



Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator

Introduction

The **Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)** and the **European Defence Agency (EDA)** are both under the jurisdiction of the Council of the European Union and must report to the Council on a regular basis. They are both the responsibility of the Council, and are subject to control, accountability and further development by the intergovernmental method of decision-making which is reserved to the Member States with little or no direct involvement of the European Parliament or the Commission. The CFSP has a longer history having been established under the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The EDA was agreed in July 2004 and set up in early 2005.

Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

The **Common Foreign and Security Policy** was originally referred to as the "common foreign policy" in the Treaty of Maastricht (1992). Today, the CFSP has much more of an institutional framework than it did in 1992. The most important change occurred with the Treaty of Amsterdam (1999) which created the position of High Representative for the CFSP (on the basis of 5-year appointments) and which specifically addressed the CFSP in Articles 11-28. (The High Representative is also the Secretary General of the Council.) The first High Representative is **Javier Solana Madariaga** who was appointed in 1999. His role is defined in Article 26 of the Treaty on European Union as follows:

"The Secretary-General of the Council, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, shall assist the Council in matters coming within the scope of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, in particular through contributing to the formulation, preparation and implementation of policy decisions, and, when appropriate and acting on behalf of the Council at the request of the Presidency, through conducting political dialogue with third parties."

The **European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)** is one of the main cornerstones of the CFSP. The ESDP has developed significantly after 11 September in recognition of the fact that threats such as terrorism are becoming more and more important outside of EU borders. Europe's strategy is outlined in the **European Security Strategy (ESS)**. The ESS was drafted by High Representative Solana and approved on 12 December 2003 by the European Council. It identifies the following key points to direct the future of the EU's security initiatives:

- 1) The EU is “inevitably a global player” and along with the United States and NATO, has to contribute to ensuring global security.
- 2) “Security is a precondition of development. Conflict not only destroys infrastructure, including social infrastructure; it also encourages criminality, deters investment and makes normal economic activity impossible.” The EU identifies poverty (specifically citing the growing problem of AIDS in Africa) as a security threat.
- 3) The ESS defines the EU’s dependence on imported oil, global warming, and increasing competition for natural resources as causes for concern.
- 4) Terrorism is recognized as a “growing strategic threat.” The ESS
 - Recognizes the new nature of terrorism and identifies the “pressures of modernisation, cultural, social, and political crises, and the alienation of young people living in foreign societies” as the main causes.
 - Recognizes that Europe is both a target and a base for terrorist activity. Thus it recognizes that it must respond to such threats both internally and externally.
- 5) “Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is potentially the greatest threat to our security” especially in the Middle East. The ESS specifically refers to the threat of such weapons falling into the hands of terrorists.
- 6) “Regional Conflicts...can lead to extremism, terrorism and state failure; it provides opportunities for organized crime...and [it can also] fuel demand for WMD. *The most practical way to tackle the often elusive new threats will sometimes be to deal with the older problems of regional conflict.*” Examples include Kashmir and the Korean Peninsula.
- 7) State Failure and bad governance can lead to the collapse of the state from within undermining global governance and adding to regional instability.
- 8) The EU “is a prime target for organized crime.” “Such criminal activities are often associated with weak or failing states.” Once more, this can be linked to terrorism.

The ESS concludes by stating “taking these different elements together - terrorism committed to maximum violence, the availability of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, the weakening of the states system and the privatisation of force - we could be confronted with a very radical threat.”¹ The ESS is extremely important because it identifies and defines the root causes of and the extent of the security threat as the European Union sees them. The ESS even states in the introduction that “the progressive spread of the rule of law and democracy has seen authoritarian regimes change into secure, stable and dynamic democracies.” Therefore, it almost implies that democracy and economic development is a prerequisite to security and to the dismantling of terrorism. If this is the case, addressing the identified problems which lead to terrorism is an immense and important task. There are numerous examples of failing states, regional conflicts, bad governance, and poor economic development. The ESS sets out the context in which European Union focuses on security at a global level.

¹ Council of the European Union. “A Secure Europe in a Better World – European Security Strategy,” 12 December 2003. EU 15 Oct. 2004. <http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/showPage.ASP?id=266&lang=EN&mode=g>.

European Defence Agency (EDA)

Following the in principle agreement at the European Council at Thessaloniki (June 2003), the Council took a joint action decision to establish the **European Defence Agency (EDA)** in July 2004. This new Agency is open to all Member States (through joint action) who express their interest in participating. The Agency's primary functions are to: develop "defence capabilities, research, acquisition and armaments" and to act "in support of the CFSP and the ESDP."²

There are many concerns about the creation of this new Agency.

- 1) Both the EDA and the Council have been criticized in general terms for succumbing to political and business pressures.
- 2) Since the EDA is responsible to the Council, the European Parliament has very little influence in the creation of the policies of the EDA.
- 3) There is some concern that the EDA will not be a very strong international entity when it comes to military capacity because European Union Member States are already committed to NATO and because the EU does not have unlimited military resources.
- 4) Others believe that the EDA is a tool for the arms industry to better access resources for research and development and to develop its markets within the EU.
- 5) Finally, the absence of a complementary European Peacebuilding Agency with a focus on civilian capabilities and research means that the EDA will contribute to the increasing focus on military capability within the EU in the context of ESDP at the expense of developing further effective and professional civilian capabilities.

Counter-terrorism Co-ordinator

The Council also decided to appoint an EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. The first EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator appointed by Javier Solana is Gijs de Vries (appointed in March 2004). The EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator "will contribute to ensure that the efforts in the field of ESDP are developed in a coordinated way with the overall EU framework"³. As Gijs de Vries himself stated, "we are not in the business of creating a new institution, or a new bureaucracy, we are in the business of making sure that the commitments entered into will be carried out as planned."⁴ Exactly how he will do this is unclear but in the words of High Representative Solana, he must first "analyse the work that has been done so far and see how it can be done in a more efficient manner," then do preparatory work for the Ministers of the Interior for Council decisions, and finally he must "make sure that every country, once a decision has been made collectively by the European Union, implements it at national level."⁵

² Council Joint Action, 2004/551/CFSP. 12 July 2004

³ Conceptual Framework on the ESDP dimension of the fight against terrorism, 18 November 2004, available at: <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/04/st14/st14797.en04.pdf>

⁴ Vries, Gijs de. Joint Press Briefing. Brussels, 30 March, 2004 (S0090/04)

⁵ Solana, Javier. Joint Press Briefing. Brussels, 30 March, 2004 (S0090/04)

An example of Gijs de Vries' recent work was presented in his interview with EuroActiv on 2 March 2005. He mentions the joint situation centre, SITCEN which is an "integrated group of analysts from [the EU's] external intelligence services and the internal security services to jointly assess the terrorist threat as it develops both inside Europe and outside."⁶ In addition, he expressed the need to have global standards, the need for effective information exchange at all levels, and the importance of empowering moderate Muslims both inside and outside of the European Union.

References

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- European Security Strategy - http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/showPage.ASP?id=266&lang=EN&mode=g
- ESDP: an overview by Jean-Yves Haine - <http://www.iss-eu.org/>
- Nicole Gnesotto - ESDP: A European View - <http://www.eusec.org/gnesotto.htm>
- The EurActive interview with Gijs de Vries is available at: http://www.euractiv.com/Article?_lang=EN&tcmuri=tcm:29-136245-16&type=Interview
- For the 2005 objectives of the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Gijs de Vries, please see <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2005/mar/eu-counter-terr-2005.pdf> .

⁶ *EuroActiv*, "Gijs de Vries on Terrorism, Islam and Democracy," 2 March 2005 EU 8 June 2005. <http://www.euractiv.com/Article?_lang=EN&tcmuri=tcm:29-136245-16&type=Interview>.