



THESEUS

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The EU's Role in the World – What Priorities? Revisiting the European Security Strategy
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1. Introduction

The European Council of December 2007 invited the SG/HR, in full association with the Commission and in close cooperation with the Member States, to examine the implementation of the European Security Strategy (ESS) with the aim to proposing how to improve the implementation and, as appropriate, to complement it for adoption by the European Council in December 2008.

The ESS, devised in 2003, constituted a major step in the EU developing into an increasingly important actor on the international stage. After five years, the core elements of the 2003 text remain largely valid. At the same time, the world has not been standing still and new issues have come to dominate the political agenda.

The conclusions adopted by the European Council in December 2007 specifically avoided references to developing a new strategy or even rewriting the current one. The conclusions focused rather on how improve the implementation of the ESS and highlight what has changed since the ESS was first adopted in 2003.

Hence, this paper focuses on possible elements to complement the ESS and issues which have gained in prominence since 2003.

2. Assessment

General

- In 2008, we are faced with a broadened threat perception than the one set out in the 2003 text.
- Arguably, threats have become even more complex and more interlinked since 2003. This means a more complex world, thus highlighting the need of a broad, comprehensive and coherent EU response.
- The links between 'internal' and 'external' security have become increasingly blurry, necessitating coherence in the EU's external action, with or without the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the new institutional arrangements for external policy.

Challenges and key threats

- There is no question that the five key threats (terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, organised crime and state failure) as well as the links between them remain important. It should be noted that some major progress has been made, although further measures should be considered in certain areas.
- **Terrorism** remains the biggest threat to Europe which the Madrid and London bombings have shown. Considerable progress has been made in the area of counter-terrorism, such as the 2005 Counter-Terrorism Strategy. However, cooperation between the second and third pillars needs further attention. Fighting terrorism continues to demand the use of both internal and external policies due to its intrinsic links to other threats. More cooperation in terms of sharing of information both between Member States and with key partners in this area is crucial. Some of the measures the Union needs to focus on are anticipation and reducing the risk and the threats (e.g. border controls, maritime and air cooperation), protection of critical infrastructure and emergency readiness and resilience.
- In the last five years, however, other global challenges have gained in prominence, both on the political agendas and as preoccupations to the European public.
- The security implications of migration need to be given further emphasis as emanating from other challenges such as regional conflicts, state fragility and lack of economic development. **Illegal migration** does not only give rise to public concerns but may constitute a security problem within European societies, e.g. through its links to organised crime. Furthermore, the integration of immigrants, including the potential radicalisation of groups feeling alien in the society, merits further attention of the Union.
- The security implications of **climate change** have been highlighted recently e.g. in the report of the SG/HR and the Commission, endorsed by the European Council of March 2008. The implications of climate change such as border disputes, conflicts over scarce resources such as water and increased migration, and in particular its links to key threats such as state fragility are evident. It has the potential to act not only as a security threat per se but as a multiplier of threats. Climate change may aggravate the struggle for scarce resources on the planet.
- The EU's growing **dependence on imported energy** has clear potential to become a security threat in the event that the security of energy supply is disrupted with a direct impact on the daily lives of European citizens. The fact that energy sources are increasingly located in regions of political instability increases this vulnerability. It should furthermore be noted that energy dependence reduces the room for political manoeuvre with links to other policy areas.
- In an increasingly globalised world and the challenges emanating from it, **economic and financial security** has gained in prominence. The link between security and the competition for scarce resources in particular in the third world therefore needs to be further emphasised. Poverty is one of the root causes of

insecurity. The stability of the international financial system is of particular importance to European society and imbalances, in particular in financial markets, can affect global growth with direct impact on the lives of European citizens.

- An issue that the Union needs to devote further attention to the **privatisation of force** and the decline of the state monopoly on violence. The outsourcing of providing security to private military and security companies (PMSCs) may carry potentially negative implications such as the lack of democratic oversight.

Strategic objectives

- The concept of 'effective multilateralism' needs to be further defined, including considering the threshold of EU military intervention as defined by the concept of responsibility to protect (R2P). Addressing the root causes of conflict, such as the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), needs to be given further emphasis in a new document.
- The Union needs to continue to act in full respect for fundamental rights and the principle of the rule of law, whether it concerns the fight against terrorism or the privatisation of force.
- As part of strengthening global governance, a key objective in meeting the global challenges, the Union should devote more efforts on inserting new emerging powers into the international system. The updated strategy thus needs to put a clearer emphasis on the need to reinforce cooperation with key partners on the basis of common values.
- The United States remains a key strategic partner due to the close political, economic and cultural ties with Europe and cooperation needs to be further strengthened in all areas.
- Russia remains a partner of strategic importance and the new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) should reflect this. The Union and Russia share common problems, not the least due to shared borders, that demand common solutions. Stabilising our neighbourhood together is of highest priority and the Union needs to work closely with Russia in achieving this strategic objective.

3. Policy recommendations

- In order to tackle threats such as illegal immigration and organised crime more effectively, the Member States should strengthen cooperation in police matters, an area that can preferably be further developed. The coherence between Member States in the Area of Freedom, Justice and Security needs to be strengthened in order to arrive at a better coordination between external actions and Justice and Home Affairs policies.
- The Union needs to engage in a policy of diversification of energy supply, including routes, for example to Central Asia, in order to lessen its dependence

on the Gulf States and Russia in the area of energy. Energy should also be made an integral part in the new PCA to be negotiated with Russia. The Union also needs to step up its efforts to achieve a broader energy mix in the medium term. This includes continued investments in research on renewable energy, but may also include reconsideration of the role of nuclear energy. The solidarity between the Member States should be strengthened; one signal would be for the European Council to adopt a declaration that it considers energy to be part of the solidarity clause.

- The Union needs to continue to pursue a proactive and coherent 'green diplomacy' at the highest level, ensuring that the EU remains a global leader in multilateral climate negotiations. The possibility to strengthen industrial, research and technology partnerships with key actors such as the US and China in the area of climate change should be explored in view of bringing key polluters on board a new multilateral regime. The Union should furthermore consider including ecological and environmental concerns as part of its conditionality clauses in the areas of trade and development aid. The EU should furthermore consider restrictive measures, compatible with WTO rules, for products with higher ecological footprint entering the single market. As the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) has had mainly positive effects in fighting climate change, the model should be encouraged in other parts of the world as a market-based system.
- The protection of critical infrastructure is essential as it has links to both energy security and counter-terrorism. This does not necessarily limit itself to physical infrastructure, but the growth of internet technology – in particular society's increasing dependency on the internet – needs to be given further attention.
- The Union needs to stabilise financial markets by making them more accountable and transparent by drawing on its competences across the pillars.
- There is a need to devote further attention to the privatisation of force, including the need to regulate PMSCs. In first place, a code of conduct should be elaborated.
- The creation of a comprehensive, institutional framework with the United States – going beyond the existing transatlantic fora too limited in their scope – needs to be considered.
- The continued blockage of the institutional dialogue between EU and NATO impedes further cooperation between the two organisations. Initiatives should therefore be considered in order to e.g. unblock the cooperation on the level of NAC and PSC.
- Working with key partners to address security in a globalised world remains of utmost importance. The Union's security is increasingly linked to that of others. The political dialogue with traditional key partners of the Union (the US, Canada, Russia and Japan) needs to be pursued with increasing vigour. In the efforts to increase the inclusiveness of global governance structures, the Union needs to both reinforce its 'strategic partnerships' with emerging powers such as China, India, Brazil and South Africa, all concluded after 2003, and to promote regional integration.

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4. Conclusion

- The ESS has proved to stand the time to an unusual extent since it was first adopted in 2003.
- The policy recommendations suggested in this paper thus aim to complement the 2003 text in areas that have undergone change: the security challenges and threats have been updated in order to take into account the developments since 2003 and the strategic objectives have been further specified. Furthermore, specific measures have been suggested in order to effectively implement the ESS.
- No matter the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty, continued efforts need to be pursued to improve vertical and horizontal coherence of the Union's foreign policy action.

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This text was elaborated in the framework of the THESEUS Summer School 2008 with the participation of: David Cadier, João Marcelo Dalla Costa, Guillaume De Rougé, Marina Filcheva, Natalie Hess, Dariya Kalmykova, Rouven Klein, Bernhard Klingen, Tobias Koepf, Fredrick Lee-Ohlsson, Skander Nasra, Irene Papanikolaou, Anna-Lena Pohl, Benjamin Pohl, Kaspar Schiltz, Piotr Senator, Oliver Sitar, Matthieu Voss, Hongyu Zhang and Kamil Zwolski.