Defending Europe:

An introduction to and critique of the militarisation of the European Union

Introduction

The European Union (EU) is at its heart a peace project. Born out of centuries of war, it has successfully created peaceful relations across the once war-torn continent. That is not to say that the EU is without its problems, some of which are discussed in this paper, but its success in sustaining peace is to be celebrated. As well as the achievements within its own borders, the EU has developed a foreign policy which reflects its peace-centred beginnings. The EU is celebrated as having an effective and comprehensive approach to interacting with other states, governments, and nations, as

World War II bore the seeds of European integration; because of war, Europe worked towards peace.

well as with regional and international bodies. It places significant emphasis on strengthening the international rule of law and on fostering good relations. It is the world's largest donor of development aid.[1] It has one of the world's most effective humanitarian aid organisations (DG ECHO) and is beginning to develop its own conflict prevention capacity. It provides a diplomatic presence for Europe in 139 countries worldwide.[2]

Alongside its success in developing a civilian-led foreign policy, the EU also includes institutions which have become increasingly militarised. Over the last twenty years, a host of committees, agencies, and departments designed to foster cooperation on issues of defence and security between the Member States have been created. Far from being an inevitable consequence of European integration, this militarisation represents a corruption of the European project. At the European Council in

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What is militarisation?

Militarisation is the process by which the presence and the approaches of the military are made normal, whilst nonviolent civilian methods to achieving political and economic ends are side-lined. It is a complex process that can occur at all levels of society: between people, between communities, and between states. Relations between two countries can be militarised, as during the Cold War between the US and the USSR or on the Korean peninsula today. Azerbaijan's massive increase in military spending over the last decade indicates a militarisation of the Caucasus[1]. Militarisation can manifest itself in many different ways. In situations of tension between different states, we can look at increases in military expenditure or the rhetoric of political leaders. At the national level, say in education policy, we might look at the numbers of military personnel visiting schools or the significance given to military history in the national curriculum.

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[1] The EU provided EUR 55.2 billion of Official Development Assistance in 2012. European Commission, *Annual Report 2013 on the European Union's Development and external assistance policies and their implementation in 2012*, COM(2013) 594 final (August 2013) [on-line], accessed 6 September 2013, available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/ multimedia/publications/documents/annual-reports/ europeaid_annual_report_2013_highlights_en.pdf

[2] European Commission, *Taking Europe to the World: 50 Years of the European Commission's External Service*, available at http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/docs/50_years_brochure_en.pdf

December 2013 and beyond, the Member States, the External Action Service, and the European Commission should cease working to develop a militarised European Union and instead focus on strengthening the foundations of the civilian-led foreign policy. Civil society must work more effectively to challenge the militarism that corrupts parts of the European Council and European Commission, and which creeps into the European Parliament and the External Action Service. More resources and better coordination are needed by peace organisations to support the EU in upholding the importance of an alternative to the militarist reflex with which many countries, including EU Member States, approach foreign policy.

1. Europe and the military

Europe's countries have a long history of prioritising a strong, large military, and the recent growth of military approaches and military structures in Brussels in many ways simply continues that tradition. Before detailing how certain institutions of the EU are militarising, we briefly outline how Europe as a continent is already a heavily militarised area.

Military spending

European governments are amongst the largest spenders on defence in the world. Military expenditure by Western and Central European countries makes up 28% of the global total, despite representing only 7% of the world's population.[3] UK military spending is the fourth highest in the world (for less than 1% of the world's population), and that of France ranks fifth. Among other EU Member States, Germany makes it into the top ten military spenders at ninth place, while Italy is 11th.[4] And spending is not being rationalised today: the Council of the European Union in November 2013 noted a need for "sufficient expenditures related to security and defence".[5]

EU military expenditure in 2010 totalled €194 billion, a decrease of around 7.6% from 2008. The peace dividend which could have been generated by the end of the Cold War has been frittered away, particularly through the continued spending on military hardware at a time when social expenditure has been eviscerated by budget cuts. Weapons are being modernised: by way of example, the UK is replacing its Trident nuclear submarines at a cost expected to be between £15 and £20 billion. New weapons systems such as armed drones and new fighter aircraft are still heavily funded.[6] Massive arms spending prior to 2008 by countries such as Spain and Greece has left them with daunting debt overhangs, while in countries less hit by the crisis such as Germany, and, to some extent, France, military expenditure continues largely unscathed.

Military alliances and military interventionism

Alongside colossal military expenditure, many European states have been part of the military alliance of NATO for the same period of time that they have been in the economic and political partnership that is the EU.[7] NATO also links EU participating states militarily with six nations who are not part of the EU (Canada, Norway, Iceland, Turkey, Albania and the US - the world's biggest military spender).

EU Treaty Law provides only a limited foundation for building military cooperation, but this has not been an impediment for Member States eager to increase efficiency though such cooperation with

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[3] These and other figures in this section are sourced from Slijper F (2013). *Guns, Debt and Corruption*. Campagne tegen Wapenhandel. (http://www.tni.org/sites/www.tni.org/files/download/eu_milspending_crisis.pdf, accessed 12 November 2013)

[4] Slijper (2013). Population figures are from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population [accessed 11/13]

[5] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/139719.pdf [accessed 11/13]

[6] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-13442735 [accessed 14/11/2013]

[7] Of the 28 EU Member States, only six are not NATO members: Malta, Cyprus, Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden. Of these, all except Cyprus are members of NATO's 'Partnership for Peace', a programme aimed at building trust between NATO and non-NATO members. There is a high degree of cross-over between the two groupings.

other EU member states. There are a variety of other agreements which involve some form of military co-operation between EU Member States, sometimes with other countries. Most are driven by attempts to share military costs. For example, the EU Battlegroups are an initiative aimed at promoting the integration of national armed forces and providing the EU with an independent military capability. They are supposed to be the "rapid response" force of the EU and are designed to fulfil the Petersberg Tasks[8]: "joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation". The Battlegroups each consist of around 1500 to 2000 military personnel including support and service staff from two or three Member States, who are on stand by in case they are called to action by the Member States through the Council. For example, the Nordic Battlegroup, of 2400 soldiers, comprises Sweden, Finland, Norway, Estonia, and Ireland, and exists to "carry out peace-support, peace-enforcement, evacuation and humanitarian operations".[9]

The Benelux Alliance consists of personnel from Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. These three countries have collaborated on projects such as naval integration and joint army operations for some time. In April 2012, defence ministers from these three countries signed an agreement promising to further this collaboration. Four key areas were particularly highlighted for integration: logistics and maintenance, education and training, executing military tasks, and procurement of equipment.[10]

The Weimar Triangle (France, Germany and Poland) and the Visegrád group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) both promote closer co-operation between their members on economic, social, and military issues. In 2011, the Weimar Triangle agreed to form a battlegroup consisting of 1700 soldiers,[11] while the Visegrád groups has agreed to form a 3000 solider battlegroup which should be active by early 2016.[12]

In addition to formal alliances, there are also more informal co-operations. The Franco-British co-operation policy is a prime example. The two nations have a long-standing alliance that has seen many forms of collaboration, including work on fighter aircraft and nuclear weapons development.[13]

Weapons exports

The EU is a major producer and exporter of weapons. Between 2008 and 2012, approximately 30% of international arms transfers were made by EU Member States.[14] Some of the world's largest arms manufacturers are based in Europe, including BAE Systems, EADS, Finmeccanica, and Thales.

In 2011, France alone exported at least €9 billion (bn) of military equipment, with just over €900 million worth of that going to Saudi Arabia. Britain in the same period exported around at least €7bn worth of military hardware, and Saudi Arabia (€2bn in goods) was one of its major customers. And even EU Member States with lesser known arms industries export considerable quantities. For example, in 2011, Austria sold a total of €1.6bn of military equipment to other nations, with €400 million of military exports going to Kuwait, its biggest military trading partner.[15] Exporting arms has therefore become a priority for European nations looking for economic boosts, at a time of economic struggle.

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[8] The 'Petersburg Tasks' were originally created in 1992 at a meeting of the Council of the Western European Union. They were explicitly included in the Treaty of Nice, amending Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union. The tasks were expanded in the Treaty of Lisbon.

[9] http://web.archive.org/web/20060824044530/http://www.mil.se/index.php?lang=E&c=news&id=32771 [accessed 11/13] http://www.government.se/sb/d/9133/a/82276 [accessed 11/13]

[10] http://www.egmontinstitute.be/speechnotes/13/130513-Future-Benelux-Defence-Cooperation.pdf [accessed 11/13]

[11] http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/military-france.b52 [accessed 11/13]

[12] http://visegradrevue.eu/?p=806 [accessed 11/13]

[13] http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/International%20Security/0311pp_gomis.pdf [accessed 11/13]

[14] SIPRI, *SIPRI Yearbook 2013*.

[15] http://www.caat.org.uk/resources/export-licences-eu/licence.en.html?source=Austria&year=2011 [accessed 11/13]

The Council of the European Union in November 2013 highlighted "the need to build on the results achieved so far and renew the commitment by Member States … to foster a more integrated, sustainable, innovative and competitive European defence technological and industrial base all across the EU, on which the capabilities of the future depend and which provides jobs, growth and innovation."[16] The link of science and economic growth with militarism is one of the developments which is of great concern. What is missing is a concern as to the purchasers and end use of the innovation and manufacture of military capabilities; the fundamental values of the EU should frame its other activities including concern for creation of jobs.

2. The Europeanisation of defence and EU militarisation

The EU is a constantly evolving set of institutions, which, amongst other objectives, seek to project Europe on the world stage. EU foreign policy is implemented by institutions and agencies working with the full range of tools such as humanitarian aid and international trade. The EU seeks to have a coherence and complementarity between domestic policy and external policy. The EU has built a reputation of having an effective foreign policy and has done so without direct access to military assets. It has become an important actor on the global stage and established its own unique approach to interacting with third countries. These are successes which should be robustly appreciated. However, despite these successes, there are those who seek a military role for the EU. Some aspire to Europe becoming relatively independent from NATO, others for a greater EU contribution to alleviate the pressure on NATO. Some would look to the EU as a way to reduce bilateral military effort, while others look to the EU to compensate for what they see as insufficient national effort.

A common defence policy and military cooperation

The end of the Cold War marked a major turning point for the EU, particular with regards to foreign policy. The Maastricht Treaty, signed in 1992, advocates "the progressive framing of a common defence policy, which might lead to a common defence". The crisis in the Balkans in the late 1990s triggered further developments in an EU foreign policy. Speaking in 1998, Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac, stated, "the [European] Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises."

The Common Defence and Security Policy
Developing a European military capability

Militarisation has taken its most concrete form in the European Union through the creation - and continuing expansion - of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Whilst still entirely intergovernmental, the existence of military structures within the EU signals a move to some degree of competency in defence. The Treaty on European Union (Preamble) advocates the "progressing framing of a common defence policy, which might lead to a common defence".

Overseas Missions

Article 43(1) of the Treaty on European Union states that CSDP "shall provide the Union with an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets. The Union may use them on missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening

> "We now see broad acknowledgement from our civilian diplomatic colleagues that the military indeed can play a very useful role in support of the EU's objectives on prosperity, peace and security."[1]
>
> *Lt Gen van Osch, Head of EU Military Staff, May 2009 to May 2013*

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[16] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/139719.pdf [accessed 30/11/13]

international security." The EU can launch missions overseas for any number of reasons, but missions are most often aimed at strengthening the rule of law, training government military forces, and border monitoring in non-EU countries. Since 2003, there have been a total of 34 missions launched through the EU and CSDP.[17] Seventeen of these are currently active,[18] whilst the other seventeen have come to the end of their mandate and not been renewed. In May 2012, there were approximately 4055 personnel posted in the EU CSDP missions.[19]

Of the 34 CSDP missions, ten have been explicitly military in nature, with military command structures and mobilisation of armed forces of EU Member States. The EU itself has no military so relies on the Member States to provide personnel and equipment. This has proved difficult as Member States have proved very unwilling to provide the EU with personnel and equipment for both the civilian and military CSDP missions.

The Military Staff, Military Committee, and the Political and Security Committee

The nascent defence and military ambitions of the EU are carried out on a day-to-day basis by a number of committees and agencies. The most important of these are the EU Military Staff, the Military Committee and the Political and Security Committee.

The European Union Military Staff (EUMS) is the division of the EEAS tasked with providing military expertise to the foreign policy of the EU. In 2013, 176 uniformed personnel seconded from the militaries of the Member States comprised the EUMS. The EUMS reports directly to the head of the External Action Service, currently Catherine Ashton (UK).

The EU Military Committee (EUMC) is a body of the Council at which representatives from the armed forces of the Member States meet to discuss foreign and defence policy. Their main responsibility is to advise the Political and Security Committee of the Council (PSC) on policy areas which have military implications.

The PSC is a committee at which representatives from the Member States meet once a week to discuss foreign policy. In contrast to the EUMC, the representatives are civilians; diplomats from the Member States. Indeed, Member States often have an ambassador whose is responsibility is to supervise CFSP and CSDP through the PSC. The Council Decision (2001/78/CFSP) establishing the PSC describes the committee has "the linchpin of the European security and defence policy".

Supporting the arms trade

As discussed above, Europe is a major exporter of weapons and armaments, accounting for around 30% of global arms exports between 2008 and 2012. The myopic focus of the European Commission, and many Member State governments, on neo-liberal economic policies has led to policies geared towards supporting the European arms trade. As European governments cut their national defence budgets, this inevitably means a more aggressive approach to selling arms abroad.

A key development in this story was the creation of the European Defence Agency (the EDA). Set up as an agency of the Council of Ministers in 2004, the EDA is tasked with increasing cooperation between the militaries of EU Member States. In 2012, it had a budget of €30.53 million and employed 118

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[17] For more information on the CSDP missions, see the 'CSDP Mission Chart' maintained by 'International Security Information Service – Europe'. Available at http://www.isis-europe.eu/project/CSDP-MAP [Accessed 24/04/2013]

[18] ISIS Europe, 2013. 'CSDP Note – Chart and Table of CSDP and EU missions', *ISIS Europe CSDP Notes* [online] July 2013 Available at http://www.isis-europe.eu/sites/default/files/publications-downloads/ISIS-CSDP%20mission%20chart%20and%20table%20July%202013.pdf [accessed 08/07/2013]

[19] ISIS Europe, 2013.'CSDP mission personnel statistics from May 2013'. Available at <http://isis-europe.eu/sites/default/files/page-attachments/Copy%20of%20mission%20personnel-June2013.pdf> [accessed 30/07/2013]

members of staff.[20] The European Defence Agency is funded directly by Member State contributions, with France, Germany and the United Kingdom providing over 50% of the budget.[21] It is mandated to perform four tasks related to defence and military policy:[22]

- Developing and monitoring military capability objectives for EU Member States

- Promoting and enhancing European cooperation on arms procurement and production

- Supporting defence technology research and coordinating joint research activities

- Strengthening the industrial and technological base of the defence sector

The EU does not have its own military or the power to purchase equipment itself, so the EDA instead focuses on helping Member States work together on defence procurement and military cooperation. It serves various other functions too, including collating data on the defence expenditure and military capabilities of the participating Member States.[23] The EDA is an opt-in structure: Denmark is not a member, and the UK weaves anguished knots about its involvement.[24]

Commission Communication: 'Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector'

In July 2013, building on the 'Defence Package'[25], the Commission adopted a policy document outlining out how it could strengthen Europe's defence industries. The Communication, 'Towards a more competitive and efficient defence security sector', begins:

> *The strategic and geopolitical environment is rapidly and constantly evolving. The world's balance of power is shifting as new centres of gravity are emerging and the US is rebalancing its strategic focus towards Asia. In this situation, Europe has to assume greater responsibilities for its security at home and abroad.*

The Communication proposes the Commission to take up four strands of work: effective implementation of the Defence Package on marketing arms, to strengthen the competiveness of the European defence industrial base, to "exploit civilian military synergies", particularly regarding research funding; and, lastly, to prepare the ground for increased cooperation between Member States, including by "assessing the possibility of EU-owned dual-use[26] capabilities" and "considering launching a preparatory action for CSDP-related research". The Communication details specific measures the Commission would take, including:

- Launching an EU military research programme

- The possibility of military "assets directly purchased, owned and operated by the Union".

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[20]European Defence Agency, 2013.*Annual Report 2012*. [online] EU Publications Office: Luxembourg Available at <http://www.eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/eda-factsheets/annual-report_web> [Accessed 26/06/2013]

[21]European Defence Agency, 2012. *European Defence Agency 2011 Financial Report*. [online] Available at <http://eda.europa.eu/docs/finance-documents/2011-financial-report.pdf?sfvrsn=0> [Accessed 01/07/13]

[22] Council Joint Action 2004/551/CFSP of 12 July 2004 on the establishment of the European Defence Agency

23 See EDA website 'Defence Data'. <http://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/defence-data-portal> [Accessed 26/07/13]

24 'The problem of European defence is that it does not work with the United Kingdom, but would not work without it either.' Sven Biscop (2012). 'The UK and European defence: leading or leaving? Royal Institute of International Affairs.

[25] The Defence Package is composed of two Directives that were passed into law in 2009. The Directive (2009/81/EC) concerns the inclusion of defence procurement in the rules of the single market. It attempts to improve the openness and transparency in how Member States allocate public defence contracts by including such contracts under EU public procurement law. The second Directive (2009/43/EC) concerned "simplifying terms and conditions of transfers of defence-related products within the Community". It attempts to streamline the transfer of goods subject to arms export controls between Member States.

[26] 'Dual-use' refers to goods that have the potential for both civil and military application. Many defence technologies now rely on off-the-shelf commercial products. This makes drawing the line between civil and military difficult. 'Dual-use' is thus an important area for export control systems.

The Commission still does not seem sure whether its involvement is under the guise of defence industrial policy, and thus support for European military capability, or simply the expansion of the single market. Is it trying to bring the arms trade under the rules of the common market, or simply promote the growth and stability of the European defence sector? There are limitations to how far the Commission could go in bringing the defence industries under the rules of the internal market: Article 346(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, 2007) allows Member States to protect their weapons manufacturing capabilities in the interests of national security[27] , although the scope of the article in contested. As the Commission strives to deepen its role in this area, it may try to narrow the applicability of Article 346. For example, in the recent communication on defence, the Commission decided to "ensure that all necessary conditions are fulfilled when Article 346 TFEU is invoked to justify state aid measures". It will now scrutinise more closely the decisions of Member States when they invoke Article 346.

This Communication is not the first time the Commission has issued policies on the European armaments industry; proposals relating to the defence industries were published in 1996, 1997, 2003, 2006 and 2007.[28]

Horizon 2020

The EU is also showing evidence of becoming militarised in its funding of research and development. The next Research Framework Programme, 'Horizon 2020', will last for seven years from 2014 to 2020 and is estimated to be worth around €80 billion, with €2 billion earmarked for security research.[29]

Security research is a highly sensitive and controversial policy area for the Commission because the programme is explicitly civilian in nature. The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) of the EU, when it met in March 2012, adopted the following conclusions:

> *It [the FAC] encourages the EDA and the Commission to pursue synergies with European policies and in particular in the field of Research and Technology, including regarding the new European Framework Programme for Research and Technology (Horizon 2020). This will contribute to strengthening the European Defence Industrial and Technological Base.[30]*

Likewise, in its Communication on the defence industries, the Commission notes:

> *While the research and innovation activities carried out under Horizon 2020 will have an exclusive focus on civil applications, the Commission will evaluate how the results in these areas could benefit also defence and security industrial capabilities.[31]*

By opening Horizon 2020 to defence research, the Commission is explicitly supporting the arms trade.

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[27] Article 346 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union reads: *"The provisions of the Treaties shall not preclude the application of the following rules:(a) no Member State shall be obliged to supply information the disclosure of which it considers contrary to the essential interests of its security;(b) any Member State may take such measures as it considers necessary for the protection of the essential interests of its security which are connected with the production of or trade in arms, munitions and war material; such measures shall not adversely affect the conditions of competition in the internal market regarding products which are not intended for specifically military purposes."*

[28] For an overview of EU policy relating to the defence industries, see <http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/rules/defence_procurement/policy_background_en.htm>

[29] Available at <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=5618&lang=en&tpa_id=168>

[30] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/129252.pdf

[31] Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions: 'Towards A More Competitive And Efficient Defence And Security Sector' Available at <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/defence/files/communication_defence_en.pdf> [accessed 25/07/2013]

3. What is wrong with a militarising Brussels?

The EU's strength in foreign policy comes in its civilian-led approach based on fostering cooperation, and supporting economic and political development. The EU has vaunted its example as a rules-based form of international cooperation, and has consistently encouraged the internationalisation of the rule of law. By looking towards the military to fulfil its foreign policy objectives the EU risks undermining its most influential tools, and by instead opting for a discredited, ineffective approach to global interaction. The European Union will not outcompete nation states in this outmoded game.

Limiting policy space

The EU's Common Defence and Security Policy is a civilian policy led by civil servants working toward non-military objectives. The overseas missions, arguably the most important aspect of CSDP, have been almost entirely civilian in nature: of the 34 overseas missions that have taken place since 2003, only 10 have mobilised the armed forces of EU Member States. Of those 10, only a handful were given a 'combat mandate'; most were training and support missions involving the militaries of Member States. Yet, despite this civilian focus, the military aspects of European defence policy are given disproportionate attention in academia and in papers by Member States and EU institutions[32] in preparation for the European Council meeting.[33] For example, in July 2013, a paper co-written by Germany and France suggested three focus areas for the December meeting: increase the effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP; increase the development of military capabilities; and strengthen Europe's defence industry. The focus on the military aspects even of those overseas missions purporting to have non-military objectives, reduces the space in which people involved and observing can enhance non-military aspects. Attention to the root causes of conflict, to the need for post-conflict peacebuilding, and to the need for conflict sensitivity in operations, are all pushed to one side by the focus on militarism.

The inefficacy of military action

Military action in foreign countries causes turmoil, results in large numbers of deaths and injuries, and is not effective as a means to achieve political goals. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have totally failed in their objectives, caused loss of life on the largest scale, and wreaked havoc with the economies of all parties involved. All EU Member States who are in NATO have taken part in the long-running conflict in Afghanistan. Of non-NATO EU Member States, only Cyprus and Malta have not contributed troops to the conflict.[34] EU Member States have lost a combined total of 831 service personnel in Afghanistan, with thousands more injured both physically and mentally.[35]

The consequences of initiating military interventions with abject failure to consider the exit strategies has led to untold suffering in Afghanistan, Iraq, and in Libya. The spill-over consequences of the Libyan adventure are being felt in Mali and the Central African Republic, and are undermining the hard-won diplomatic efforts of the EU in its relations with the African Union in particular and with Africa in general.

Democratic scrutiny

A major defect of EU defence policy is that it is cobbled together by EU Defence Ministers outside of the treaties. The defence policy is as a consequence conducted almost exclusively without the democratic scrutiny offered by the European Parliament. No one Member State has a handle on EU military matters – the one Parliament which might scrutinise it is muzzled by the extra-Parliamentary scheming of the Ministers in informal caucuses.

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[32] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/139719.pdf
[33] http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131015_02_en.pdf
[34] http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2013_10/20131021_131001-ISAF-Placemat.pdf
[35] http://icasualties.org/OEF/Index.aspx

Recent events in Syria have reminded us of the importance of democratic checks on the executive when it comes to military action. In the UK, the Coalition government had decided to support US military action in Syria, but after losing a vote in Parliament it was forced to back down[36]. What are the corresponding controls on EU military adventurism at an EU level?

4. What should the future of EU foreign and defence policy be?

The success of the EU depends upon it remaining true to its origins.

Celebrating the EU as an alternative to militarism

The EU was conceived as a peace project, created out of the destruction of the Second World War to ensure that armed conflict between European states could never take place again. Sixty years later, social, institutional and economic connections make war within the EU inconceivable. The story of European integration began as a story of peace. QCEA believes that it is by exporting its values and its success as a peace project that the EU can be most effective on the international stage, not by emulating the military power of the US, Russia and others.

The EU is not naturally a military alliance. Its strength comes in its 'soft power': its ability to wield influence without relying on military strength. Through its development aid, civilian-led overseas missions, and its role in strengthening international law, the European project has thus far represented an alternative to the militarism often present at the national level. For the EU to focus on developing military capability is to relegate its potential strength in using soft power to second place when instead its soft power should be at the forefront of its external relations.

The greatest strength of EU foreign policy is the range of civilian-led tools that it uses to create a more just and peaceful world. It is these agencies, instruments and institutions that should be strengthened and supported in the years to come. The debate around the future of EU defence policy – currently focussed on the European Council this December – is in danger of marginalising the successful civilian-led approach the EU is commended for.

Recommendations

For all EU bodies and Member State representatives involved in planning the future of EU foreign policy, in particular CSDP:

> Dedicate equal space to civilian CSDP at the December Council and thus refuse to let military CSDP eclipse this larger, more important aspect of EU security and defence policy.

> Commit to a nonviolent, civilian-led foreign policy by refusing to support the proposals of the European Commission to develop, amongst other things, an EU-led drone project.

> Create a more democratic and accountable CFSP and CSDP by allowing journalists greater access to the PSC and by publishing the voting records of Member States in the FAC.

> EU research funding should remain exclusively civilian in character, focusing on improving human well-being and not be directed towards the defence industries and arms manufacture.

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[36]Watt, N., Mason, R., and Hopkins, N., 'Blow to Cameron's authority as MPs rule out British assault on Syria', *The Guardian* [newspaper online], Friday 30th August 2013, accessed 6 September 2013, available at <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/aug/30/cameron-mps-syria>

For NGOs and peace organisations:

> Continue to coordinate EU-level campaigns which, whilst critical of EU militarisation, highlight the successes and importance of a nonviolent, civilian-led EU foreign policy, and which propose realistic and achievable policy recommendations for the future CSFP and CSDP.

> National-level NGOs should monitor the decisions of their national governments at EU level and hold them to account regarding the focus on militarism and facilitating funding for their defence industry from EU sources.

For individuals concerned by EU militarisation:

> Investigate the position of your MEPs regarding EU defence policy in the build-up to the European elections in May 2014. Remind your friends and neighbours that disengagement from the EU is not a serious alternative to the dialogue and negotiation that is necessary for peaceful interstate relations.

> Write in your local newspaper, community publications or blogs about the upcoming December Council and the militarisation of the EU. Remember to highlight the centrality of peace to the process of European integration and note the potential of the EU to present a serious alternative to the militarist foreign policies of some Member States.

Conclusion

QCEA congratulates the EU on its success in supporting peace-building activities worldwide inter alia through development funding. However, these successes are undermined by prioritisation of military approaches and teams in CSDP. In December 2013, the European Council will discuss the future of CSDP and the majority of discussions in preparation for the Council meeting focus on improving EU military capabilities, and take place in informal formats under the radar screen of public scrutiny. This is a monstrous error. We should instead focus on improving and building on the successes of the EU as a peacebuilder and a union focussed on people's well-being: this is what the EU can and must be good at if it is to regain its necessary and rightful place in the governance of Europe.

As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon wrote in 2012:

> *Many defence establishments now recognize that security means far more than protecting borders. Grave security concerns can arise as a result of demographic trends, chronic poverty, economic inequality, environmental degradation, pandemic diseases, organized crime, repressive governance and other developments no state can control alone. Arms can't address such concerns.*[37]

Researched and written by Chris Venables; edited by Alexandra Bosbeer
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[37]UN Office for Disarmament, 2012. 'The world is over-armed and peace is under-funded', *UN Office for Disarmament* website [online]. Available at <http://www.un.org/disarmament/update/20120830/> [Accessed 23/05/13]