
Europe and security: the necessity of a choice.

Cristina Rago

Among the various difficulties that European Union has to face in its always ongoing evolution, the obscure implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the incapability to have a single and strong voice in its foreign policy seem to be a serious impasse.

EU has been showing a dialectic relation with the security dimension since its birth, even if its primary goal concerned exactly reconciliation and security among European countries in order to avoid any other conflict after two world wars.

Professor Vittorio Emanuele Parsi analyses this dialectic relation through the history of European integration up till now in his last paper *The real challenge of Europe: from consumer to security producer*, presented during a convention organized by Jean Monnet Chair in

History of European Integration at the Political Science Faculty in Forlì University and the information centre Punto Europa in Forlì.

Despite the absence of the security dimension in the explicit agenda of the founders, this topic has always played a central role in the evolution of the EU. At the beginning the absence itself allows members to give easily away part of their national sovereignty in favour of a supranational centre of power which is unusually devoid of the use of force.

In the international context after World War II security is guaranteed by the bipolar system where USA and USSR are ready to intervene in defence of their allies. Undoubtedly, the contraposition between the two blocks favoured the European integration process: Truman administration obliges the European



countries to cooperate as a condition to enjoy the aids of the Marshall Plan. At the same time this program is also an American instrument to build a shield against the spreading of the communist threat.

USA guarantees European security through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in which at the beginning it plays an undisputed hegemonic role. As the European Allies rebuild their own military capabilities, USA starts to be on the alert and the first transatlantic tensions burst.

The above mentioned international system reveals that during European integration security is absent just in its active meaning. In fact some considerations prove it is always latent: first, in the 1950s there is an attempt of creating a European Defence Community; second, EU becomes the third pole in the transatlantic relations along with USA and European countries as single states; and, finally, European progressive enlargement reinforces security, extending the sphere of

influence of the American forces and of the transatlantic institutions.

Professor Parsi identifies three different phases in the EU history in which security assumes various configurations. The first one corresponds to the period of the Cold War, when Europe is basically a net consumer of security relying on the American nuclear force and accepting its liberal hegemony. The second period starts with the fall of the Berlin wall and views Europe as a magnet of security towards its neighbouring countries. The enlargement process leads the new members towards democratization and stability without the use of the military instruments: Europe affirms itself as civil power. At the same time NATO also lives an enlargement process, where the imperfect monopolar power of the USA is evident. This phase lasts till 2003. After the crisis in former Yugoslavia, Europe realizes that its civil power is no longer enough to face the new international threats: it needs to develop a military instrument. But how to implement that?



In the current international system, which can be identified as an asymmetric multipolarism where USA is still the superpower but other regional countries are developing their international role, such as Russia, Brasil, India, etc., Europe seems to be a radiating actor of security, providing it not just to its neighbouring countries, as in the previous phase, but also to a wider range of actors. Playing this role, it could be very important to cooperate with USA, on the basis of the similarity of values and culture that unifies them and with the common aim of producing an international order.

In this configuration, Turkey is certainly one of the challenges facing Europe. The debate on its accession is still a hot issue and its evolution will have important consequences on international security. Could Europe really contribute to the modernization of Turkey and reconcile the multicultural identity of the continent?

The Mediterranean integration represents another strategically important area for European security. But how to overcome the dichotomy

between the European integrated and institutionalized political space and the fragmented and violent system of the Southern Mediterranean region and of the Middle East? Is a cooperation framework really possible between these two systems?

The Arab–Israeli conflict is a tough challenge to Europe’s security. In order to contribute to the peace process, Europe surely needs to act with its military force and not just as civil power. The context requires an action of the international community in order to build a balance of equilibrium and contribute to the reconciliation between the two regional powers: Iran and Israel.

In conclusion, showing its own military force is becoming more and more necessary to be taken into consideration in the international system and to contribute to global security.

That is evident looking at the NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan in which allies are fighting not just against al Qaeda but also to defend their international credibility. In fact, if



ASERI Focus Security

No. 2, October 2008.

NATO was defeated, Europe would lose its role in the stabilization of the Middle East; the regional equilibrium in Asia would collapse and NATO itself would fall into a deep crisis, making Europe take distance from USA and approach Russia.

If the necessity of an action is clear, there is still a heated debate on how Europe can really become something more than a civil power for its own security.

Web resources:

- European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)
http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/cfsp/esdp/index.htmrity
- European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=261&lang=EN
- European Defence Agency
<http://www.eda.europa.eu/>
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<http://www.nato.int/>

European Defence Agency historical financials

Figures in € k	2007	2006	2005	2004
REVENUES				
MEMBER STATE CONTRIBUTIONS	20,818	21,500	19,910	1,786
DEDUCTIONS FROM STAFF REMUNERATION	1,037	837	612	39
INCOME FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	520	390	148	11
TOTAL REVENUES	22,374	22,727	20,670	1,836
EXPENSES				
PERSONNEL EXPENSES	12,626	10,847	7,453	299
FUNCTIONING EXPENSES	4,387	4,076	2,829	114
OPERATIONAL PROJECTS & STUDIES	4,485	3,887	2,495	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	21,498	18,810	12,777	413
ACCOUNTING SURPLUS	876	3,917	7,893	1,422
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE & DEPRECIATION ADJUSTMENTS	440	328	(3,462)	0
BUDGETARY SURPLUS REPAYABLE TO pMS	1,317	4,245	4,431	1,422

Source: European Defence Agency, *2007 Financial Report*, July 2008.



pMS contributions to European Defence Agency – 2007

2007 Contributions	% GNI ⁽¹⁷⁾	Budgetary Contributions	Actual Cost to pMS	Budgetary Surplus ⁽¹⁸⁾
Austria (AT)	2.2884	476,393	446,263	30,130
Belgium (BE)	2.8375	590,706	553,346	37,359
Bulgaria (BG)	0.2186	45,515	42,636	2,879
Cyprus (CY)	0.1290	26,859	25,160	1,699
Czech Republic (CZ)	0.9606	199,971	187,324	12,647
Estonia (EE)	0.1088	22,641	21,209	1,432
Finland (FI)	1.4722	306,481	287,098	19,384
France (FR)	16.0781	3,347,139	3,135,448	211,691
Germany (DE)	20.1846	4,202,027	3,936,268	265,758
Greece (EL)	1.7724	368,968	345,633	23,335
Hungary (HU)	0.7657	159,401	149,320	10,081
Ireland (IE)	1.3632	283,797	265,849	17,949
Italy (IT)	12.7991	2,664,519	2,496,001	168,518
Latvia (LV)	0.1453	30,249	28,336	1,913
Lithuania (LT)	0.2132	44,379	41,572	2,807
Luxembourg (LU)	0.2268	47,219	44,233	2,986
Malta (MT)	0.0420	8,739	8,187	553
Netherlands (NL)	4.6622	970,568	909,185	61,384
Poland (PL)	2.3013	479,091	448,791	30,300
Portugal (PT)	1.3467	280,353	262,622	17,731
Romania (RO)	0.8969	186,710	174,902	11,809
Slovakia (SK)	0.3960	82,435	77,221	5,214
Slovenia (SI)	0.2659	55,349	51,848	3,501
Spain (ES)	8.7882	1,829,532	1,713,823	115,709
Sweden (SE)	2.7211	566,469	530,643	35,826
United Kingdom (UK)	17.0165	3,542,487	3,318,442	224,046
Total 26 pMS	100%	20,818,000	19,501,360	1,316,640

⁽¹⁷⁾ 2007 GNI "Own Resources, excl. reserves", OJ n° L 77, 16.03.2007; percentages rounded to 4 decimals.

⁽¹⁸⁾ The Budgetary Surplus is returned to pMS as a deduction from the 3rd contribution in year N+1 (15 October 2008).

Source: European Defence Agency, *2007 Financial Report*, July 2008.