EU manage to reach its goal of an integrated European defense industry while respecting their choice of neutrality? This is not as easy as it sounds given that, as we have tried to demonstrate, economic integration must be accompanied by a common defense policy.

## Conclusion

To sum up, the integrated defense industry and market desired by the European Commission may be beneficial to a certain class of countries only, widening the gap between the western and eastern sides of the EU.

Moreover, some key issues are strangely hardly mentioned in the official documents. What about intellectual property rights? The point in having a national defense industry is to be able to rely on suppliers to provide the best equipment and spare parts during conflicts and throughout the life cycle, which is about 40 years. Long-term trust is thus key. As an interviewee told me once, "Secrecy is not a market product." And what about exports if one partner refuses to sell to a client state? When they decided to cooperate, France and Germany signed an agreement (Schmidt–Debré agreement) in 1972 where both promised not to veto an export. Yet Germany blocked a few sales for ethical reasons in 2014. Is trust strong enough already? Are ethical and political values sufficiently common to produce military equipment together?

The general feeling is that the Commission and the Council are putting the cart before the horse: they realise the economic union – and the defense union – before achieving the political union. Unfortunately, this criticism is not new.

1 European Commission (2013): Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector, COM(2013) 542 final, July 24, 2013. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX-52013DC0542&from=FR> (accessed November 7, 2018).

This communication was favourably welcomed by member states, the European Parliament, and those in the industry.

2 European Commission (2016): European Defence Action Plan, p. 2. [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016\\_grow\\_006\\_cwp\\_european\\_defence\\_action\\_plan\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016_grow_006_cwp_european_defence_action_plan_en.pdf) (accessed November 7, 2018).

3 European Commission (2017): Reflection paper on the future of European defence, p. 3. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/reflection-paper-defence\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/reflection-paper-defence_en.pdf) (accessed November 7, 2018).

4 European Commission (2017): Launching the European Defence Fund, COM(2017) 295 final. [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/launching\\_the\\_european\\_defence\\_fund.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/launching_the_european_defence_fund.pdf) (accessed November 7, 2018).

5 "The current level of European budgets and the increasing cost of weapon systems mean that no single nation in Europe, including France, has alone the size and thus the capacity to bear the cost of a defence industry able to answer all its needs." Direction générale de l'armement (DGA) (2009) : Plan stratégique pour la R&T dans la défense et la sécurité [Strategic Plan for Research & Technology in defence and security], p. 22.

6 European Commission (2016) : European Defence Action Plan, p. 2. [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016\\_grow\\_006\\_cwp\\_european\\_defence\\_action\\_plan\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016_grow_006_cwp_european_defence_action_plan_en.pdf) (accessed November 7, 2018).

7 Edgar Morin (1990) criticises the analytical principle, a principle at the basis of modern science, in his book *Introduction à la Pensée Complexe*. Paris. Book translated into English: Edgar Morin (1993): *Introduction to the complex thought. The tools to address the challenge of complexity*.

8 Edward T. Hall spent decades studying intercultural relations. See for instance (1990): *Understanding Cultural Differences: Germans, French and Americans*.

9 The Visegrád Group includes four countries from Central Europe: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia>

10 France and Germany Agree Next-Gen Fighter Design Studies, 22 November 2018. <https://defense-studies.blogspot.com/2018/11/france-and-germany-agree-next-gen.html>

11 Actually evidence tends to show it is not certain. For a historical explanation on how politics has become embedded in economics, see Polanyi, Karl (1945): *The Great Transformation*.

12 French economist Fanny Coulomb recently said in a conference that in order to get "a genuine and advanced planification, we must accept an immediate sacrifice as regards industry." Entretiens de la Défense [discussions on defence], University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, June 1, 2018.

## The Author

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# ENOUGH WORDS HAVE BEEN EXCHANGED ...

*Author:* Jörn Thiessen

Close your eyes and picture the following scenario: We have another six years of Donald Trump ahead of us – and then a really conservative president comes to power in the United States. Anyone who hasn't woken up yet may as well stay in bed. Our problem in Europe today is not the United States – we are the problem. Across the Atlantic in North America, there resides a people with whom we are and will remain closely linked on all possible levels. Except now they are led by an administration whose intentions and rhetoric are as opaque as they are disconcerting. Over here, we have the world's largest single internal market, which has now pompously decided to "take its fate into its own hands," if Chancellor Merkel is to be believed. Her words reflect the consensus of the 2014 Munich Security Conference, that Germany should assume more responsibility for foreign policy.

To well-informed Europeans, it is clear that aside from dealing with all the current transatlantic challenges, we have a duty to take a new look at ourselves. We must part with old images of who "we" are – even if, for decades, our societies have successfully hung these pictures on the walls and given them a weekly dusting. The old Europe of the Treaties of Rome no longer exists, any more than we are still a "coal and steel community." Today we are living through and shaping an agglomeration of nations. Over a period of decades, it has grown to 28 states, and is committed to further enlargement. Through deeply interwoven values, rules and the benefits of cooperation based on them, it has become – internally and externally – the world's most successful region. For the large majority of its populations, despite all their differences, peace and prosperity have become facts of everyday life. Arch enemies have become, if not friends, then dependable partners. Whether and to what extent we are also a community depends not only on the respective political points of view, but also on the specific policy area under consideration. We can however say that the military is one of Europe's most successful processes of cooperation and integration to date. The list of functioning joint projects is long. It ranges from Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and

## *Abstract*

*Jörn Thiessen's essay is a plea for an increasing integration of European armed forces, with the goal of a military union and common army. Since transatlantic relations have become completely unpredictable, and given the extraordinary success story of the European project, the author believes that the time has come for the EU to take care of its own protection "for its own motives and needs." Especially with such a relevant strategic goal, citizens could be retaught the sense and meaning of the EU project. This is all the more important at a time when the construct based on cooperation and moderation is being undermined on all sides by nationalism, populism and euroskepticism (culminating in Brexit).*

*Back in 1954, the idea of a European army failed. But now, according to Thiessen, there are numerous military and security initiatives in place that do not run contrary to the fundamental peace-orientation of the EU. Permanent Structured Cooperation, for example, has now been brought into being and is also targeted at greater interoperability. Why should this now be suddenly shelved? Ultimately, the EU is responding to the same needs and economic necessities that exist within NATO.*

*Moreover, the EU has long been involved in peacekeeping and crisis prevention missions. The new-found energy should now be used to create and jointly finance, from the bottom up, the required structures for a reality that has existed for a long time – while of course ensuring functional oversight by the European Parliament. Thiessen concludes his essay with a concrete proposal: to set up a "European Peace Corps."*

German-Dutch units to the Coordinated Annual Review of Defence (CARD) and the European Defence Fund (EDF).

But what will be the strengths tomorrow of a European Union which the British (in all likelihood) will have left, and in whose next parliament 30 to 40 percent of deputies will belong to parties either of the extreme right or the extreme left? What is the attraction of a group in which at least one member is facing proceedings due to apparent breaches of democratic and constitutional principles, and a second is already causing concern because of its judicial reforms? What values and attitudes will carry us forward in the face of Asian models of social systems and organizational structures which are evidently highly attractive, but incompatible with our principles of enlightenment, individuality and universal human rights?

It is still irritating that critics of the design and reality of the European Union often cannot avoid taking trivial details as a pretext for asserting their view that fundamentally undesirable developments are taking place. For the older generation, whose parents were wartime children, peace and prosperity are outstanding brands and outcomes of European integration. Yet for younger contemporaries, these achievements alone are quite clearly not enough to carry the Union into the future.

Anyone today who campaigns for the continuing integration process in Europe can point to the fact that the history of the Union has always been based on a complex process of developing, observing and monitoring complex sets of rules. Europe is moderation: between smaller and larger states, between richer and poorer nations, between extremely diverse regions and often divergent interests. But Europe always seeks to find solutions so that our divergent societies do not have to face urgent challenges on a sectoral, regional or national level, according to their gross national product or even individually.

The Union is small on the global scale, and it is fragmented to a high degree. The much-disussed sovereignty of individual states is a chimera. In many areas it is nothing more than a pious hope by increasingly unstable governments that emphasizing sovereignty will divert attention from their own weaknesses. Raging

nationalism is just as great a danger as individual showmen in some states, who link policy agendas with their own person so directly that institutional anchors and parliamentary foundations threaten to be swept away, or have already been lost.

In Europe, we all depend on each other. A strategy of beneficial cooperation is the only choice; there is not even the ostensible alternative of exit-

## ***Europe is moderation: between smaller and larger states, between richer and poorer nations, between extremely diverse regions and often divergent interests***

ing the Union. The mix of negotiations and wrangling with the British government is essentially aimed at leaving the old institutional framework, only to renegotiate thousands of new institutional framings. Even such a radical step does nothing to change the dependencies.

Europe as a whole loses because of Brexit. Its reputation included. In all corners and quarters. From the security point of view, it loses almost one quarter of its military capabilities and nearly 40 percent of the military-industrial base, as Christian Mölling recently noted at a conference in Washington between the German Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS) and the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies.

The Union has arrived at a historic point. For its own motives and needs, it must now increasingly provide its own external protection. This is at least as wise for its external strategy as it is existential for its inner structure, and for conveying its meaning to its citizens. Europe has to regain control over itself. To do so, it should place a few visible, plausible strategic goals at the forefront. Among these, security is of prime importance. The current Commission is active in this area like no other before it.

The EU's Global Strategy states: "The purpose, even existence, of our Union is being questioned. [...] Our wider region has become more unstable and more insecure. The crises within and beyond our borders are affecting directly our citizens' lives." Anyone who wishes to preserve and

strengthen the Union, and make it fit for the future, must ensure that its projects visibly and directly impact on its citizens' lives, just as external crises do. Only in this way can we maintain the capacity for governance, and regain it where it has already slipped away from us.

The project to create a European Army is older than the current Union. It is worth reading the German *Bundestag*'s records of proceedings from 1950, which deal with the plan by the French prime minister René Pleven to create an army under the command of a European defense minister that would also include German units. The German chancellor Adenauer agreed with the idea in principle, and called its failure the "bitterest disappointment"<sup>1</sup> of his time in office. The SDP were much more skeptical about the whole matter. The then member of parliament Lütkens stated: "[...] Europe should be a work of peace and peaceful values, if it is to be created at all, and under no circumstances can it be created as a work of military organization."<sup>2</sup>

Sixty years later, Europe has become a work of peace, and even after the failure of the European Defence Community project in 1954, it has

## ***With its initiatives, the EU is not concerned only with itself, since it is also responding to the same challenges within NATO***

achieved closer military integration than anyone could have imagined at that time. For us to continue to work on the basis of this idea is as much the right thing now as it was back then. There are many well-known European military and security initiatives: from the European Defence Fund (EDF) to the European Defence Agency, from the EU Battlegroups to the Union's military headquarters (though we are not allowed to call it that yet), from the Coordinated Annual Review of Defence (CARD) process to the closest cooperation between Germany and, for example, Belgium, Norway, the Czech Republic and Romania. All are aimed, broadly speaking, in the direction of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) by EU members, under the umbrella of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). This should gradually lead to greater interoperability, compelled not only by our common values and basic

attitudes, but also by a simple lack of resources among all European partners. Most NATO states are experiencing similar needs. With its initiatives, the EU is not concerned only with itself, since it is also responding to the same challenges within the transatlantic alliance.

PESCO currently comprises 17 projects by 25 partners. These no longer represent a small and somewhat fragmentary beginning. Topics covered by the projects include medical command, logistic hubs, military mobility and European training certification. As PESCO is implemented, the question of fulfilling commitments becomes important: Opting out is no longer possible, otherwise the entire project is at risk. France wanted less but deeper cooperation under this framework – the debate will stay with us. As will Macron's proposal to establish a European intervention force, which Chancellor Merkel has initially endorsed.

We are still a long way from a true military union, but it must come. It should consist not only of more exercises, better coordinated cyber defense, and more spending on armaments and common equipment. The next bold and prudent steps should now be taken: a common command structure, a growing common budget, a European defense commissioner, a European defense committee and the establishment of parliamentary oversight by the European Parliament (EP). There is a long list of politicians and parties whose proposals point in this direction: Kohl, Juppé, Blair, Hollande, Schäuble, Lamers, Steinmeier, Merkel, von der Leyen, Macron, Kauder, Juncker, SPD, CDU, the Greens.

There are also powerful arguments against such a move: the loss of sovereignty, different (military) constitutions, varying degrees of parliamentary control, other values and standards of professional ethics, different democratic rights for military personnel, language barriers, industrial nationalism, national identifications, the question of nuclear equipment – and this list is still not complete. Yet what Steffen Dobbert wrote is true: "EU soldiers observe, monitor, train and defend themselves in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Congo, in Georgia, in Iraq, in Moldova, in Niger, in Palestine, in Somalia and in South Sudan. [...] That's quite something for an idea that once failed."<sup>3</sup>

The German requirement for parliamentary approval cannot be transferred directly to the European Parliament. It is a German control mechanism that has proven very effective for us, and never delayed a planned deployment. Whether Europe will develop modified parliamentary oversight mechanisms will only be seen during the course of specific projects. Our European neighbors are just as much democrats as we are. They also care about the rights of the individual, which are enshrined in their constitutions too. We should not be swayed by exaggerated concerns.

We have several projects and institutions of a military nature with European involvement and also leadership: the German/Netherlands Corps, the Franco-German Brigade, the European contribution to NATO's presence in the Baltic countries, and the navy missions in the Mediterranean and off the Horn of Africa. The same is true of our experiences with the Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS), with AWACS, in the Multinational Corps Northeast and in the Eurocorps, in airspace monitoring and in joint mine countermeasures. Not all experiences have been encouraging, but overall they are steps in the right direction, toward a Europeanization of armed forces.

But what should a new defense commissioner decide on, and what should the European Parliament oversee? We do not have any pan-European troops yet, and being a king without a country is not a particularly attractive job. Let us start with a "European Peace Corps," which women and men from all European countries can enlist in directly. With the active help of the Franco-German Brigade in Müllheim, it will grow, take part in UN blue helmet missions under the mandate of the UN and EP, and demonstrate our common ideas of diplomacy, peacekeeping, prevention and international solidarity. An establishment team for the European Staff and Command College will be located there, and produce learning plans for the corps and its tasks as part of the "military Erasmus program."

Today, under the umbrella of the EU, ten civilian and six military actions are in progress, and more than 3,000 experts are available across the full spectrum of stabilization, peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities. Around 1,400 of these experts are based in Germany, at the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) in Berlin.

Broad civilian and also to a large extent military expertise exists in all EU states. It makes sense to bring this expertise into a new project at operational, tactical and strategic levels.

The EU's strategy takes a 360-degree approach to human security. It is oriented to political, military, economic, social, infrastructure and information categories. That makes it unique in the world. In this strategy, diplomacy, comprehensive security, defense, development cooperation, humanitarian aid and economic development play equal roles. A common "Peace Corps" can help to make these goals visible. A courageous step is urgently needed to establish common armed forces, following intense Europeanization of all possible areas and structures. The outlined proposal may be naive – the EU cannot currently provide any troops of its own, since their status under international law is controversial, many other hurdles may be declared impossible to overcome, and not all states want to participate. Nevertheless, words should not be followed by still more words and projects. Let us see some deeds at last.

1 (Translated from German).

2 (Translated from German). <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btp/01/01098.pdf> (accessed November 7, 2018).

3 (Translated from German). <https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2015-03/europaeische-armee-juncker-nato-russland> (accessed November 7, 2018).

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*of the German Bundestag from 2005 to 2009, on the Defense Committee.*

# EMANCIPATION WITH A SENSE OF PROPORTION

*An interview with Karl-Heinz Kamp*

**Dr. Kamp, the German defense minister talks about defense becoming more European, but remaining transatlantic. How should this be understood exactly, in concrete terms?**

The statement reflects a dual necessity: Firstly, transatlantic relations – with or without President Trump – are essential for German and European security. That is not to say that one has to agree with everything that goes on in Washington, but at the same time we should guard against anti-Americanism in our own societies. Yes, America can be difficult sometimes, but it is the only America we have.

Secondly, Europe cannot forever base its security policy on the hope that the United States will come

***Not everyone has understood that “taking our destiny into our own hands” entails considerable costs***

to the rescue when things get tough – whether in Europe or elsewhere. This is not a new realization. It predates Donald Trump’s tenure in the White House and was pointed out by many of his predecessors. Trump is just the first to get serious about calling on the allies to share more of the burden. Daddy is simply not going to keep bailing out the kids anymore – to coin a phrase. So Europe will have to pay its own way, meaning it will have to progressively develop the military capabilities that the U.S. has provided until now. That is easier said than done, and not everyone has understood that “taking our destiny into our own hands” entails considerable costs.

**One reason frequently cited for European military integration is cost efficiency. But redundancies with NATO can hardly be cost-efficient. How can they be avoided?**

Many years ago, the Americans cautioned the Europeans against double structures in NATO and the EU, because they feared not only wasting money, but also a possible decoupling of the United States from Europe. Secretary of State Albright once called this the “three Ds”: no duplication, no discrimination and no decoupling. That fear ceased a long time ago. On the contrary, the United States would be delighted if the Europeans developed more military capabilities of any kind – whether in NATO or in the EU. Of course we have to make sure in each case that we’re not re-inventing the wheel and creating things that already exist in NATO. But given that EU members generally spend little on defense, this risk is in any event manageable.

**But today the EU’s overall defense spending is already several times that of Russia. And just because we aren’t hearing warnings like we did from past American administrations, that doesn’t necessarily mean it makes sense for Europe to spend more on defense.**

Stop just there – first of all, cost comparisons with Russia tell us little unless we take the different costs and strategic situations into account. For years, Russia has spent between four and five percent of its national product on its armed forces, with its military personnel likely to receive only a fraction of the equivalent salaries in the EU. The EU spends on average 1.3 percent. Plus the government in Moscow commands one military force. In the EU, there are 28 states with massive redundancies.

Secondly, we don’t need higher military spending in Europe just because President Trump says so or because we want to be a good transatlantic partner. Armed forces, such as the *Bundeswehr*, need more money simply because they are no longer able to fulfill their responsibilities. Look at the headlines about tanks that don’t drive, helicopters that can’t fly. And it’s not just large equipment, but also night vision devices, flak jackets and so on. If politicians send men and women out to risk their lives on dangerous missions, then politicians should provide the best equipment available. That requires more money, and it has nothing to do with building up armaments or a supposed arms race.

**Security threats exist in many forms and are not always military in nature. Are there threat scenarios in which you think the EU would be better posi-**

### **tioned than NATO in terms of security policy? If so, what are they? If not, what is all of this about?**

NATO has never been an all-purpose weapon for security policy problems. In fact its scope is rather limited, namely Alliance defense, military crisis management, and partnerships with countries outside NATO for joint security measures. Those are the core functions set out in the Strategic Concept for the Alliance. They are ideal for handling the threat from Russia, for example, but are little help when it comes to migration or Islamist terrorism. The EU, in contrast, has a much broader base. In addition to its (very limited) military capabilities, it has a wide range of political and economic resources at its disposal. A good example that illustrates the different capabilities is the Ukraine crisis. NATO is building up military deterrence capacities in eastern Europe to prevent Moscow from engaging in new adventures in that region. The EU, on the other hand, is the crisis manager. It negotiated an agreement for gas supplies to the Ukraine, upholds sanctions against Moscow, and, through its European Neighbourhood Policy, it stabilizes other countries in the region so that they are not drawn into the Russian sphere of influence. This is why the idea of the “networked approach” – i.e. combining civilian and military measures – is not empty talk but a compelling necessity. The military, incidentally, are the last people to believe that military strength is all-powerful. That is a wide-spread but distorted image. Here in Germany, there is also a frequent suggestion that civilian measures for conflict resolution are morally superior to military action. That is equally untrue. Both should operate together in a useful way.

### **Let's suppose there will soon be a single EU army with common political leadership. Will we then see an EU shaped by the German culture of military restraint? Or will the EU become a liberal hawk that fills the gap left by our transatlantic NATO partners as their focus shifts?**

A single European army, led by a common European government, will probably never happen – simply because it is something that most EU members don't want. But that doesn't mean you can't create more and more European armed forces, where several countries get together and place units under mutual command. German-Dutch cooperation is an example where both sides have relinquished sovereignty, placing a Dutch general in charge of

German troops and vice versa. As a result, different military and political cultures move closer together, too. The point about a culture of military restraint in any case hardly applies to Germany anymore, otherwise we would never have become the third-largest provider of troops in Afghanistan. On the other hand, Germany will never approach military deployment in the same way as France or the United Kingdom. We have not only a different history, but also different political processes, such as parliament's strong right to a say in decision-making. The EU will always have to try to reconcile very different cultures – not just military ones. That is very difficult right now with partners like Hungary, Poland and Italy.

### **What can EU partners learn from Germany in the field of security policy, and, conversely, what could Germany learn from its EU partners?**

Cooperating in alliances, whether NATO or the EU, is a constant process of learning from each other. In the EU too, different partners contribute different skills that the others pick up: The United Kingdom – while it is still a member – is known for its pragmatism; France has a clear view of dangers south of the Mediterranean; Germany has the ability to combine different approaches and especially include the positions of “smaller” partners. At the moment, Germany could mainly learn from itself. After 2014, the grand coalition of the day not only promised more international involvement, they also showed it. Several times, Germany overcame its reluctance and stationed armed forces in eastern Europe or supplied weapons to the Peshmerga – i.e. in a crisis region. All of these actions were carried out in defiance of public opinion, simply because they were necessary. Some of this resolve is desirable today, for example if we look at the rather peculiar debate over the famous two percent military spending target.

**Dr. Kamp, thank you for this interview.**

### **Profile**

**Dr. Karl-Heinz Kamp** is President of the German Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS). After studying history and social sciences, in 1989 he became a research fellow and subsequently head of the Security Policy department at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Bonn. In 1992 he gained a PhD degree from the University of the Federal Armed Forces in Hamburg. From 2007 to 2013, he was Research Director at the NATO Defense College in Rome.



# WOULD PESCO AND A EUROPEAN ARMY MAKE ESTONIANS FEEL MORE SECURE?

## Abstract

*Viljar Veebel investigates the initial question from several points of view. Based on survey results, he notes that Estonian security circles see Russia as the main current and future threat. At the same time, in this context, NATO is perceived as the main guarantor of credible deterrence and defense.*

*When it comes to new initiatives and visions in the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy, reactions are relatively clear-cut:*

*Politicians, the military, and the public are skeptical toward the idea of a "European army"; they feel it adds no value in terms of security policy, and in any case would be difficult or impossible to implement. Interestingly, views toward PESCO are much more positive. According to the author, Permanent Structured Cooperation can expand the EU's military capabilities, for example, and it also sends a signal of effective cooperation both internally and externally (to Russia). He provides plenty of evidence for both.*

*The reasons for these different assessments are understandable, Veebel believes. Estonia (just like its neighbors Latvia and Lithuania) does not wish in any way to call NATO into question as the main security guarantor. PESCO fits better with this position than the long-term goal of a common army, which raises many questions. It is a more pragmatic approach, which is hoped to bring benefits for the country's own defense firms as well. In principle, the author argues, the Estonian public could be made more aware of the potential benefits of closer cooperation in security and defense policy – both in military terms and for integration into the EU more generally.*

*To conclude, Veebel briefly looks at reactions in Russian foreign media to both initiatives. While the European army attracted little interest, PESCO was portrayed as a senseless waste of money and a (militarily completely insufficient) provocation. This harsh criticism suggests that Russia actually feels threatened by the EU's move toward closer cooperation in security and defense.*

*Author:* Viljar Veebel

## Introduction

Based on the results of the recent survey<sup>1</sup> on security perceptions and strategic partnership across the EU member states, Estonian experts and policymakers consider Russia to be the main source of threat and instability. Even ten years ago, Estonia's large neighbour was considered to be a serious threat when Estonia was confronted with Russia's aggressive behaviour and meddling in Estonian domestic politics during the so-called Bronze Night in Estonia in 2007. The attitudes of local experts in Estonia have not changed in the meantime. Furthermore, the Russian–Georgian war in 2008 and the events in Ukraine from 2013 on have exacerbated these fears, so the same survey suggests that Russia will also remain the main source of threat and instability for Estonia over the next ten years (see Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> In this light it is not surprising that Estonians are actively searching for any possible security guarantees against Russia's aggressive ambitions to destabilize the current security environment in the former Soviet republics, retake the former territories, and delegitimize NATO if possible.<sup>3</sup>

For Estonians, but for Latvians and Lithuanians as well, the transatlantic security alliance NATO is definitely at the top of the list of these security guarantees. The transatlantic partnership is considered to be the key element and priority of Estonia's defense doctrine, which states that Estonia ensures credible deterrence and military defense through NATO's collective defense, and that national military defense capabilities form a part of NATO's collective defense.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, based on the public opinion survey from October 2017, about 74 per cent of the respondents in Estonia support the country's membership in the alliance, and about 50 per cent of the respondents are convinced that NATO would provide military assistance if a conflict broke out in Estonia. In addition, 60 per cent of the respondents consider that the positioning of a NATO combat group in Estonia enhances security in Estonia, and 39 per cent of the respondents think that the country's membership in NATO prevents military conflicts against Estonia.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the transatlantic security alliance is clearly the main security provider for Estonians, and it is definitely challenging for other security initiatives and forms of coop-

eration to beat this result and to earn the trust of Estonians to the same degree as the transatlantic collective defense alliance does.

However, two other initiatives – the launch of the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in December 2017 and Jean-Claude Juncker's proposal in March 2015 to establish a European army – have recently created some excitement among local politicians and military experts. The launch of PESCO happened during the Estonian presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2017 and was a surprise even to Estonians themselves – the initiative appeared among the country's priorities only shortly before the beginning of the Estonian EU presidency. The proposal to establish a European army coincided with the period when fears increased in Estonia because of Russia's aggressive behaviour in the aftermath of the events in Ukraine.

In the hope that both initiatives would make Estonians feel safer and more secure, it is definitely worth analysing what Estonian politicians, military experts, and the public ethically and practically think of PESCO and a European army, and what their motives are for this. In addition to that, looking at the wider context, it is intriguing to investigate what Russia might think of both initiatives.

## The Estonian perspective on a European army

Jean-Claude Juncker's proposal to establish a European army has been met by local politicians in Estonia mostly with caution and pessimism. The arguments vary from unnecessary duplication of NATO to lack of solidarity among the EU member states. For example, Estonian Prime Minister Jüri Ratas clearly states that, in his opinion, Europe does not need a separate army and that he does not support the idea of a European army. His arguments are mostly based on the idea that no competition and duplication between the EU and NATO are needed, and the only way that the EU and NATO could contribute to increased security in Europe is by boosting mutual cooperation.<sup>6</sup> Minister of Justice (former Minister of Defense) Urmas Reinsalu argues that Juncker's proposal is not a practical cooperation initiative, but a political declaration with little to offer to meet the current security needs of Estonia. He also stresses that the

formation of a European army requires the inclusion of national defense issues in the treaties, but since the latter requires a consensus between the EU member states, it would be difficult to achieve in practice. He also points to the solidarity principle in the EU, arguing that in crisis situations the EU solidarity clause could be applied already nowadays and this could be more important for Estonia than the formation of a European army.<sup>7</sup> Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the national par-

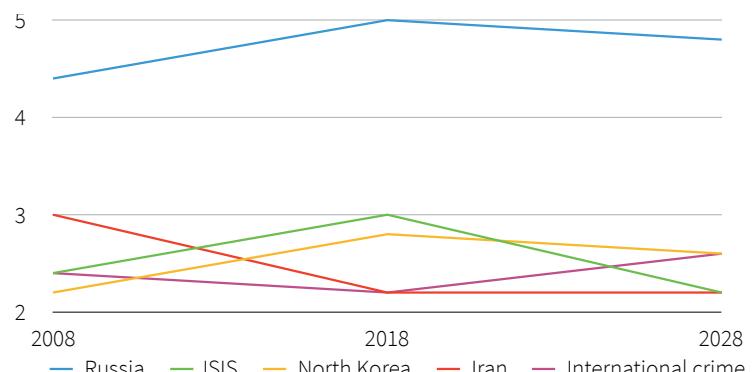


Figure 1: Estonian experts' rankings on the country's main sources of threat and instability in 2018, and their assessment on how the same threats would rank in 2008 and in 2028: the results of the ECFR survey in summer 2018 (ratings on a 1 to 5 scale, with 1 standing for "no threat at all" and 5 for "top priority threat"); see endnote 1.

liament (Riigikogu) Marko Mihkelson states that Europe's current military structure should not be reformed too easily only because of Russia's recent aggressive behaviour. He also stresses that the initiatives and activities that strengthen the role of the European allies in NATO and deepen the economic and military cooperation at the transatlantic level should be prioritized, thereby also referring to the importance of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement.<sup>8</sup> Minister of Foreign Affairs Sven Mikser calls the initiative "interesting, but with much scope for improvement,"<sup>9</sup> and Minister of Defense Jüri Luik says that the EU could not have a common European army and, if really necessary, military units should be compiled on the basis of the national defense forces of the EU member states.<sup>10</sup> At the EU level, Estonian Deputy Minister for EU Affairs during the Estonian EU presidency Matti Maasikas describes Juncker's proposal as part of the current debate on the possibilities of how to strengthen military cooperation in Europe.<sup>11</sup> However, he agrees that the security policy initiatives and concepts should be revised, considering radical changes in the security situation in Europe. One member of the European Par-

liament (MEP) from Estonia Urmas Paet (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe) is concerned about the currently inefficient use of the EU Battlegroups and financial issues. However, he also states that the EU should continue with the plan.<sup>12</sup> Overall, there is only one politician in Estonia, Estonian MEP Indrek Tarand (The Greens/European Free Alliance), who somewhat separates himself from the rather pessimistic pack and argues that a European army is “the only correct solution,” based on the argument that “European nations currently rely on the US taxpayer to fund deterrence against Russia and none of the EU nations could withstand Russian aggression alone.”<sup>13</sup> The Estonian military community’s reaction to Juncker’s proposal of establishing a European army is also rather pessi-

### *The pessimism of local politicians and military experts towards the creation of a European army seems to be shared by the general public in Estonia*

mistic. Although serving members of the Estonian military forces have avoided public comments on the idea of creating a European army, two ex-servicemen, who are considered to be opinion leaders in security and defense issues in Estonia (both are also members of the national parliament), Lieutenant General Johannes Kert and General Ants Laaneots, have made their opinion clear on this topic. Lieutenant General Johannes Kert argues that the EU’s efforts to consolidate the EU’s foreign policy, which, among other instruments includes military forces, seems to be a rational step, and that common military forces combined with EU membership in NATO would boost increased standardization, offer more optimal use of resources in Europe, and create a better operative decision-making mechanism. However, he says that the European army will only be created in the 2030s, and he puts into question the real ability of a European army to function as a tool of collective deterrence due to the lack of geostrategic advantage that NATO has over the EU.<sup>14</sup> In principle, he seriously questions the purpose for which a European army would be created. General Ants Laaneots states that the idea of creating a European army could get entangled in the different interests and demands of the EU countries. He quotes the example of Afghanistan

to show that EU countries have different demands and limits in terms of military action.<sup>15</sup>

The pessimism of local politicians and military experts towards the creation of a European army seems to be shared by the general public in Estonia.<sup>16</sup> The Eurobarometer survey from April 2017 indicates that 48 per cent of the respondents in Estonia are totally in favor of and 42 per cent totally oppose the idea of the creation of a European army. Interestingly, this result is the lowest among the Baltic countries – the results in Lithuania were 71 per cent and 25 per cent and in Latvia 59 per cent and 36 per cent respectively.<sup>17</sup> However this should not be translated as a lack of consensus among the Baltic States that NATO is currently seen as the key actor for safeguarding regional security and stability, but rather as the testimony that Latvians and Lithuanians have much more faith in the European army initiative than Estonians have.

The public attitude in Estonia towards a European army has not changed much over time – a similar survey from early 2014 showed that 47 per cent of the respondents in Estonia were totally in favor of and 44 per cent totally opposed the idea of creating a European army.<sup>18</sup>

### **What about PESCO?**

Contrary to the mostly pessimistic attitude towards the creation of a European army, Estonians seem to be very optimistic as far as the PESCO initiative is concerned. The importance of this initiative has been stressed by both local leading politicians and representatives of the military forces. Estonian Prime Minister Jüri Ratas calls PESCO first and foremost a “fundamental step,” which shows that 25 countries are focused on closer cooperation in the area of security and defense, and are committed to increasing national defense expenditures and improving national defense capabilities. Furthermore, he particularly highlights the so-called “military Schengen” project (or, to use his expression, the “tanks’ Schengen”) as a cooperation area with very high potential, as it would allow moving military equipment from one EU country to other EU member states.<sup>19</sup> Estonian Minister of Defense Jüri Luik stresses both the political importance and practical value of PESCO. On the one hand, he sees PESCO as a political “umbrella” or a cooperation form, which would send a clear signal to both the

EU member states and Russia that the EU is highly interested in joint activities of the EU member states in the defense area, and that the EU is willing to take joint political, defense-related, and financial actions to strengthen this cooperation. In this light, he also stresses that PESCO is an example of the viability of the EU, not focusing on just other problems or crises, but on the future and positive ideas. On the other hand, Jüri Luik points out that PESCO has a very practical side not only in the form of joint projects but also thanks to the possibility that countries like Norway and the UK could participate in these projects, which would definitely be in Estonia's best interests.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the commander of the Estonian armed forces General Rihh Terras strongly stresses military aspects of PESCO, saying that joint projects in the PESCO framework are focused on developing the newest and most innovative defense solutions, which would strengthen operational capabilities of the EU, and that PESCO helps to realize the huge potential of the EU in the defense area and strengthen the European "pillar" in NATO. In addition to the so-called "military Schengen" project, he also mentions four projects Estonia is interested in as an observer, such as the projects of underwater drones or underwater robots, the project of communication systems in the form of new digital information exchange, the project of maritime surveillance, and the cyber project.<sup>21</sup> The opportunity to develop innovative solutions in the PESCO framework has been also stressed by Jüri Luik, who mentioned that Estonia has submitted an innovative project in unmanned ground systems, and that the most influential countries like Germany and France were interested in it. He also pointed out that it is important to be flexible in involving third countries when developing smart and innovative defense technologies and to support cross-border activity of small and medium-sized businesses.<sup>22</sup>

## A fundamental choice

It is intriguing that the PESCO initiative, which is more defense-oriented, seems to be popular in Estonia, but the idea of creating a European army, which is more deterrence-oriented, generates uncertainty and hesitation among local politicians, military experts, and the public. This phenomenon may most likely be rooted in two aspects: firstly

practical considerations and secondly the mentality not to call into question the role of the transatlantic security alliance NATO in the current security environment.

So, on the one hand, Estonia's decision to join PESCO seems to be a purely rational choice, which allows the country to reduce its vulnerabilities and to use its advantages like technological knowledge. For example, Estonian Minister of Defense Jüri Luik has also publicly stated that the PESCO initiative is very useful for the Estonian defense industry, which

## *The somewhat lukewarm reaction in Estonia to the idea of creating a European army seems to be a first instinctive reaction to "protect" the alliance*

has focused on robotics, cyber security and communication, and on developing modern technological solutions in general.<sup>23</sup>

However, on the other hand, the decision to favor PESCO over a European army seems to be a fundamental choice in Estonia. In principle, the Estonian political and military community seems to be convinced that NATO membership and the idea of collective defense and solidarity of the alliance should not be questioned and even debated. Even the most radical political party in the Estonian parliament, the Conservative People's Party of Estonia (EKRE), has never questioned the country's membership in the alliance and NATO's role in protecting Estonia. In this light, the mostly cautious or pessimistic reactions of Estonian politicians to the idea that could potentially duplicate the aims and structures of NATO are somewhat understandable. So the somewhat lukewarm reaction in Estonia to the idea of creating a European army seems to be a first instinctive reaction to "protect" the alliance.

## A real chance – and a real threat?

Overall, it is clear that the current developments in the EU of moving towards closer cooperation in the area of security and defense are in the best interests of Estonia. This makes the European Union stronger in military terms and increases security of the European citizens, which means that the security of the Estonian population will also be increased. The same applies to the establishment of the European Defence Fund, which, in essence, should generate "more collective defense" also for Estonia.

Some Estonian experts have also suggested that the topics which are relevant in the EU today also overlap Estonia's priorities such as practical considerations, proactivity, far-sightedness, and coverage with real resources.<sup>24</sup> This means that Estonia's interests should be in principle well-represented in the EU in the area of security and defense.

## *The current developments in the EU of moving towards closer cooperation in the area of security and defense are in the best interests of Estonia*

However, to a certain extent, what Estonians are lacking today is the “bigger picture,” the sense of “being European.” As already mentioned, some local politicians in Estonia have highlighted the importance of PESCO as an initiative that reflects the commitment of 25 countries to move towards closer cooperation in the area of security and defense and to improve both national and collective defense capabilities. At the same time, the opposing positions as far as a European army and PESCO are concerned give an indication that Estonians may not fully sense the importance and the potential of the closer cooperation in the area of security and defense in the EU today, and react instinctively and, without further consideration, negatively to the initiatives that might potentially overlap the aims and activities of NATO. Only after the direct contact point with the alliance is discovered (e.g. that PESCO could strengthen the “European pillar” in NATO), the attitude changes. However, the EU as a whole should also not ignore the fact that part of the skepticism in Estonia might be related to the issue that the usefulness of increased defense and security cooperation in Europe is currently praised by the same people who argued ten years ago that cooperation in the EU in the area of security and defense is needed only when NATO fails to provide security guarantees, and, until then, there is no need to waste resources for duplication.

Last but not least, it is definitely intriguing to analyse what Russia thinks of both initiatives. One way to understand it would be to look at the Russian-minded Estonian-language media. While Jean-Claude Juncker's idea some years ago to create a European army has not generated strong (neither positive nor negative) emotions in the Rus-

sian-minded media in Estonia, the recent PESCO initiative has already gained some attention. Pursuant to Russia's attempts to spread disinformation, the reaction was, according to expectations, negative and derogatory. To quote a news article published in *Sputnik*, the Russian government-funded media outlet, in November 2017, the new European military initiative is fully irrational in its essence, is directly oriented against Russia, and is a priori predestined to fail unless it had already been realized in the last century. Furthermore, the newspaper argues that it is obvious that the military union of the EU without the support of NATO is unable to confront Russia's military capabilities anyway, and that PESCO will just be a new instrument to take money away from the EU member states. To conclude, the newspaper quotes Sir Christopher Meyer in that “pigs will fly before the EU creates an army.”<sup>25</sup>

The official tone and the message of this Russian news article are obviously clear. However, the entirely different matter is what Europeans could take from this message. Since Moscow reacts only on topics it feels seriously offended by, it might be the case that when developing closer cooperation in the area of security and defense, the EU has revealed one of Russia's vulnerabilities.

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8 Veskiöja, Risto (2015): Mihkelson Junckeri EL-i ühisarme plaanist: täanast Euroopa julgeolekuarhitektuuri ei tohiks kergekäeliselt muuta [Mihkelson about Juncker's plan: the current security structure in Europe should not be adopted easily and casually] (available only in Estonian). <http://www.delfi.ee/news/paevauudised/eesti/mihkelson-junckeri-el-i-uhisarme-plaanist-tanast-euroopa-julgeolekuarhitektuuri-ei-tohiks-kergekaeliselt-muuta?id=70968709> (accessed September 11, 2018).

9 See footnote 6.

10 Kressa, Kaarel (2017): Intervjuu: Kaitseminister Jüri Luik: uus Euroopa kaitsekoostöö on kasulik nii Eesti julgeolekule kui meie firmadele [Interview: Minister of Defence Jüri Luik: new defence cooperation in Europe is useful for national security and for local companies] (available only in Estonian). <http://www.delfi.ee/news/paevauudised/valismaa/intervjuu-kaitseminister-juri-luik-uus-euroopa-kaitsekoostoo-on-kasulik-nii-eesti-julgeolekule-kui-meie-firmadele?id=80456098> (accessed September 12, 2018).

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15 See footnote 12.

16 As a remark, publicly available media debates were practically missing in Estonia, being limited only to several rather skeptical headlines, and mostly focused on the question of why we restrict ourselves only to the European common military forces while knowing that a much wider and fully functioning transatlantic security network already exists.

17 European Commission (2017): Special Eurobarometer 461. Designing Europe's future: Security and Defence, p. 21. [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjx\\_fu2gtjdAhXFWSwKHD39CGAQFjAAegQI-CRAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fec.europa.eu%2Fcommfrontoffice%2Fpublicopinion%2Findex.cfm%2FResultDoc%2Fdownload%2FDocument-Ky%2F78778&usg=AQvVaw1lhKu4inLAK7xi7hTJpo8z](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjx_fu2gtjdAhXFWSwKHD39CGAQFjAAegQI-CRAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fec.europa.eu%2Fcommfrontoffice%2Fpublicopinion%2Findex.cfm%2FResultDoc%2Fdownload%2FDocument-Ky%2F78778&usg=AQvVaw1lhKu4inLAK7xi7hTJpo8z) (accessed September 20, 2018).

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413: Future of Europe (Report), p. 30. [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_413\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_413_en.pdf) (accessed September 30, 2018).

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20 See footnote 9.

21 ERR (2017): Terras: PESCO teeb EL-i sõjaliselt tugevamaks [Terras: PESCO makes EL military stronger] (available only in Estonian). <https://www.err.ee/648797/terrass-pesco-teeb-el-i-sojaliselt-tugevamaks> (accessed September 20, 2018).

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24 Uibo, Lembit (2017): Missuguse näoga on Euroopa Liidu kaitsealane koostöö [What does the EU cooperation in the area of security and defence look like] (available only in Estonian). <https://diplomaatia.ee/missuguse-naoga-on-euroopa-liidu-kaitsealane-koostoo/> (accessed December 12, 2017).

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# JUST ANOTHER USELESS SECURITY INITIATIVE?

## RUSSIA'S PERCEPTION OF PESCO

### *Abstract*

*Maxim Kuzmin is unimpressed with the media attention surrounding PESCO. He calmly points out that it is not about creating a European army. Rather, the main goal is improved military cooperation, the joint use of existing or future capabilities, and increased mobility within the EU. The EU's many reasons for establishing PESCO have not gone unnoticed in Russia: a changed security environment due to cyber threats or migration flows, the unpredictable behavior of a NATO partner – the United States – under President Trump and the significant foreign policy and military weakening of the EU due to Brexit. Nevertheless, the author sees the change in Russian foreign policy since the 2008 war in Georgia, which culminated in the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine, as the principal motive.*

*So far, according to Kuzmin, the few statements made by Russian politicians and researchers about PESCO suggest that they interpret it as another ineffective attempt to make Europe militarily stronger. As the author says, ever since the Cold War era, Russia has seen U.S.-dominated NATO as its main rival, not Europe. This thinking now prevails again; the increasingly authoritarian and centrally governed country is pursuing military strength and power politics. Europe is not currently perceived as a military threat – with or without PESCO. However, Russian security policymakers are paying greater attention to the EU's soft power attempts to spread democracy and liberal values – which Russia opposes with a certain vehemence.*

*A siege mentality has currently taken hold. Consequently the Russian government will be induced to react if PESCO also leads to a strengthening of NATO. The main fear then would be that Russia might step up its efforts to split the EU. There are plenty of avenues of attack – from commodity dependence to supporting anti-EU parties and politicians. In the author's opinion, the EU should not underestimate this threat.*

**Author:** Maxim Kuzmin

In November 2017, the abbreviation PESCO hit the headlines of European and American newspapers. 23 of the European Union (EU) Member States initiated Permanent European Structured Cooperation or PESCO (later the number of participants rose to 25). This act of deepening security and defense integration in the EU caused a totally polar reaction – from highly positive to highly critical – both inside and outside the EU. It is definitely going to influence the EU's relations with key security players on the European continent, particularly the Russian Federation. In spite of the fact that modern Russia does not have even a fraction of the influence of its predecessor, the Soviet Union, it still has some levers of influence on EU member states. Moreover, recent Russian security policy toward the EU has been far from friendly. That is why Russia's perception of PESCO is an issue of a great research interest and political importance.

### **From a Russian perspective: What is PESCO?**

To figure out some critical points in this discussion, it is necessary to understand clearly what PESCO represents at the moment and why the EU member states decided to call it to life now.

PESCO was incorporated into the Treaty on European Union in 2009 (Art. 42 (6)), where it is described as a possible security initiative for member states whose military capabilities fulfill higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments to one another in the area of defense.<sup>1</sup> It is specified in Protocol 10 to the Treaty. In the Notification on PESCO to the European Council,<sup>2</sup> it is explained that PESCO has the following goals:

- increasing joint and collaborative defense projects;
- creating a defense information center which can be accessed only by PESCO members;
- developing cooperation in the sphere of cyber security;
- considering the joint use of existing capacities;
- developing common technical and operational forces which are necessary for

cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);

- simplifying cross-border transport in the EU

As we can see, PESCO is not a project to build up a European army as some EU and national officials have called for. In fact, having initiated PESCO, some of the EU member states just agreed to deploy, train and fund military forces together and reduce inter-state bureaucracy when it comes to military transportation.

However, the initiation of PESCO gained totally contradictory receptions even inside the EU. While the EU High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, called this move “historic”,<sup>3</sup> EU integration specialist Dr. Nick Whitney, in turn, described it as a “squib”.<sup>4</sup> Some EU members expressed their concern that PESCO might be one more step towards the dominance of Germany and France in the EU. And some others, like the United Kingdom, Malta and Denmark, refused to participate.

## How PESCO came to life

As mentioned earlier, PESCO was incorporated in 2009 but first initiated only in 2017. In our view, there may be several reasons for this delay:

To start with, the term “Europe” has been associated with peace and security for a rather long period. For many decades, since the Second World War, the European continent has not seen any violent border change. Of course, the existence of Europe was not unshadowed during that time because Europe was a “border” between two poles of the Cold War. But meanwhile it could enjoy the military “umbrella” of the United States. After the Cold War was over and the conflicts caused by the collapse of communism seemed to have been relatively overcome – though it is questionable at what price and to what extent from the EU side – the EU enjoyed a period of relative peace inside and near its external borders. The European security structures (both NATO and the CSDP) have been often criticized for taking too much money from member states’ budgets. Indeed, NATO during the Cold War era was a counterweight to the Soviet military threat, but the USSR didn’t exist anymore and Russia didn’t seem to be a

menace. The situation changed dramatically several years ago.

Firstly, European security had to face totally new kinds of security threats, such as hybrid wars and interference in the cyber security sphere. The refugee crisis caused by the conflicts in the Middle East directly affected EU member states, which became one of the main destinations for Syrian refugees. This in turn called into question the continued existence of the European project itself and its freedoms (mainly the freedom of movement and open borders).

The second reason why PESCO was called to life at this particular moment is the change in United States foreign policy, or the threat from

## *The initiation of PESCO gained totally contradictory receptions even inside the EU*

the U.S. administration to make this change. The thing is that the U.S. and NATO have always played a significant role in European security. Even when the EU’s own security and defense structure was established in 1998, to our mind one of the main goals of this act was to convince the U.S. that the united Europe could be a reliable security partner. Although the U.S. had demanded increased engagement in its own security issues for years, the EU security stance changed dramatically when President Trump entered office in 2016. Trump, a highly successful businessman and extremely eccentric public figure, is known for his political unpredictability and personal views that have often attracted criticism from the United States’ main international allies. Thus he is often heard attacking the EU in particular and the liberal state order as a whole. One of his main bones of contention with the EU is the accusation that the EU member states fall short of NATO spending goals. The U.S. President demanded that they spend more on defense, and threatened to concentrate on American domestic security issues (“America first”).

In addition, Trump is often blamed for his reluctance to speak openly about Russia’s undemocratic behavior under Vladimir Putin. Therefore some EU members, primarily those

countries which have a memory of living under socialism, expressed their concerns that the new US administration underestimates the menace stemming from Russia. This will be discussed in more detail later.

Thirdly, there is the issue of Brexit or Britain's withdrawal from the EU. The process of leaving a union that has reached an unprecedented level of integration will be a difficult and complicated one. It is going to influence all spheres of relations between the United Kingdom and the EU, including the sphere of EU security and defense.

Although European security after Brexit is not so widely discussed in the public debate, it must be taken into account that the United Kingdom is a nuclear state with a permanent

to NATO and to transatlantic cooperation. The most important concern of Southern European countries, in turn, is an unstable political situation in the Middle East and North Africa. Countries of Western Europe (especially those participating in the anti-ISIS coalition) fear international terrorism and radicalization of the youth and, unlike their Eastern European partners, often call for the maintenance of dialog with Russia. PESCO can be described as an attempt to bring all these security stances under a common denominator.

Finally, the last but probably most important reason for initiating PESCO is Russia's recent foreign policy. This brings us close to the main question of the essay.

As mentioned above, the Russian Federation, legal successor to the USSR after its collapse, did not seem to be a threat to European security, in spite of the fact that since the early 2000s Russia had been losing more and more features of a democratic state. During this period, Russia experienced an increase in human rights violations and corruption, the concentration of power in the hands of one party, the strangulation of freedom of speech and assembly, and an increase in aggressive military rhetoric. However, all of that traditionally remains a matter of internal policy, and the EU member states were not so eager to spoil diplomatic relations with their main natural resource supplier over the latter's domestic issues. As far as its foreign policy is concerned, in 2008 Russia was involved in the war in Georgia, but the EU and U.S. preferred not to overreact. Remember that former U.S. President Barack Obama, whose first term in office also started in 2008, announced his famous but eventually unsuccessful "reset policy" right after the war in Georgia.

In 2014, Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula and started supporting separatists in eastern Ukraine, which led to a long military conflict close to the EU's borders, with thousands of victims. The annexation and Russia's subsequent actions were not simply a violation of international law, but an act of aggression by a nuclear state with a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council against a much smaller country which, besides, had to deal with an unstable political situation at the

## *Brexit is going to influence the defense of the European Union to a significant extent*

seat on the United Nations Security Council, impressive military capacities, worldwide diplomatic influence through the Commonwealth, and one of the best intelligence services in the world. Brexit is going to influence the defense of the EU to a significant extent. The EU is losing a member which played the role of a "bridge" between the EU and the U.S. in security issues due to its "special relationship" with the latter, and a country which was one of the founders of the European Security and Defence Policy in 1998. In her speech during the G7 meeting in July 2017, German Chancellor Angela Merkel remarked: "the times when we could fully rely on others are over"<sup>5</sup> hinting at the rhetoric of Donald Trump and Brexit.

Fourthly, the EU member states differ significantly. They all have different geographical positions, GDPs, histories and, as the EU Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence puts it, "there have historically been differences in threat perceptions."<sup>6</sup> The Baltic states and some Eastern European countries, which have the memory of living under a totalitarian regime, see their main threat in the policy of the Russian Federation – hence their loyalty

time. Explaining its actions, Russia proclaimed it was going to protect the interests of Russians “no matter where they live,” and the EU countries, especially those which are close to Russia geographically (like Poland and Romania) and those having large Russian diasporas (the Baltic states), could not feel safe anymore.

## Russian fears

So Russia was one of the main reasons why the EU members initiated PESCO. But how did Russia react to it? Does Russia regard PESCO as a threat, like many other Western security initiatives? This question is worth examining on several levels. The first one is of course the statements of government officials who represent the “official” point of view (which always refers directly to the government if we speak about Russia), then scientific discourse, and finally opinions of Russian experts and political journalists.

Pursuing this question, it turns out that Russia’s authorities have not made so many statements on PESCO. The only official who commented PESCO was Russia’s envoy to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov. In his interview to the Sputnik news agency, which in Europe and the U.S. has the reputation of being the Kremlin’s propaganda tool, he stated: “It is probably a little bit early to speak about the prospects of this co-operation [...]. We will see how it will be implemented. I think implementing PESCO will take some time. I think they [the EU] will continue doing what was de facto happening within the European Defence Agency.” The envoy then reflects on the diversity of the EU and the possible boost that PESCO might give to investment in the EU defense industry. As we can see, there is not even a hint that PESCO may be dangerous for Russia; the interview itself looks more like the opinion of a disinterested political theorist rather than a government official.

As has already been said, PESCO was firstly initiated in 2017 and, as at October 2018, the Russian scientific literature had not offered a stance on PESCO. This may not be unusual, since significant political events usually develop quickly, and scientific literature does not manage to keep up with coverage. Besides the

scientific realm it is necessary to mention that even though the start of PESCO dominated the front pages of European and American newspapers, it received very modest media coverage in Russia. However, some Russian political scientists accurately expressed their views in some press publications. Some of them joked that from the Western European Union in 1954 onward, there had already been a lot of attempts to create a defense organization for the EU, but none of them worked out. Some underlined that the EU already has its own defense structure, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), so, even if the military effectiveness of the CSDP could be called into question, why would it need another one?

Russian political journalists went further. The far-right Russian press has a tendency to see “America’s hand” everywhere. (It is necessary to remember that mass media in Russia is

## *Splitting the transatlantic defense partnership is the long-time dream of many international relations experts in Russia*

to a rather high extent controlled by the government, with the exception of small regional and some federal newspapers, but the Russian government is much more tolerant toward the far-right press than toward the liberal press.) It insisted that PESCO was initiated against Russia under pressure from the United States, highlighting the words of Jens Stoltenberg who said that NATO should be able to use future PESCO capacities. Others expressed their pleasure at the fact that the EU had started to drift further from the U.S. on security issues: Splitting the transatlantic defense partnership is the long-time dream of many international relations experts in Russia.

While discussing the views of officials and political observers, we shouldn’t forget that there is another level of interest, namely in Russian society. There is no research available on how people in Russia perceive PESCO, but we can examine an opinion poll which recorded the attitudes of Russians to the EU. A poll conducted by the independent Levada-Center in 2017

showed that it is almost as bad as their attitude towards the United States: 60 percent of Russians regard the U.S. as a threat, and the EU – 54 percent.<sup>8</sup> Thus it is very important to understand that the majority of Russians perceive the EU as an enemy. However, Russia traditionally felt that the U.S. posed a much bigger threat to its security than Europe. This was influenced at first by Soviet propaganda. The term “Europe” did not cause a negative reaction in the Soviet Union, as almost half of Europe was “socialistic” and therefore could not be an enemy. During the Cold War, the role of the main enemy belonged to the United States.

Russia has seen different periods of post-Soviet international and security thinking. Right after the collapse of the USSR, Russia was ready to cooperate with the West. During his first

## ***Russian authorities rely very much on military force, and since 2008, they have spent an enormous amount of money on military modernization***

term in office, even President Putin was eager to help the United States in its war against international terrorism, hoping that in return the U.S. would turn a blind eye as Russia became a corrupt authoritarian state. When this strategy proved unsuccessful, President Putin refused to be cooperative. Nowadays the decision-making of the highest Russian officials responsible for foreign policy is again dominated by Cold War thinking, which assigns the central role to President Putin. According to the Russian Constitution, in the Russian Federation the President possesses significant political power and can only be controlled to a limited extent by parliament – the State Duma. Taking into account that modern Russia does not have a democratic division of powers and the legislative branch is totally controlled by the executive, it becomes clear that there are hardly any checks and balances on President Putin’s power. Typically for authoritarian regimes, foreign policy decision-making is concentrated around the head of state. Thus the Russian authorities rely very much on military force, and since 2008, when

the above-mentioned war in Georgia revealed severe shortcomings in the Russian army, they have spent an enormous amount of money on military modernization. If we refer to the terms of international relations theory, they act totally in accordance with classical political realism.

Consequently, the EU’s reluctance to use military power and its adherence to human rights, democratic freedoms and tolerance have made it extremely weak in Russia’s eyes. Besides, the security policy of the biggest EU countries does not make the EU a menace from Russia’s point of view. France, one of the motors of European integration, left NATO under President de Gaulle and returned to the organization only under Nicolas Sarkozy in 2007. Germany has traditionally been reluctant to use the Bundeswehr abroad. The United Kingdom is set to leave the EU. Thus Russia does not regard the EU as a direct military threat, and will not regard PESCO as one either. However, there is a concern that NATO might use PESCO logistics and capacities. In Cold War thinking, NATO is again associated with the main enemy, i.e. with the United States. While the EU is presented in Russian media as a weak and bureaucratic organization which cannot protect its own borders and is too divided to act quickly, NATO is described as an aggressive military bloc slowly approaching Russian borders in order to restrict the country’s sovereignty and obtain its natural resources. That is why Russia might fear that PESCO might strengthen NATO.

However, Russia is aware of the EU’s influence as a soft power – free elections, anti-corruption, democratization, human rights, the values which the EU institutions call for, are definitely not on the list of topics advocated by the Russian authorities. Moreover, in accordance with the prevailing Cold War thinking, the world is still divided into spheres of influence, which brings us back to the concepts of political realism. Russia consequently regards the former Soviet republics as its own “back yard”. That is why it reacted so harshly to the EU’s Eastern Partnership initiative, which includes the former Soviet republics Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Azerbaijan. These countries were traditionally less loyal to Russia’s foreign cause (it is important to remember that Russia’s ag-

gression in Ukraine started with Ukraine's intention to sign an associate treaty with the EU). But also Belarus and Armenia, which are usually considered to be among Russia's most important allies in the post-Soviet space, were interested in building some partnership with the EU. When this project was initiated, the Russian foreign minister Sergej Lavrov stated that the Eastern Partnership represented an attempt to "pull countries from the positions they want to take as sovereign states."<sup>9</sup>

## A look into the future

It is almost impossible to predict political events, but we can get some idea with the help of basic scenario planning. There are three different potential outcomes. In any case, Russia's actions towards PESCO will certainly depend on its future development. In scenario number one, PESCO would turn out to be a paper tiger and would not yield any major results. This possibility would certainly be the most favorable for Russia, which would maintain the status quo in its security policy toward the EU.

Scenario number two includes further development of PESCO and strong cooperation between PESCO and NATO. This would be the worst outcome for Russia, the one Russian authorities are most afraid of.

In that case Russia might strengthen its policy directed at splitting the EU and particularly the EU military cooperation with the USA. There are already some fearsome signs that Russia is going to act exactly this way - in November 2018 Russian President Vladimir Putin unexpectedly expressed his support to the plan of the European army suggested by French President Emmanuel Macron. "Europe is...a powerful economic union and it is only natural that they want to be independent...and sovereign in the field of defence and security"<sup>10</sup>, Putin remarked. The statement attracted severe criticism from Donald Trump but is well within the concept of a multipolar world that is not dominated by the USA. This has been advocated by Putin since the beginning of the 2000s. It is clear that the Russian president's issue of concern is not the successful defense of the EU. He is looking forward to Europe possibly moving further away from the USA on military issues.

Besides, Russia seems to have many levers of influence on the EU countries – oil and gas supplies for example, but economic partnership which is currently suppressed by sanctions but still not killed off. Besides, there are some pro-Russian EU state leaders like Hungarian President Viktor Orbán or Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte. Large Russian diasporas in some EU countries – primarily in the Baltic states – can also be used by Russia as a tool to influence the internal and external policy of these states. Russia might also resort to financing anti-EU parties – the support given to Marine Le Pen's Front National in France being the most obvious example – or deploy its agents in EU countries in order to destabilize the political situation. The recent spy scandal, which came to light after the attempted poisoning of a former Russian spy in the United Kingdom, demonstrates that these concerns are not at all groundless. The fact that the EU is divided, with different EU member states having different security positions, plays into the hands of the Russian authorities. All of this makes Russia an important security threat for the EU, which should be taken into account when planning defense strategies.

The third scenario is that PESCO would not correspond strongly with NATO but will be developed by its members as an independent EU security structure. That might be less dangerous for the Russian authorities than the second scenario because, as mentioned above,

***The fact that the EU is divided, with different member states having different security positions, plays into the hands of the Russian authorities***

they do not perceive the EU as a significant defense and security structure. But also in this case, Russian authorities might channel their efforts toward destabilizing PESCO, at least through propaganda. The EU member states should not underestimate this threat.

Anyone who wants to understand the direction of current security thinking by the Russian authorities will find the following quotation

revealing: “We should work on the realization of three mega projects. These are: building new nuclear weapons, strengthening the army, and protecting the population from influence on their conscience from outside. There is a war against Russia. We must unite ourselves and stand against our outside enemy.”<sup>11</sup> It is not hard to imagine a Soviet party functionary during the Cold War uttering exactly the same words – and we have to keep in mind that they were spoken by Alexander Beglov, the temporal governor of the second biggest Russian city, Saint Petersburg, an official who does not seem to be deeply involved in the state’s foreign policy. Unfortunately they demonstrate the “fashionable” way of thinking among a big part of Russian society today.

1 The consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, 2012, p. 37.

2 See <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31511/171113-pesco-notification.pdf> (accessed October 10, 2018).

3 Mogherini, Federica, 2017: A historic day for the European Union. <http://www.federicamogherini.net/historic-day-pesco/?lang=en> (accessed October 19, 2018).

4 Whitney Nick, 2017: EU efforts miss the open goal again. [https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary\\_eu\\_defence\\_efforts\\_miss\\_the\\_open\\_goal\\_again](https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_eu_defence_efforts_miss_the_open_goal_again) (accessed October 21, 2018).

5 (Translated from German). Soboczynski, Adam (2017): Merkel: Die Zeiten, in denen wir uns auf andere völlig verlassen konnten, die sind ein Stück vorbei. <https://www.zeit.de/2017/23/angela-merkel-rhetorik-deutschland-usa> (accessed October 20, 2018).

6 European Commission (2017): Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence, p. 11.

7 EU to Optimize Defense Industry for Its Own Manufacturers – Russian Envoy. <https://sputniknews.com/europe/201711211059296791-eu-defense-industry/> (accessed October 21, 2018).

8 Отношение россиян к США и Евросоюзу ухудшается [The attitude of Russians towards the USA and the EU is getting worse]. <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/news/2017/12/18/745582-otnoshenie-rossiyan> (accessed October 21, 2018).

9 Pop, Valentina (2009): EU expanding its ‘sphere of influence,’ Russia says. <https://euobserver.com/foreign/27827> (accessed October 21, 2018).

10 Putin’s positive on Macron’s European army plan blashed by Trump. <https://www.rt.com/news/443677-putin-macron-army-europe-trump/> (accessed on November 11, 2018)

11 Казак с партийным опытом [A Cossack with Party Experience] <https://www.rbc.ru/newspaper/2018/10/09/5bbb09a69a79477c8982bde9> (accessed October 21, 2018).

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**CARD – Coordinated Annual Review on Defence**

Voluntary process to synchronize the defense efforts of individual EU Member States within the EUMS for the purpose of transparent capability planning.

**EDA – European Defence Agency**

Agency to the Council of the EU. Founded in 2004 to assist the EU Council and individual Member States in the development and implementation of the European Security and Defence Policy.

**EDF – European Defence Fund**

European Funds to support and enhance national defense research and development.

**EDIDP – European Defence Industrial Development Programme**

Program to enhance the global competitiveness and innovation of the technological and industrial base of European defense.

**ESDP – European Security and Defence Policy**

First recorded in the Treaty of Nice in 2001, finally renamed the CSDP in 2009 by the Treaty of Lisbon.

**EUFOR CROC – EUFOR Crisis Response Operation Core**

Flagship project of the first PESCO projects. It should not lead to the provision of standing troops, but rather to core elements for intervention forces that improve and accelerate the EU's crisis response capabilities.

**EUGS – Global strategy for the foreign and security policy of the European Union**

EU Security Policy, that came into force in 2016.

**TEU – Treaty on European Union**

Basic agreement on the EU political system (together with the TFEU Treaty on the Functioning of the EU). Originally known as the Treaty of Maastricht (1992), it has since been amended several times (Amsterdam 1997, Nice 2001 and Lisbon 2007).

**CFSP – Common Foreign and Security Policy**

Established by the Maastricht Treaty. A key EU policy area where Member States cooperate on foreign, security and defense policy, as well as development and trade policies.

**CSDP – Common Security and Defence Policy**

Part of CFSP

**PESCO – Permanent Structured Cooperation**

Cooperation of 25 EU Member States in the field of CSDP, established in accordance with TEU Art. 42 (6) in November 2017. Concretely consisting of 34 projects, of which 17 were decided in December 2017 and 17 more in November 2018.

# “FOR THE UNITING EUROPE, I PICTURE MORE AND MORE ISLANDS OF FUNCTIONING COOPERATION”

*An interview with Hans-Peter Bartels*

**Dr. Bartels, let's assume we are on the road to creating a European army: How would you translate the principles of *Innere Führung* for European defense policymakers? Would they have difficulty understanding them?**

The idea of the citizen in uniform means that military personnel are part of a democratic polity. This exists elsewhere in Europe, too. But what we call “*Innere Führung*” is very much a specifically German concept.

It means that the military principle of command and obedience – “outer leadership” if you like – must be complemented by ethical standards, which every member of the armed forces should internalize. Every member of military personnel should therefore carry within themselves a standard for good and evil, right and wrong, justice and injustice. And this standard should be compatible with freedom and democracy. It is important to note that these individual standards may be rooted in a Christian conception of humanity, or in humanism,

## ***The conscienceless soldier who is only a combatant cannot be a defender of freedom and justice***

or in critical rationalism. You will often find a generalized reference to the supposed “values of the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*).” This is always somewhat wide of the mark, in my view, because it is a form of mechanistic derivative thinking, shaped by belief in military document hierarchies.

Our firm conviction that, for example, classical human rights are universally valid, every-

where and at all times, does not derive in the first instance from the Basic Law. It precedes the Basic Law and underlies it. In other words, human rights are not valid because they are enshrined in our constitution; they are in our constitution because they are universally valid – even before the Basic Law was adopted in 1949.

During the Second World War, soldiers in the resistance against the Nazi regime had to fall back on such “inner” universally valid standards of good and evil when the system of “outer leadership” kept forcing them to do evil, to do wrong, to do injustice. Prior to July 20, 1944, many struggled with the decision of whether they could break their oath to Hitler and refuse to obey orders – which was an absolute duty in the *Wehrmacht*. They had nothing else to guide them except their own inner self, their conscience. Was that sufficient?

Now the concept of *Innere Führung* says that your freedom of conscience is part of what it means to be a soldier. The conscienceless soldier who is only a combatant cannot be a defender of freedom and justice. Germany's military personnel should know what they are fighting for: not for some objective given to them, but for something that is valuable to themselves – for their and our free constitutional order. To be able and willing to fight, not because it is commanded, but because it is a good and just cause, in accordance with one's own conscience: this is “*Innere Führung*”. That is why all military personnel are entitled to historical, ethical and political education, from the first day of their service until the last.

And, incidentally, that is also why this strange, unique, very German clause appears in article 20, paragraph (4) of the Basic Law: “All Germans shall have the right to resist any person seeking to abolish this constitutional order, if no other remedy is available.” Every individual is the final authority that safeguards our freedom. So this was a particularly long answer. But that's just the way it is with Germany's special history, experience and responsibility.

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**To follow up with a more specific question: Do you think that the relationship between democracy and the armed forces, as we have shaped it in Germany for good historical reasons, is acceptable across the EU?**

In principle, yes. To list some keywords, that means: the primacy of democratic politics, the right to vote and the right to stand as a candidate in elections, the right to file complaints and petitions, the election of representatives and freedom of association, for example in military professional organizations, the freedom of conscience, opinion and expression within the general duty of loyalty, the incompatibility of being a soldier with extremist, anti-democratic attitudes. And political education! None of this is exclusively German. Some of it still needs to become the experienced legal normality in some member states, especially the newer ones. But the trend is moving in this direction. Perhaps it is not necessary for us to call it "*Innere Führung*" – the "citizen in uniform" is sufficient.

**One frequently cited reason for European military integration is cost efficiency. Wouldn't it make sense to improve cost efficiency on the national level first – in other words, in the German armed forces – before entering into a merger (to use the business term)?**

There is no need to play off national efficiency increases against those on the European level. Everyone knows that a lot of money is spent needlessly in the *Bundeswehr* every day. This has to be addressed. But it seems evident to me that it is not a particularly bright idea for the EU Europe and NATO Europe to line up 22, 25 or 30 nation-state armies side by side with 200 different types of tanks, aircraft and frigates. By the way, the German and Dutch armies are currently "merging" in a very real way in their everyday routine duties. The feedback has been good, and I think that's great!

**Many skeptics say that a European Army is "putting the cart before the horse": There is a desire to create joint armed forces, yet only discuss the strategic culture later on. How do you respond to these skeptics?**

Of course there are thousands of issues, large and small, to solve on the path to the European

defense union. But given our disastrous European history of the 20th century, those are not bad problems. They are all fairly good problems. My idea for the uniting Europe is not for a big master plan negotiated by all nations that sets out how everything should subsequently unroll. Instead, I picture more and more islands of functioning cooperation that grow, meet and join together as they increase in size, and gradually form a mainland.

And as far as today's certainly very different strategic experiences and cultures are concerned: If progress is made toward integration in the military, then there will also be the so-called "normative force of facts" for foreign and security policy. If there is no progress, then the historically developed differences in strategic cultures will probably continue to exist for the time being.

**Dr. Bartels, thank you for this interview!**

## Profile

*In 2015, Hans-Peter Bartels was appointed the twelfth Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces (Wehrbeauftragter des Deutschen Bundestages). After his Abitur and military service in 1980/81, he studied political science, sociology and ethnology at Kiel University (CAU). He earned his doctoral degree in 1988. From 1988 to 1998, he worked as a staffer at the State Chancellery of Schleswig-Holstein. In 1998, Hans-Peter Bartels became an SPD member of the German Bundestag for Kiel. Most recently, he served on the Defense Committee.*



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# REFLECTIONS ON ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL IN EUROPEAN ARMED FORCES

*Author:* Angelika Dörfler-Dierken

“We ought to work on the vision of one day establishing a proper European army,” German Chancellor Angela Merkel told the European Parliament in Strasbourg on November 13, 2018. Time and again, most recently from the French President Emmanuel Macron, there have been calls for a European army to help resolve global conflicts in line with European values and norms. The German federal government’s 2016 White Paper also expresses Germany’s commitment to defend human rights, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and international law together with its European partners. Anyone who wants to act together requires a common basis – also an ethical basis that is shared with one’s partners. In reality, the national European armed forces are far apart from each other when it comes to their military traditions. The following article therefore explains the key developments in the foundation of the German armed forces, with the implementation of the

## *Various differences in the historically shaped national military cultures still have strong impact today*

concept of *Innere Führung* (leadership development and civilian education), and calls for *Innere Führung* to be made the guiding concept for the armed forces of European nations, and for a possible European army.

In September 1957, under the West German Minister of Defense Franz Josef Strauß, a guide to *Innere Führung* was published. This small book was entitled *Handbuch Innere Führung. Hilfen zur Klärung der Begriffe* [The *Innere*

*Führung* manual. An aid to understanding the terms]. It was written by employees under the sub-division head in the joint general staff of the German armed forces (*Führungsstab der Bundeswehr, FüB I Innere Führung*). The sub-division head was Wolf Graf von Baudissin (1907–1993), who also made various contributions to the manual. Until 1972, the “yellow book” as it was known, because of its mustard-yellow linen cover, was issued to all officers of the *Bundeswehr* for self-study. Later on, the concept of *Innere Führung* set out in the book was transferred into Joint Service Regulations (*Zentrale Dienstvorschriften*), and understood as a standing order.

To this day, *Innere Führung* continues to shape the *Bundeswehr*’s self-image as well as its organizational and leadership culture.<sup>1</sup> This article sets out a number of reflections on the question of whether a possible future European army can also draw inspiration from the concept of *Innere Führung*. Of course these only cover individual aspects of this complex topic. Each European nation maintains its own national traditions and ideas of what makes a good soldier. To permeate and align these with the fundamental European values of human dignity, freedom and justice cannot be an easy task. At international conferences such as EuroISME – the European chapter of the International Society for Military Ethics – it quickly becomes apparent that various differences in the historically shaped national military cultures still have a strong impact today. For representatives of the Western group of nations, the key point of reference – and above all: touch-down point – is the Second World War, whereas for the Eastern nations, it is the breakup of the USSR. Just as weapons systems are not always compatible with one another, multinational cooperation does not always work smoothly on an interpersonal level, even if some states and their armed forces are already cooperating very well together. Working together and exchanging ideas, for example in the German/Netherlands Corps, has led not only to amazed envy between the members of the respective national armies, but also to a degree of convergence in approaches to ethical questions and in military procedures.

As the starting point for my reflections on a common organizational and leadership culture, on a self-image common to all members of a future European army, I have chosen the *Handbuch Innere Führung* (1957).<sup>2</sup> Now more than sixty years old, this manual accompanied the rearmament of Germany a decade or so after the end of the Second World War. Four groundbreaking ideas for the self-image of the German armed forces are briefly outlined here:

- Europe as an area of peace
- Critical reflection on national military cultures
- Technical developments require responsible obedience
- Human dignity as a guiding concept

## Europe as an area of peace

The manual begins with a chapter on the oath. It clearly develops the difference between the oath to “the *Führer*” required of *Wehrmacht* soldiers, and the oath made by *Bundeswehr* officers to the democratic and free constitutional state. The following sections of the manual deal with the fundamental question of when and how war could be fought in the future. It sets out clearly that in accordance with the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) of the Federal Republic of Germany, never again should Germany start a war. This is not a discussion about war guilt and the question of whether the other European powers were not also partly to blame for the escalations in 1914 and 1939. Rather, it is about practicing a new view of a pacified Europe. This says that Europe has always been a single cultural area, European peoples should learn to see themselves as a community, and never again should they turn their former, fabricated nationalisms against each other. And above all, that the soldier’s goal is not war, but peace.

“In the mind of the European and hence also of the German soldier, peace has always been considered the normal state, and thus constitutes the goal for the sake of which alone a war can be justified. It is from peace that warfare obtains its task and its limits.” (*Handbuch Innere Führung* 1957:59)

With these words, the love of peace and the togetherness of European nations were clear-

ly portrayed before the eyes of *Bundeswehr* soldiers. Thus from its foundation onward, the *Bundeswehr* was related to Europe, and Europe was to be a peace project from that time forward. Following the experiences of the two World Wars and the revanchism that repeatedly flared up, it was certainly necessary to commit German soldiers, many of whom had been trained under the *Wehrmacht* and National Socialism, to peace. Today, Europe has in fact become an area of peace in a turbulent world. But at the same time, the threats are evident: Growing nationalism and right-wing conservative populism, along with special national paths and separations, run contrary to ideas of deeper cooperation between European states, including in the military. The return to a commitment to peace among each other and externally could become a cornerstone for a European defense concept, and hence for the self-image of European soldiers.

## Critical reflection on national military cultures

Another important element is likely to be the encouragement of self-critical retrospection, as German officers are urged to engage in. The authors of the *Innere Führung* manual acknowledge that it was “difficult” at that time “to take up the true European and German military tradition, after what lies behind us:

The issuing of criminal orders from the top,  
their passing on to the lowest areas of command,

the expectation that they will not be carried out at the bottom,

their carrying out in some places,

the order to stand to one side, if crimes take place next to the soldier,

the confusion of moral necessity with political situation assessment.

That is – at least to such an extent – unique in European history.

The fact that unfair and unjust things can happen on the enemy side too is irrelevant when it comes to judging this phenomenon. So is the fact that great examples can be cited of a contrary attitude on the part of German soldiers.” (*Handbuch Innere Führung* 1957:63)

Even today, an examination of each country's own national military tradition with respect to the European convention on human rights could initiate a discussion process that would democratize the internal relationships and contribute to the emergence of a common European awareness in the armed forces.

### **Technical developments require responsible obedience**

Such self-criticism will probably have to be practiced in any future European army too, since it is impossible now to take up medieval or even older traditions. In those days, the issues surrounding technology were hardly a concern. In view of the advanced technologization of war, to the point of nuclear annihilation, the *Innere Führung* manual is clear

### ***The reflections in the “Handbuch Innere Führung” on a new model for soldiers who will safeguard the peaceful, free and constitutional Europe are suitable for a European army***

in stating, even at that time, that deterrence alone can be the only appropriate military strategy. This remains true today. It is the reason why NATO agreed on massive retaliation. Later on, the concept was replaced by flexible response. Today, too, the question of how to deal with nuclear weapons is urgent. The Western European EU countries still stockpile these warheads – even now that Russia has dismantled and repatriated the weapons systems that were secretly stationed in the former GDR. In addition, without this featuring extensively in the European public debate, a new strategic instability has emerged. It is intensified by the impending cancellation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty by the United States, by the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and by cyber warfare. Russia and the United States have new weapons systems and are heading into a new arms race. The United Kingdom and France have nuclear weapons too, like the United States

and Russia. But other states such as Pakistan and North Korea also know how to exploit the deterrent potential of nuclear weapons.

In this situation, it is particularly important that every soldier knows what he or she is doing, and what responsibility he or she bears for world peace. Particularly in military operations, it has to be clear that ill-considered action can have unintentional consequences, even a spiral of escalation leading to total annihilation. It seems that only responsible human action may be able to prevent this. By way of example, we should remember Stanislav Petrov. In 1983, he prevented the Third World War when he independently decided not to fire Soviet missiles, despite his computer system telling him the West had launched an attack.

It may seem surprising that a discussion about nuclear weapons was going on even in 1957, when the *Handbuch Innere Führung* was being compiled. The emergence of the peace movement is usually associated with the NATO Double-Track Decision, bringing to mind the major demonstrations against the stationing of U.S. Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe. But ever since the atomic bombs – Little Boy and Fat Man – were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and since the USSR caught up in 1949 with the detonation of its first atomic bomb, it had been obvious to experts what military conflicts would mean from now on: nuclear annihilation. So the *Innere Führung* manual clearly told soldiers: “For as long as the world powers are in military equilibrium and there is the threat that weapons of mass destruction will be used, the focus of aggression will naturally shift to the intellectual arena.” (*Handbuch Innere Führung* 1957:36) This principle of resolving potential conflicts through the power of the intellect should still apply today to deployments of a European army, as a matter of course.

### **Human dignity as a guiding concept**

The reflections in the *Handbuch Innere Führung* on a new model for soldiers who will safeguard the peaceful, free and constitutional Europe are just as modern and suitable for a European army. The manual states that the new model for

*Bundeswehr* soldiers should be based on the individual acts of the resistance conspirators of July 20, 1944, since they had assumed responsibility in an unclear situation. European soldiers should stand up for “real loyalty,” for “real obedience,” for “real responsibility” and if necessary “[sacrifice] their existence for freedoms, rights and human dignity.” There is a special pointedness about saying that members of the resistance – who didn’t only exist in Germany, but also in the occupied countries – are models for soldiers today, since a discussion about the respective national military cultures and traditions could provoke strong sentiments. In France, for example, as in all other countries in Europe, there were collaborators with the *Wehrmacht* as well as resistance fighters. Elsewhere, even after 1945, the military forcefully prevented any democratization of state and society. In some European countries that might provide European soldiers, discussions about the “real” military tradition are probably still waiting to be had.

Even if, at first glance, many terms in the *Innere Führung* manual might seem old-fashioned now, like the thinking of the 1950s, they nevertheless address problems which are still current today. Fundamental to all these ideas is the belief that soldiers in a democracy are diametrically distinct from those in a totalitarian system. As “citizens in uniform”, they are not mere instruments of military and political leadership. Instead, they are thinking and responsible citizens who have assumed a special function and task in the permanent civil war – as Baudissin put it – to maintain the free constitutional order. The basic ideas of this concept of *Innere Führung* have been continued into the present-day Joint Service Regulation on *Innere Führung* (now referred to as A 2600/1 in the *Bundeswehr* system of regulations). The central ideas are:

- legitimization of all military actions (primacy of politics),
- integration of military personnel into society (democracy and pluralism), and
- soldiers’ motivation growing from insight into the meaning of their service.

In today’s overseas deployments, justified on humanitarian grounds, word has gotten

around that even those people in uniform who do not wear gold or silver on their epaulettes have to take on a lot of responsibility. It is of little help here for regulations to state that the enemy’s relics or holy scripts – such as the Koran – should not be desecrated, that prisoners should not be tortured or threatened with death, that foreign women (when interventions take place in different cultures) should be treated with just as much respect as women back home. These requirements have to be put into practice! The challenges are at least as great when soldiers in the country of deployment unexpectedly witness inhuman injustice or – as in Srebrenica – a massacre.

European soldiers should “uncompromisingly stand up for the basic values of Western humanity” and be ready “to risk all for the achievement and protection of the rights and freedoms of the humblest, even in everyday life.” (*Handbuch Innere Führung* 1957:11) At the same time, it is expected that the basic conflict between freedoms and rights on the one hand, and totalitarianism on the other, will be an enduring one, which cannot be overcome

***The belief that soldiers in a democracy are distinct from those in a totalitarian system is fundamental. As “citizens in uniform”, they are not mere instruments of military and political leadership***

easily. “In this world [one can] choose only one or the other” and should “decide [...] with the utmost consistency to be either liberal or totalitarian. [...] The defense of rights and freedoms does not authorize us to engage in crusades or activities that lead to the enslavement and extermination of others or even the whole world. Rather, it primarily means an expectation directed at ourselves.” (*Handbuch Innere Führung* 1957:11) The values of rights and freedoms, formed in a long historical process in Europe, should be experienced on a daily basis by European citizens, and also by its soldiers in their everyday lives and in their service. “Rights and freedoms always remain at risk; the greatest risk comes from our own egoism. Their preservation and defense is our

special responsibility for others." (*Handbuch Innere Führung* 1957:11)

It would actually be desirable to specify – similarly to the European Convention on Human Rights – that all members of a future European army have to stand up for freedom,

## ***"Innere Führung" thrives on the belief and experience that only what is worth living for is worth defending***

peace, human dignity and democracy out of inner conviction. Because *Innere Führung* is oriented to these values and norms, and because the Joint Service Regulation (*Zentrale Dienstvorschrift*) A 2600/1, which is currently applicable in the Federal Republic of Germany, implements these values and norms in the German armed forces, the concept of *Innere Führung* would actually be suitable for European soldiers. It would ensure that the functional principles of operational European armed forces are in line with Europe's free and democratic principles. *Innere Führung* thrives on the belief and experience that only what is worth living for is worth defending. Moreover, such a definition would draw attention to the political and internal commitment within the armed forces to the inviolability of all soldiers' human dignity. According to this code of ethics, even the human dignity of the enemy would be inviolable – this, too, is an idea that Baudissin expressed back in 1957:

### **The Author**



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*arise from the contradiction between the order for German soldiers, to serve peace in the world, and the use of follow military means of violence. Prof. Dr. Dörfler-Dierken teaches at the university Hamburg and published numerous publications.*

"Humanity is not divisible. If it is now to be the preserve only of particular groups, it will be lost completely. The soldier who has no respect for his fellow humans – and the enemy, too, is his fellow human – is not tolerable, neither as a superior nor as a fellow soldier nor as a fellow citizen." (*Handbuch Innere Führung* 1957:64)

These four ideas from the 1957 *Innere Führung* manual remain valid today, even after more than sixty years. To develop them as the ethical core of a European army is essential if Europe is to have a civilizing impact in the crises and conflicts of the present day, including if necessary via military intervention.

1 For further information on the concept of *Innere Führung* and an assessment of the implementation of its principles by soldiers of the German *Bundeswehr* see Angelika Dörfler-Dierken/Robert Kramer (2014): *Innere Führung in Zahlen. Streitkräftebefragung 2013 [Innere Führung in figures. A survey among armed forces]*. Berlin.

2 All of the following quotations are translated from German, and taken from Bundesministerium für Verteidigung (ed.) (1957): *Handbuch Innere Führung. Hilfen zur Klärung der Begriffe*. Bonn. Page numbers are given in the text.

*Author: Klaus Beck*

## **Greater focus on security and defense in European politics**

With the changed security environment resulting from the annexation of Crimea, the military conflicts in eastern Ukraine, the situation in the Middle East and not least the shift in American policy under the Trump administration, the debate over greater European cooperation within the EU has intensified. One of the ideas behind this is that security and defense can at least complement the single market – the current “binding agent” in the EU – and therefore could be a suitable policy instrument to promote cohesion in the EU after Brexit.

In 2017, the European Commission launched a process of reflection on the future of the EU. Among various published documents, the “Reflection paper on the future of European defense”<sup>1</sup> of June 7, 2018 sets out scenarios for common defense and security. The third of these scenarios envisages extensive integration of armed forces at the European level.

As part of the process of giving concrete form to European cooperation in matters of defense policy (Permanent Structured Cooperation, PESCO), the document adopted in December 2017 describes and considers greater political and also military cooperation between the signatory countries. A list of priority projects from March 6, 2018<sup>2</sup> also points to further integration steps.

In its medium-term financial planning, the European Commission includes a defense fund of 18 billion euros. Thus a debate on greater integration has also found expression in the EU's budgetary policy.

It is true that PESCO, like the planned defense fund, is focused mainly on common armaments policy – not least with a view to potential savings and enhanced effectiveness through European cooperation. Nevertheless, the question of actually developing European integrated armed forces is now more present in the (professional-level) policy debate.

# **MINIMUM STANDARDS MUST APPLY! NO EUROPEANIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES WITHOUT INNERE FÜHRUNG**

This raises specific questions concerning the internal structure of such armed forces – and hence also the question of the validity of the concept of *Innere Führung* (leadership development and civic education) in the European context.

## **Foreseeable problem areas in the integration of European armed forces**

It is apparent that greater military cooperation, and European integration going beyond current established structures, raise a series of problems owing to different national leadership cultures and inner structures. These problems will need to be addressed in the subsequent course of Europeanization processes.

The issues relate in particular to questions of *Innere Führung*, the concept of the citizen in uniform, the trade union representation of military personnel, participation structures, and to different positions on gender and diversity issues.

Just a few points are listed here:

- There are considerable differences between leadership cultures in European armies. Some differ greatly from German concepts of the citizen in uniform and *Innere Führung*.
- Different military law systems. For example, the right of members of the armed forces to make complaints simply does not exist in some European armies. In contrast to Germany, some partner armies have their own military criminal jurisdiction.
- Different types of embedding in political structures. In Germany, we have a parlia-

mentary army. This is not the case in other countries. Also the primacy of politics is much more highly developed in Germany than elsewhere.

- This results in a different type of embedding in parliamentary structures. Germany is almost unique in this respect with its Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces (Wehrbeauftragter des Deutschen Bundestages).
- The handling of the gender issue differs greatly among the European partner armies.
- The transfer of policing responsibilities to a gendarmerie force as part of the military structure is common practice in some European countries, but in Germany it is not provided for in the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*).
- Protection of trade union freedoms for military personnel and members of the armed forces. This is explicitly prohibited in some European countries, or is frowned upon.

## *The Federal Republic of Germany cannot allow its strict standards of parliamentary oversight to be eroded*

And politically, the EU so far lacks a clear strategy for its security and foreign policy. A European White Paper on this topic is urgently required.

### **Joint armed forces need a European *Innere Führung***

If the integration of these very different inner structures is to succeed, and there is also to be legal certainty for military personnel in the integrated EU force, then it is essential to develop a common European concept of *Innere Führung*.

Therefore further points should be developed too, such as the legal basis for deployments by resolution of the European Union, or also for greater continuous military cooperation.

Here it is particularly important to consider the extent to which new European regulations are necessary, with the European Charter of Fundamental Rights serving as common ground. At any rate, the Charter is a binding basis for action by the European institutions. Thus a common European constitutional consensus has been reached, which the development of a value-based inner structure could refer to.

And unlike an association with a purely military purpose, the norms of the Charter of Fundamental Rights should provide a common basis of values that also determine external action by the EU as a whole.

Then, similarly, if there is to be more continuous cooperation, questions concerning different pay structures, different pension benefits and other material aspects would need to be resolved. It would be hard to see why personnel in integrated units should receive different pay and benefits for performing the same activity. This would be another area where the principle of equal pay for equal work would apply.

And of course the right of co-determination as well as trade union activities and representation would have to be uniformly regulated for the European army.

Furthermore, the role of the European Parliament with a requirement for parliamentary approval would need to be clarified, and then not least, in my opinion, there would also need to be a European parliamentary commissioner in the European Parliament. The Federal Republic of Germany cannot allow its strict standards of parliamentary oversight to be eroded.

At the same time, as more concrete form of cooperation is taken on step by step, it is important to develop the previously different national leadership cultures and inner structures of the armed forces in such a way as to ensure democratic control over deployments under European command.

The concept of the “citizen in uniform” should be safeguarded, i.e. military personnel must be granted the right to vote and the right to stand as candidates in elections, as well as freedom of association. Restriction of

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the fundamental rights of military personnel should be reduced to the absolute necessary minimum for military purposes. The duty of obedience should be restricted to lawful military orders. The European Parliament should develop effective mechanisms to monitor and enforce these principles.

## First steps

It is suggested that within the PESCO projects, there should also be a project for the further development of a European leadership structure and culture. This should focus in particular on questions of the different systems and cultures in the individual European armies. It would also involve identifying how and which common ethical and political values are present in the individual national cultures, and how these could be connected together in everyday military life.

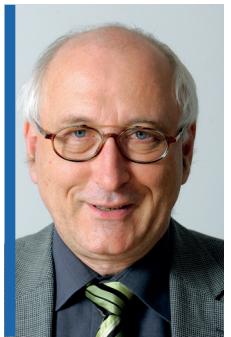
Here the German armed forces could offer various possibilities – particularly the Center for Leadership Development and Civic Education (*Zentrum Innere Führung*) – for continued work, together with other European partners, on the question of the Europeanization of *Innere Führung*.

1 European Commission (2017): Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/reflection-paper-defence\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/reflection-paper-defence_en.pdf), (accessed November 7, 2018).

2 European Council (2017): Defence cooperation: Council adopts an implementation roadmap for the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/03/06/defence-cooperation-council-adopts-an-implementation-roadmap-for-the-permanent-structured-cooperation-pesco/> (accessed November 7, 2018).

## The Author

*Klaus Beck was born in 1952, holds a Diplom degree in education, and lives in Ludwigshafen am Rhein. He did his military service from 1971 to 1973, and was subsequently a Reservist Hauptmann. Until mid-2018, he worked as a trade union secretary in the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB). Beck is a member of the advisory panel for "Innere Führung" (leadership development and civic education) at the German Federal Ministry of Defense (BMVg), where his main focuses are the Europeanization of "Innere Führung," the relationship between the German Armed Forces and society, and the problems experienced by military personnel who suffered war-zone trauma.*



# EUROCORPS: A FORCE FOR THE EURO- PEAN UNION AND NATO

*Military cooperation in Europe is by no means new. The integration of personnel from different EU countries into military units is also already a reality. An example of this is the Eurocorps in Strasbourg: five framework nations send soldiers to the multinational headquarters, which can lead up to 60,000 troops in EU or NATO operations if needed. An insight into the everyday life of the members of the Eurocorps could thus be an outlook on the future of the army of Europeans. Therefore Ethics and Armed Forces inquired about it at Eurocorps. Five soldiers from different European nations describe their motives, cultural similarities and differences and give personal assessments of military integration.*



OR-9 Eric D., Belgium

## When did you join your national military and for what cause?

I joined the Belgian Army on the November 3, 1988 as a volunteer. At that time I was 18 years old and after High School, I could not decide what to study further on. Thirty years later, I'm still working as an NCO for the Belgian Ministry of Defense, more specifically at Eurocorps, a multinational Corps available for both the European Union and NATO.

## Which experience in your military career had the strongest influence on you?

Belonging to the Belgian Medical Component, and qualified as Combat Medic I had the opportunity to participate in thirteen missions abroad. I had two tours of duty in Afghanistan where I was the Medical Liaison Officer (LNO) between the German Field Hospital and the Belgian Provincial Reconstruction Team/Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (PRT/OMLT). The daily work in the emergency room, the possibility to learn from other nations and being part of the first crucial medical treatment for allied casualties, impacted both my military and private life significantly.

## Serving in a multinational staff, would you say that there is a common mindset among all the soldiers from different countries? And if so, does it come from a common military command culture or from shared European values?

So far, my experiences in a multinational staff are rather limited to a tour of five years. Nevertheless, I worked many times with other nations or in other national small scale organizations. The huge advantage of the military community is the well-structured command and control what makes it possible to be effective in international environment.

Respecting at all times individual values and cultural backgrounds is the key to be successful in an international military environment especially in the Eurocorps, by far one of the most engaged and experienced Corps in Europe.

## In daily business, what regional habits pose challenges to your work, and which habit deriving from another country has enriched you in your profession?

Within Eurocorps headquarters consisting of five framework nations, it's quite easy to adapt to each other's habits. It provides the opportunity to learn from each other.

## Having a multinational staff is maybe one thing, but the integration of foreign combat units seems to be more complex. To what extent do you think military integration in Europe is useful?

Currently Eurocorps headquarters does not have any direct subordinated units. As a consequence, my answer is not based on previous experience. However, working on complex issues is challenging. There are no problems, through challenges one day the military integration will be achieved. It's only a matter of time.

### **When did you join your national military and for what cause?**

I joined the Spanish Army in 1999 following a vocational decision. Since I was a teenager I have always wanted to serve my country as a member of its Armed Forces. For me it was the right way to merge the will to serve my country and a demanding career.

### **Which experience in your military career had the strongest influence on you?**

Spanish cadets spend five years in their respective military academies – Army, Navy or Air Force – to get their commission as active duty officers. No doubt the period I spent in the Spanish Army General Academy (General meaning “all branches”/ combined-arms) has had the strongest influence on me, as there the foundations of my professionalism and personality were laid. After that, once I was promoted to lieutenant, I joined the Army Aviation branch so piloting helicopters and to develop missions with rotary wings means has been the most exciting experience in my life. Other experiences as command commitments – platoon, company, and battalion level – have also had a great impact on my personal and professional maturity. Additionally, I have to mention my experience in real operational deployments to Bosnia, Afghanistan and Central African Republic as the most intense and shocking influences I have had. Finally, leadership and comradeship is a permanent inspirational influence on a daily basis.

### **Serving in a multinational staff, would you say that there is a common mindset among all the soldiers from different countries? And if so, does it come from a common military command culture or from shared European values?**

The first answer is yes. In my opinion, military around the world share a common mindset, no matter their cultural, doctrinal or geographical respective background.

As for Eurocorps, I think that this shared mindset probably derives from both factors mentioned in the question. A common military command culture, including common ways to organize work and procedures, is clearly recognizable; but the set of European values – meaning a shared ethical approach to our profession and to our mission – also underpin our day to day work, our ways and our ends.

This is one of the best points to work in Eurocorps, a multinational environment permits to share, teach and learn knowledge, experiences and thoughts.

### **In daily business, what regional habits pose challenges to your work, and which habit deriving from another country has enriched you in your profession?**

In 2018, Europe constitutes a common space, where regional habits overlap and are integrated in a natural way in daily business. None of them poses real challenges to cooperation, joint work, personal relations and shared mission apart from minor adjustments to day to day life details.

However, national and regional particularities give a chance to improve cultural understanding, not only internally, but also in terms of understanding political, social, and geopolitical context. Geography, for instance, provides people with very different points of view and approaches to any given problem across Europe.

Multinational options to resolve different situations are the added values of working together in Eurocorps.

### **Having a multinational staff is maybe one thing, but the integration of foreign combat units seems to be more complex. To what extent do you think military integration in Europe is useful?**

First of all, military integration in Europe is a political issue, not a military challenge. Therefore, usefulness of military integrated forces should be primarily assessed in terms of political benefit, rather than pure military effectiveness.

Integration of foreign military units is a complex problem, indeed, but we have done it before in history – in Europe, for instance, since the ancient Greek times – and we do it on a daily basis when deployed in NATO, EU, or coalition led operations. Furthermore, multinational units in peace time are also operational nowadays in Europe, e.g. the Franco-German Brigade. So, from the technical point of view, integration of military units does not pose any unbeatable challenge.

However, for military integration to be useful, synergies have to be identified, sustainment and training shared and properly funded, and scale and command and control requirements to be considered, for the sake of military effectiveness.



OF-3 Jorge A., Spain



OF-4 Edward T., France

**When did you join your national military and for what cause?**

I joined the French military academy of Saint-Cyr in 1985. I had been interested in a military career for a long time, with the wish to become an officer, on the crossroad between reflection and action, to be granted human responsibilities and serve my country. I was and I still am fascinated by history and international relations. As an officer, I had the feeling I would be able to see this in real life.

**Which experience in your military career had the strongest influence on you?**

I consider my assignment to an OSCE mission in Georgia a few years ago as the most interesting and fascinating experience, where I could witness a real situation and act in cooperation with other nations aiming to promote stabilization.

**Serving in a multinational staff, would you say that there is a common mindset among all the soldiers from different countries? And if so, does it come from a common military command culture or from shared European values?**

There is on the whole a common mindset in Euro-corps, with colleagues belonging to different nations, but being very close culturally as convinced Europeans. We can say that we share the same fundamental values, but as officers we are also conscious of our different traditions and history. This makes things even more interesting and challenging.

**In daily business, what regional habits pose challenges to your work, and which habit deriving from another country has enriched you in your profession?**

Serving in a multinational environment is a fruitful experience. Each nation has indeed its military habits and style, and national regulations such as administrative procedures, leave policy, compensation after exercises ... also play a certain role in daily business. Nevertheless, with intelligent and open-minded people who share a common style of training and military experience and have sometimes been involved in operations together, there is no problem at all. On the whole, each member of the staff, whatever

nation he belongs to, tries to bring his best for the sake of the whole team.

**Having a multinational staff is maybe one thing, but the integration of foreign combat units seems to be more complex. To what extent do you think military integration in Europe is useful?**

Military integration at staff level is a daily reality: Officers from different nations are just simply used to working and cooperating together. In some cases, they have followed training in the same academies, e.g. at *École de Guerre* or *Führungsakademie*, and have served on the same theaters like former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Mali and others. This integration is not so simple to implement at combat unit level, where national standards, regulations, manpower, equipment, etc. prevail. An army remains established on a national basis as a fundamental state institution, even if efforts are made to promote integration between close European nations in a “coalition of the willing” spirit. European military integration remains a progressive and medium-running process.

### **When did you join your national military and for what cause?**

I was conscripted for military service in October 1994. But I had already decided before then to become a regular soldier and go in for officer training. My father was also a career officer, so from an early age I had insights into everyday military life. The Cold War and the longstanding latent threat from the Warsaw Pact no longer existed at the time I made my decision. Even in those days, I was aware that history keeps moving on, and nothing lasts forever. But one singular, defining experience was the outbreak of civil war in the Balkans. I didn't want to believe that a conflict like that was still possible on European soil. I saw longer-term service in the armed forces – as a regular soldier and later as a career soldier – as a useful way of actively dealing with the consequences of such a conflict as part of peace support operations, or of preventing them through a defensive potential, i.e. being able to fight in order not to have to fight.

### **Which experience in your military career had the strongest influence on you?**

I find it quite difficult to pick one experience, so I would like to mention the aspects that have affected me personally and professionally.

During one of my deployments in Afghanistan, one of my soldiers killed himself. He was a fellow soldier who I thought I had a good rapport with. His sudden death and its consequences – bringing his body back to Germany and handing it over to his family, his burial on December 23, one day before Christmas – made a deep impression on me as a young battery commander. It always reminds me that you can only ever look into a soldier's face, but never his thoughts or heart.

### **Serving in a multinational staff, would you say that there is a common mindset among all the soldiers from different countries? And if so, does it come from a common military command culture or from shared European values?**

I would say that soldiers in democracies always have a similar basic military attitude, a similar mindset. A conservative orientation, and therefore positive toward more traditional values like comradeship, loyalty, performance of duty and service (to the community). You are committed to an idea (such as the constitution and the ba-

sic values contained within it), not to a leadership personality. The awareness that your own freedom, your own way of life are not things that can be taken for granted – they are achievements that have to be actively maintained and consistently protected. That is true of my experiences with European and also transatlantic soldiers. As for a special characteristic among European soldiers, it might have more to do with the extremely turbulent history that they have lived through together. It affects how they relate to one another, especially in central Europe. There is a tangible and visible awareness of the value of free and peaceful cooperation.

The celebration of common holidays and days of remembrance, e.g. the end of WWI or II, is an example of this. These memorial days mark eras when, in some cases, our own grandfathers faced each other on the battlefield.

### **In daily business, what regional habits pose challenges to your work, and which habit deriving from another country has enriched you in your profession?**

As for challenges, a simple example, but one you encounter on a daily basis, is the way that soldiers of different ranks behave toward one another. In some armies, the separation of ranks is stricter and more clearly noticeable than in the German armed forces. In the Bundeswehr, the question of how you behave toward a particular soldier depends more on their task and area of responsibility than their actual rank. So a lower-ranking German soldier can have his voice heard by a group of higher-ranking officers, if he has more detailed knowledge or a deeper understanding in a particular environment. In some nations, rank barriers preclude dealing with soldiers in such a way from the outset.

With regard to enrichment, particularly while working together with officers and NCOs from countries that have relatively small armed forces, I have been impressed by their international experience and great professionalism. Luxembourg (which is represented by just two posts in the Eurocorps) and Belgium are excellent examples of this – whether because of their impressive language skills or because of their ability to integrate effectively into a multinational environment, without giving up their own identity. ►



*OF-4 Burkhard W.,  
Germany*



OR-9 Frank S., Luxembourg

OF-4 Burkhard W. (from page 65)

**Having a multinational staff is maybe one thing, but the integration of foreign combat units seems to be more complex. To what extent do you think military integration in Europe is useful?**

I can only envisage any useful and deep-rooted integration of task forces in the traditional sense (Article 5, Major Combat +) as far as division level at most, where it would already be limited. On the tactical level, during deployments, your decisions and actions are just too fast and agile to allow uncertainty or misunderstandings in command and leadership. The differences between various schools of thought within officer training, political restrictions on the deployment of armed forces, but also the ever greater complexity of communication and command equipment – areas in which national reservations are often indirectly reflected in development and procurement – are obstacles to effective and agile armed forces. In my opinion, the main responsibility for fighting should always be under clear national leadership and control. This does not rule out the integration of individual posts.

**When did you join your national military and for what cause?**

In October 1982. For serving my motherland.

**Which experience in your military career had the strongest influence on you?**

Different experiences, such as: 1. Training the soldiers to give them their values, discipline and everything else you learn in the army for the path of your life. 2. Different foreign operations. 3. To be able to serve the Grand Duke and his family. And 4. Right now start my assignment to Eurocorps.

**Serving in a multinational staff, would you say that there is a common mindset among all the soldiers from different countries? And if so, does it come from a common military command culture or from shared European values?**

Military thinking is a meticulous thinking as well as the language style of the military.

Sometimes misunderstandings can occur, but they can be solved through the experience and maturity of the individuals.

**In daily business, what regional habits pose challenges to your work, and which habit deriving from another country has enriched you in your profession?**

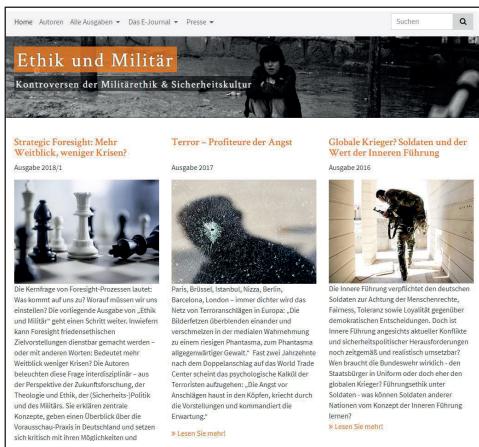
The most important enrichment is to work in an international military environment, where you have the opportunity to continuously meet new people.

**Having a multinational staff is maybe one thing, but the integration of foreign combat units seems to be more complex. To what extent do you think military integration in Europe is useful?**

36 years ago I could never have imagined working with foreign military men from the Eastern Bloc. The mindset of the Cold War was in our heads and it was impossible to think otherwise. But during the 1990s everything changed, Europe has developed into something else. The European Union has achieved something that also brought different thinking and action to the military, which today makes a difference to everyone in terms of international security. Due to the current uncertainty in the whole world because of terrorism alone, it is important to stand up together, making sense for military integration in Europe.

# PREVIEW / FULL ISSUES

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## IMPRINT

The e-journal "Ethics and Armed Forces" (ISSN 2199-4137) is a free-of-charge, non-commercial, digital publication containing journalistic and editorial content. It is produced by Zentrum für ethische Bildung in den Streitkräften – zebis, Herrnegraben 4, 20459 Hamburg. Director of zebis: Dr. Veronika Bock

**Note: The published articles do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editors and publishers.**

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Katholische Soldatenseelsorge (KS)

### Legal form

Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts

### Supervision

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Date of Publication: December 1, 2018



ethicsandarmedforces.com



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