

A study by the Security & Defence Agenda
for the French Ministry of Defence

Shaping Europe's Defence Debate



November 2007, Brussels



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This study has been prepared by the Security & Defence Agenda for the French Ministry of Defence. It looks at the quality of debate amongst defence and security experts of the future course of the ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) in Brussels and concludes with recommendations on how French thinking might play a more influential role in the developing Brussels-based debate.

The report consists of two parts:

Part I: An analysis of commentary provided by some 100 senior security & defence experts on the current state and possible improvements of ESDP debate in Brussels.

Part II: The summary of debates from our March 26th 2007 lunch debate that brought together some 30 senior thinkers to discuss preliminary results of the study.

Introduction

Security and defence policy has not been a major element of the contemporary Brussels debate. European Union triumphs like the euro and its 'big bang' enlargement and failures like the constitutional treaty have crowded out the less dramatic developments inherent in its Common Foreign and Security Policy and its growing defence identity. As to NATO, its strengthening post-Cold War role has been somewhat eclipsed by the downturn in the transatlantic relationship since 9/11.

Yet for all that, Europe's defence and security issues have since the turn of the new century become an established part of the policymakers' agenda, even if they have yet to win the attention of the EU-accredited international press corps. There is now a "community" of senior figures in Brussels whose function is to define and refine European policy on the wide range of topics that until, say, five years ago had generally been viewed as purely NATO business, and therefore the province of the "other Brussels" out at suburban Evere near the airport.

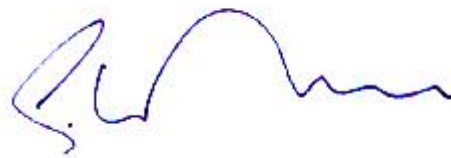
The senior figures who make up this new European defence and security community are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds – the generals and admirals who are the member states' military representatives, EU Commission and Council officials, specially appointed diplomats, a growing body of senior executives from major defence companies, some academic analysts and NGO people and a handful of specialist journalists.

The coming together of these members of the European defence policymaking community has been a gradual and largely imperceptible phenomenon. It has no doubt been cloaked by the arrival of so many diplomats and newly-appointed EU officials from the 12 new member states that have joined the Union since May 2004. Perhaps for that reason it has not been mirrored by a sharp uptake in most Brussels-based think tanks' interest in defence.

When the Security & Defence Agenda was set up in late 2001, its initial aim was to provide a neutral meeting ground for NATO and EU defence policy specialists who barely knew one another, but since then it has developed into a much more structured debating forum. SDA activities now span monthly roundtables attracting an average of 120 senior participants, major international conferences and reports.

European think tanks that specialize in defence and security issues and that have real intellectual 'muscle' are to be found in the EU's national capitals. To a very real extent, however, these still often view policy questions through a national prism; the complexities of EU-level policymaking and the difficulties of getting their voice heard in Brussels seem to have deterred many of them from joining in the EU defence policy debate.

The result, as this report attempts to explain, is that when it comes to Europe's increasingly important focus on security and defence issues, the think tank world has yet to catch up with developments on the ground. There is already a substantial policy debate at EU level on military outreach and on improving the security of Europe's citizens, but with a few rare exceptions the major think tanks in the Union's member states are not part of it. But once the EU debate begins to bring these issues into sharper focus, it is clear that think tanks will have a greater role to play.



Giles Merritt
Director
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Brussels, November 2007

Part I: Shaping Europe's Defence Debate

The SDA invited some 400 security and defence experts to respond to a questionnaire (below) designed first of all to identify what they feel are the key issues to be debated in ESDP and then to evaluate the quality of that debate currently in Brussels – paying special attention to French influence in Brussels' ESDP debate. Almost 100 leading experts on defence policy issues, drawn from both political and military backgrounds contributed their findings to this analysis.

Respondents took part in this survey of opinion on the understanding that they would not be directly quoted.

Questionnaire

1. What accomplishments can the ESDP point to, and what continue to be its shortcomings?
2. Is EU-level policymaking on defence and security issues a sufficiently "porous" process, with enough input from non-governmental sources?
3. How could a wider and more coherent EU defence and security policy debate be structured? What would be your wish list for fresh voices in the ESDP debate?
4. Is the EU-level defence and security debate as presently structured capable of addressing the more contentious strategic, budgetary and industrial policy issues?
5. Is French thinking shaping Europe's debate on defence and security policies at all, and are other EU countries' thinkers more influential or less? If more, which EU countries' thinkers are best, in your view, to influence the European debate? Why?

Executive Summary

What accomplishments can the ESDP point to and what continue to be its shortcomings?

The debate about the strengths and weaknesses of the European Security & Defence Policy (ESDP) is lively and well-informed. The SDA sought to get a feel for the overall issues driving the debate – what should it be proclaiming as successes and which shortcomings should be further debated?

Overwhelmingly, respondents mentioned the number of successful crisis-management operations around the globe, with operations in the Balkans and in Africa singled out as noteworthy successes. The EU had also succeeded in creating the institutional framework and policy instruments to permit the building of ESDP in the future. The creation of the Battlegroups was widely seen as having been born out of the establishment of policy instruments and collective national wills of EU member states.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the list of perceived shortcomings of the ESDP was considerably longer than the roster of achievements. Foremost among worries is the current parlous state of co-operation between the EU and NATO. A second area of concern appears to be in the nature of EU institutions that have been created to help develop the ESDP itself. There exist,

for instance, no set stabilisation doctrine or metrics for judging actions or successes. A third area of concern to respondents is the lack of progress in achieving greater commonality in equipment purchases, and in EU military interoperability in general. Though, this was a qualified criticism by most, with many recognising the progress that has been made in the last few years.

It is worth noting that the survey highlighted almost polar extremes of optimism and pessimism between those who work directly for EU institutions and those on the outside looking in (for instance, NGOs). Those directly connected with the EU stressed the relative infancy of the ESDP and its policy instruments, and believed that the project was on track to succeed over time. ("ESDP is a process needing baby steps.") Non-governmental actors were much more critical, with some expressing views that unless fundamental changes in political will are achieved, ESDP would continue to function only at a superficial level.

Is EU-level policymaking on defence and security issues a sufficiently "porous" process, with enough input from non-governmental sources?

The majority of respondents felt that, as things currently stand, the ESDP policy-making process is neither porous nor transparent enough. Those who work within the EU institutions generally felt that non-governmental actors are listened to and already wield suffi-

cient influence in the policy development process. Most outside respondents (but not all) took an opposing view. Traditional think tanks were also viewed as useful and influential and many respondents indicated a desire for these to do more in the areas of doctrine, strategy, and public awareness to help serve the policymakers better. Whether the information provided by think tanks is actually utilised was another question.

Some saw the debate remaining 'among elites' for the foreseeable future, while others saw the process opening up progressively with increased input from bodies like the European Parliament and the European Defence Agency. And yet others considered the lack of porosity not to be a weakness but rather a strength to defend the process from paralysis.

How could a wider and more coherent EU defence and security policy debate be structured? What would be your wish list for fresh voices in the ESDP Debate?

Respondents were generally in agreement that greater success could be obtained by widening the policymaking debate. A frequent suggestion for this widening was greater involvement by the European Parliament and more frequent debates along the lines of those held within the Commission's Seventh Framework Programme for research and technology development (FP7) Programme and by the European De-

fence Agency. The creation of new communications channels and gatherings that would bring in public and private stakeholders would assist the ESDP debate. There is a lack of communication of the ESDP's rationale and accomplishments to the general public – with media across the Union focusing on NATO rather than ESDP. There is a perceived need to generate more attention even when things are going well.

A wish list for fresh voices included increased information from the EDA and increased attention to the ESDP by the EU Presidencies. One respondent stated the need for a "single European market for security and defence research." Surprisingly, think tanks were not among the leading suggestions for fresh voices in the debate – though their current influence was recognised. Rather, they were encouraged to improve their level of influence and effectiveness in the debate. A new generation of European thinkers is waiting in the sidelines and should be encouraged to come forward.

Is the EU-level defence and security debate as presently structured capable of addressing the more contentious strategic, budgetary and industrial policy issues?

Almost overwhelmingly, the consensus of respondents was a resounding "no". Intergovernmental politics will continue to set the pace for the foreseeable future. A second major perceived hurdle

was not just a paucity of debate on budgets and budget-sharing, but a lack of sufficient funding in general to permit success. Respondents from the defence industry were understandably concerned about the current state of the European Defence Technology Industrial Base and the debate that sustains it. Many respondents indirectly offered potential solutions to cope with the challenges posed by controversial issues: if EU structures themselves discourage open debate and dissent, then innovative ideas will have to be formulated and vetted outside of the EU—through the think tanks. In this sense, non-governmental actors become “idea brokers” to government institutions in the footsteps of many US think tanks.

To what degree is French thinking shaping Europe's debate on defence and security policies, and are other EU countries' thinkers more influential or less?

Respondents from new and old member states, EU Institutions, non-governmental actors, and industry, were unanimous that France holds a significant level of influence in the Europe-wide debate over security and defence. Most participants often spoke in general terms – lumping all means of influence together without distinguishing whether they spoke in terms of governmental or non-governmental actors. However, the debate also implied that the level of influence of national think tanks in the Brussels debate is in line with the influence of that State in the political level of ESDP debate. While some believed that French influ-

ence was the highest among member states and of paramount importance in the European project, the vast majority believed that the United Kingdom held equal influence in the community concerning ideas and policymaking as it affects the ESDP. While the French “voice” is felt to be strong, it has positioned itself at the extreme end of the debate regarding ESDP. Many French analysts are seen not to be comfortable in a contentious debate setting, which is increasingly the trend in Brussels. It was frequently highlighted that the French reliance on the French language in a European context was often a barrier to spreading their viewpoints in published literature as well as during public debate.

Several rebuked the question completely and suggested that it is not useful to spend too much time looking at individual states' influence when what is needed is cross-fertilisation at a higher level in the EU institutions and among European publics. Trans-national European voices are needed and this requires the cultivation of a European culture on security and defence to underpin the development of the ESDP. Whatever France's experts can do to encourage this trend, it seems, would be openly welcomed by all.

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Question 1: What accomplishments can the ESDP point to and what continue to be its shortcomings?

The debate about the strengths and weaknesses of the European Security & Defence Policy (ESDP) is lively and well-informed.

With this question, the SDA sought to get a feel for the overall issues driving the debate – what should it be proclaiming as successes and which shortcomings should be debated?

Overwhelmingly, respondents mentioned the number of successful crisis-management operations around the globe, with operations in the Balkans and in Africa singled out as noteworthy successes. More than just providing help and stability to

these regions, such peacekeeping work was seen as actively encouraging the maturity of ESDP. The perception is growing of momentum of EU states working together in an operational

sense, unafraid to enter the global stage. This has all come about as a result of real increased capability of member states, with proof of this is in the deployments

themselves. Some 16 different crisis management operations have been conducted in recent years.

One element stressed in the responses was that far from being a redundant and lesser version of NATO, the EU and its burgeoning ESDP provide a vital link between traditional peacekeeping and more active peace-enforcement styles of operations. The key element of this is the civil component in EU op-

“Europe is going through a strategic reawakening, but that is happening at the national level, NOT the EU level.”

“There is too little cooperation both inside the EU (e.g. between the Council and the Commission) and with NATO, i.e., there is still duplication of effort leading to a waste of resources.”

erations that is often utilised: training of police, establishment of judicial institutions, border controls, infrastructure creation, nation-building, etc. This is something that is seen as a "unique selling point" for the EU in comparison to NATO. More could be done in providing added-value to the Security-Sector Reform (SSR) regime, added some.

"...the EU still suffers from severe capability shortfalls on multiple fronts and has not reached consensus on how and when to use some of the new capabilities it has created."

success story. Other efforts such as the European Security Strategy and Headline Goals have also worked to strengthen the development process. The general sense is that these time-consuming steps to establish the institutional framework, while painfully slow, have placed the ESDP on sound footing for future growth and development. A long-term vision has thus been established.

A second accomplishment mentioned by most respondents was the fact that the EU has succeeded in creating the institutional framework and policy instruments to permit the building of ESDP in the future. Foremost among these is the establishment of the European Defence Agency, European Union Military Staff (EUMS) and European Union Military Committee (EUMC). The work to confine Article 296 was also singled out as a recent

"The very fact that an ESDP exists within the EU is an accomplishment as such"

collective national wills of EU member states. This was qualified, however, by doubts that Battlegroups would actually be utilised given the very difficult activation procedures and unanimity required on the part of member states. This is further developed in the discus-

A third positive factor respondents mentioned is the creation of the EU Battlegroups, born out of the establishment of policy instruments and

sion of ESDP's shortcomings below.

A few respondents offered a word of caution on the ESDP's success: Afghanistan. They warned that the outcome of NATO's efforts to stabilise that country and defeat the Taliban insurgency could have an enormous effect on the implementation of the ESDP. If the mission in Afghanistan fails, it could undermine the entire process in the EU as recriminations echo through NATO member states. There exists a strong moral component in European publics that limits military actions abroad in an anarchic world (said one respondent) and this makes it increasingly difficult to reach decisions on committing to missions. Current successes of the EU have been rather low-risk and small scale—it could take another 10 to 15 years to develop a fully credible EU intervention force.

"...the EU still suffers from severe capability shortfalls on multiple fronts and has not reached consensus on how and when to use some of the new capabilities it has created."

"The very fact that an ESDP exists within the EU is an accomplishment as such"

Perhaps not surprisingly, the list of perceived shortcomings of the ESDP was considerably longer than the roster of achievements.

Foremost among worries is the current parlous state of cooperation between the EU and NATO. Although Berlin Plus is viewed as an accomplishment, there is general disappointment that the debate has moved little since. A paramount concern is the need to bridge the divide between the two entities in regard to comprehensive crisis management. Only one respondent felt that the EU-NATO disagreement was less serious now than before. Most however, stressed the need for an intensified effort on building a strategic partnership not just with NATO, but also with the United States on a bilateral level. Respondents from new member states also voiced considerable doubt that the ESDP could really ever replace NATO

in guaranteeing security in Europe. These divisions appear to be profound and it is axiomatic that if the EU-NATO rift grows deeper, the discord *within* the EU between Western and Eastern European members will grow as well. Merely developing the ESDP as a knee-jerk counterbalance to NATO (and US) influence is seen as a prescription for failure. Lack of progress in this area is ascribed to lack of political will and leadership in Europe.

A second area of concern appears to be in the nature of EU institutions that have been created to help develop the ESDP itself. Some respondents expressed worries over what they perceived as the triumph of "process over policy" when it came to the ESDP. Efforts appear to have been demand-driven and less the outcome of strategic planning. The drift to "ad hoc" solutions in creating task forces could be caused by the lack of a permanent command and control

structure. As currently configured, believe some, the EU still lacks the right institutional tools and policy instruments to carry out more ambitious military missions.

"What the EU hasn't realised yet is that there's sizeable group more pro-EU, pro-ESDP than 10 years ago."

"Overall, missions tend to define the strategy. It should be the other way around."

There exist, for instance, no set stabilisation doctrine or metrics for judging actions or successes. Again, a negative factor in all this is the division

of responsibilities regarding security and defence within the EU between the European Council, the Commission, and increasingly, with the European Parliament. The tug-of-war between national governments and the collective EU institutions has to some extent paralysed forward momentum and also stymied effective and timely decision making. Many referred to the

stalled EU Constitution as a major decider in the future of ESDP developments.

Several respondents mentioned

the renewed conflict in Lebanon in August 2007. While NATO recognised that it could not intervene and that logically the EU was better placed to

provide help, in the end, the EU decision-making apparatus failed to deliver and the response was a national one of the willing. Most respondents were pessimistic that the issue of rapid decision-making and unanimity could be overcome in the near term. There simply exists no common strategic vision for coordinated action. Some member states make very little effort in making ESDP a reality while others use self-denying ordinances to avoid sending troop deployments.

A third area of concern to respondents is the slow lack of progress in achieving greater commonality in equipment purchases, and in EU military interoperability in general. To be fair, this was a qualified criticism by most, many recognising the progress that has been made in the last few years. However, overall, there has been insufficient progress in equipping European militaries for expeditionary warfare, or in pushing forward on specialisations. Several capability areas were specifically mentioned as needing dramatic improvement. These are: common command & control systems including software-defined radios; more mobility assets such as airlift and sealift; intelligence assets; and logistical assets such as aerial refuelling.

Issues that were mentioned less frequently

but that are worth noting include:

"Sufficiently 'porous' for 'brainstorming' yes, but not with respect to decisional 'output'."

- lack of a defence and security component in European space initiatives;

- the thorny issue of European missile defence;

- a lack of successful communication of the ESDP to a wider European public via the media;
- EU structures that are too divorced from national decision-making;
- little mention of economic and energy security as a part of ESDP;
- lack of consistent policy towards Eastern Europe;
- too many caveats restraining effective collective action;
- little coordination against terrorism;
- lack of long-range threat assessments;
- low levels of military expenditure on equipment and R&D;

concerns about the deterioration in the European Defence Technology Industrial Base.

It is worth noting that the survey highlighted almost polar levels of optimism and pessimism between those who work directly for EU institutions and those on the outside looking in (for instance, NGOs). Those directly connected with the EU stressed the relative infancy

of the ESDP and its policy instruments, and believed that the project was on track to succeed over time. ("ESDP is a process needing baby steps.")

Non-governmental actors were much more critical, with some expressing views that unless fundamental changes in political will were made, ESDP would only continue to function at a superficial level.

Question 2: Is EU-level policymaking on defence and security issues a sufficiently "porous" process, with enough input from non-governmental sources?

This question sought the level of input non-governmental actors could make into the EU decision-making process on

ESDP.

The majority of respondents felt that, as things currently stand, the ESDP policy-making process in neither porous nor transparent enough.

Those who felt that outside actors do influence fell into two camps: the first

believed that non-governmental actors played a significant role and enjoyed a proper level of influence in policy crafting at both the national and EU levels. The

second group took the view that these actors enjoyed enough influence and should not have more given that it was for democratically-elected institutions to craft policy, not for private interests to do so.

Those who work within the EU institutions generally felt that non-governmental actors are listened to and already wield sufficient influence in the policy development process. Most outside respondents (but not all) took an opposing view.

The question is complicated because of the varying nature of what constitutes a

Accomplishments: in Solana's words, over 10,000 women and men deployed on 10 ESDP missions on 3 continents in 2006."

non-governmental actor. While most may fall into the broader term of "think tank" that issues white papers and hold conferences, others are more active in the field including some groups that engage in relief efforts and crisis management.

Those organisations that work "in the field" are viewed as immensely influential (e.g. small-arms proliferation and

anti-landmine campaigns) although sometimes their direct involvement can complicate crisis-management being conducted at official levels. However, traditional think tanks were also viewed as useful and influential and many respondents indicated a desire for these to do more in the areas of doctrine, strategy, and public awareness to help serve the policymakers better.

Whether the information provided by think tanks is actually utilised was called into question. One participant felt that most non-governmental input was "absorbed, diluted, erased and distorted by the intra-EU governmental politics and Brussels bureaucratic processes". Another complained that access to documentation from ESDP institutions was difficult and that there was little meaningful engagement between senior decision-makers and bureaucrats on the one hand and outside experts on the other. There was a gen-

eral tendency to see supra-national bodies not leveraging or encouraging non-governmental input. Here, the problem is seen as one of political will. This is despite the fact that the Council adopted in 2004 an Action Plan for Civilian Aspects

of ESDP that pledged to develop cooperation with non-state actors and host regular meetings with non-governmental actors.

tal actors.

Some felt that this was a natural phenomenon, as the ESDP has been and will remain for the foreseeable future a debate 'among elites'. The more serious problem, as one respondent suggested, is that the elites themselves still do not understand the EU. A serious debate among elites on the future of Europe is needed before the ESDP debate can realistically be taken forward.

Some expressed optimism that the entire process was beginning to open up more. Many specifically mentioned the burgeoning role of the European Parliament in the ESDP debate and the fact that the Parliamentary Sub-committee on Security and Defence would this year be upgraded to full committee status. It was pointed to that unless the European Parliament took a more active role in the ESDP debate, then resulting policies may lack legitimacy

"The EU policymaking process is more reactive than progressive."

and transparency. National governments are subject to review in their respective parliaments but the EU Commission misses out on this linkage with the European Parliament. It was noted however, that the level of "porosity" within EU institutions themselves was inversely proportional to their level of power: the Parliament is the most porous while the Council is the least. Equally, non-governmental actors feel their level of interaction with the European Parliament is significantly easier and more encouraged than in the case of the Council. Others also expressed a view that some organisations focussed on networking in Brussels, such as the SDA and defence committee of the Kangaroo Group, were having a positive role on expanding the dialogue and debate.

Returning to the oft-mentioned issue of the *desirability* of further third party input to the ESDP debate, some con-

sidered the lack of porosity not to be a weakness but rather a strength to defend the process from paralysis. Widely opening the ESDP debate to non-governmental actors could endanger the limited sense of consensus that has already been achieved by effectively increasing dissent and dragging out what is already a lengthy process. For this reason, believed more than one respondent, the impact of more participation should be carefully evaluated.

"The ESDP system is too closed (e.g. access to Council documents is surrealistically and condescendingly limited) with virtually no interest in disclosure or meaningful engagement. On the other hand, most 'experts' are poorly positioned to provide meaningful inputs."

Several respondents singled out the EU's Institute for Security Studies in Paris as a type of hybrid that could bridge the communication gaps

because of its close affiliation and sponsorship by the EU. The EU-ISS could, it was proposed, play an even larger role in coordinating public debate on the ESDP and by helping to coordinate discussions with private think tanks. Many questioned if there were plans to move the Institute to Brussels and many actively encouraged such a move.

Ultimately, some respondents see the current balance as optimal for debate because of the need to keep policymaking firmly in the hands of national governments (via the Council) and other EU Institutions. The recent European Security Strategy document was noted as an example where there was very limited outside input (and no new ideas). According to one respondent, the lack of outside input regarding ESDP has even affected relations with counterparts in NATO who cannot obtain

“formal opportunities” for clarifying how the EU arrives at a particular position or decision. Informal meetings, they mentioned, only go so far.

In summary, there was some consensus that overall, policymaking in the EU is opaque at best but that this was not necessarily a bad thing. Two areas seen as beneficial to the debate would be increased activity by the European Parliament and more attention to educating the general public about the ESDP via the media. Third parties such as think tanks and institutes do have a role to play.

Question 3: How could a wider and more coherent EU defence and security policy debate be structured? What would be your wish list for fresh voices in the ESDP debate?

Who best could breathe some fresh air into the ESDP debate? Is the debate as currently structured sufficient with participation from the right stakeholders?

“I would like to see political parties across Europe more involved in generally ‘selling’ the EU to the population, and particularly emphasizing the successes of ESDP and its importance for the global image of the EU.”

In answering this question, respondents were generally in agreement that greater success could be obtained by widening the policymaking debate. This could be accomplished by reaching out and encouraging additional stakeholders and also by improving on some of the existing policy instruments. This included interested non-EU stakeholders (Turkey and the US, for instance). A few respondents indicated that widening the debate would, if any-

thing, make it less coherent and not more. According to this view, coherence will only come with a single foreign policy, most likely with a return to the Constitution.

“Greater involvement of women with expertise in security and defence [...] would be welcome.”

A frequent suggestion for widening debate was greater involvement by the European Parliament through its MEPs and a revamped Committee on Security and Defence. It was felt that the Parliament could be engaged deeper on ESDP issues, particularly in communicating with other EU Institutions, national governments, and European publics at large. Empowering the European Parliament and creating forums for the EP and Council

“An interesting idea to consider would be to invite, at certain occasions, representatives from European think tanks to debates with relevant working groups and committees in the Council.”

members to network might also help educate the public at large and encourage better burden-sharing among those member states not doing very much at the moment. However, one or two respondents put this into perspective by reminding how little leverage this

institution actually has on legal and budgetary issues – with the arena of defence remaining particularly in sovereign territory. Terms of reference are constrained by the national capitals themselves.

Building on the idea of engaging parliamentary resources on ESDP, others thought that national parliamentarians must also be brought into the debate process. One of the resulting benefits would be to confer legitimacy on the ESDP and help with public diplomacy and support for larger crisis management missions in future.

Such widening, it was felt, could be assisted by the creation of new communications channels and gatherings that would bring in public and private stakeholders into the ESDP debate. These should be formally sponsored by EU

Institutions and specifically invite MPs from national parliaments, the commercial sector, think tank experts, and academia to join the debate. Both the European Commission's FP7 Programme and the European Defence Agency have organised successful events along this line.

It was widely felt that too little communication of both the ESDP rationale and accomplishments had been accomplished in reaching out to the general public. There was a clear need for more vocal debate at the Community level; more tenacity in promoting ESDP. One respondent suggested the creation of an ESDP "Roadshow" led by ESDP experts who would tour cities across Europe, providing a useful communications tool. Another participant highlighted the dire need for more regional debate. Older member states, it was alleged, are not attuned to security worries of newer members. Moreover, there is currently very little debate, and even less knowledge of, ESDP policies in Eastern European member states. Across the Union, both east and west, the subject of b. This is dramatically the case for non-European press.

Indeed, engaging the media itself developed into a major theme in responses to Question 3. There is a perceived need to generate attention even when things are going well. Currently, there is little or no awareness that an ESDP is even up and running. One respondent believed a useful tactic in this battle could be in highlighting national contributions to EU crisis missions, for example, the Madrid media reporting on the

successes of Spanish policemen aiding efforts to stabilise Kosovo. Public forums highlighting ESDP could be organised and encouraged around the time when *Eurobarometer* poll is released and the German Marshall Fund's Transatlantic Center issues its annual findings on transatlantic trends. This could prove to be a double-edged sword, however. Highlighting the existence of the ESDP might provide ammunition to those elements hostile to what they see as an erosion of NATO cohesion and to those in opposition to federalisation in Europe in general. Shedding more light on a subject always invites both good and bad attention.

Another potential tool mentioned in this respect is the recent establishment of the European Security and Defence College. Its mandate includes promoting understanding of the ESDP inside the Union and outside. It could play a significant role, if funded properly, in communicating with national training institutes of non-EU countries, the media, and the business community.

In terms of further "new" voices, a few respondents suggested that the EDA could and should inform and structure the debate more. It could become more of a "sounding board" for internal debates with member countries. More work, it was claimed, had to be done on rationalising the linkages between the EU Military Committee and Staff on the one hand and the EDA on the other. Often, dialogues within the ESDP community are "stove-piped" and more attention should be devoted to networking these better. This might

mean more integration of the Commission within the steering process of the EDA as well as joint debates of the EDA Steering Committee and industry representatives.

Several participants referred to 2006's Eurobarometer poll, in which 3 of 4 Europeans polled were in favour of a common security and defence policy. When referencing this fact, they found a large discrepancy between public opinion and political priorities. One respondent questioned why ESDP did not fall higher on EU Presidency agendas and encouraged that every EU Presidency hold a high-level event on ESDP. This is a key area where institutes and think

tanks could have a potential impact on stirring political agendas.

"...the model for the EU defence and security policy debate should be akin to that of the United States: a lengthy, informal process of opinion making (through think tanks analyses, policy papers, op-eds, seminars...); formal debates within the Parliamentary assemblies (both European and national); the 'executive branch' (national governments and EU institutions) collectively making the decision, after its various officials took part in the debates and justified their positions."

Some respondents felt that it was not so much a matter of "fresh" voices emerging but rather that existing ones communicate better. This might require new channels as well as a re-engagement of debate on EU/NATO/US relationships. It was suggested that the EU Institute for Security Studies, in a larger format, could become the chief organisational body involving its partner institutes among the member states on a regular pro-

ject basis. This could serve to inventory, monitor, and analyse the evolving process of the ESDP and disseminate

the results. Many questioned when the EU-ISS would be moved to Brussels. Again, this would require an annual budget commitment on the part of participating organisations. One respondent stated the need for a "single European market for security and defence research"; stressing the urgent requirement for structures that are "market-oriented: bottom-up, net-centric, and competitive."

More than one respondent believed that new structures, not just new voices, could reinvigorate the ESDP debate. Specifically, it was felt that a new document to re-

place or update the European Security

Strategy, to refocus on future security threats inside and outside the Union, would be beneficial.

What is needed, it was conjectured, was a "living document" that would grow alongside the ESDP. Such a document could also be actively debated by national parliaments

(according to one respondent). The ESS could in future become the subject of annual debate and special seminars by all actors concerning follow-up strategies to be pursued.

Surprisingly, think tanks were not among the leading suggestions for fresh voices into the debate – though their current influence was recognised.

Rather, they

were encouraged to improve their level

"We need to move towards a single European market for security and defence research... Some of the adjectives I would use for this market: bottom-up, net-centric, competitive."

"The knowledge and expertise is there. The focus and structures are not. We should learn from both the positive AND negative lessons from some key countries (US, France, UK, even Russia)."

of influence and effectiveness in the debate. Whereas US think tanks are intellectual powerhouses, with the means to support their ambitions, many pointed to the poverty of the European think tank scene. European think tanks are, for the most part, too reliant on government subsidies and too reliant on the personalities leading them. A new generation of European thinkers is waiting in the sidelines and should be encouraged to come forward.

Some respondents expressed a desire to see a more varied group of experts engaged by the ESDP community. These should include economists and systems analysts (drawn from industry) and most specifically, former military officers (maybe from various national reserve officers associations) who could lead the debate on practice and theory questions involved in real world operations.

Respondents from the defence and aerospace industry were keen to emphasise that a much fuller and deeper engagement of industry was necessary to move ESDP forward. It was pointed out that the EU has already begun this process with the European telecommunications industry but has failed up to now with the defence sector (most probably due to Article 296 and the tight control exercised by national governments). EU Institutions should, some argued, give stronger impetus for Member States to invest in the EDTIB. This means a motivational leadership role.

Question 4: Is the EU-level defence and security debate as presently structured capable of addressing the more contentious strategic, budgetary and industrial policy issues?

Almost overwhelmingly, the consensus of respondents was a resounding “no”.

The reasons for this state of affairs divided mainly along two lines. The first was that the very structures of the EU prevented deeper engagement on sensitive issues because national governments jealously guard their control over the strategic and budgetary sectors and because of the contentious issue of sovereignty. The second line of argument posits that while current debates may not be tackling the really difficult issues head-on, we are still witnessing the beginning of CFSP and the ESDP development. As experience matures so too will progress grow in creating a robust ESDP. Overall, things are moving in the right direction. A minority of participants believed that debate as currently structured was actually meeting the challenges and pointed to the increase in the ESDP budget itself, and the creation of the EDA, although admitting the process was slow.

Taking a “long-term” or “short-term” view influenced whether respondents were optimistic about the chances of progress in this area. The long-term view positioned the ESDP as is still in

its infancy, with the correct structures only just in place to deal with challenges as they develop. The best plan of action is therefore to move forward on questions where agreement has been reached and to separate questions that are not directly relevant to ESDP by treating these in another, more appropriate framework.

The steady if not rapid successes of the EDA were indicated as proof that small initiatives could be built upon, slowly. That said, these were all minority views.

Most respondents highlighted a series of shortcomings that are preventing deeper debate and inhibiting the ability to grapple with contentious policy issues in the ESDP domain.

First and foremost, was the common view that intergovernmental politics will continue to set the pace for the

foreseeable future. Protectionist influences and geostrategic differences are strong forces that have hampered progress in consensus-based EU structures. The problem of deep differences in security outlook between old and

new member states is bad and getting worse according to some respondents. This must be dealt with soon before major cracks resulted, it was believed.

Getting 27 nations to agree will always be a fraught process. An answer, to some respondents, would lie in proportional voting and getting the Constitution up and running.

Until that happens, coalitions of the willing are probably the only way forward; there is always a reluctance to reopen difficult negotiated reference documents in problem areas and existing institutions have few means to alter this reality. One respondent indicated a belief that those states that took a nationalistic/sovereignty approach in do-

"Innovative ideas for addressing highly charged issues such as budgets and industrial policy must be developed and vetted outside of the normal EU structures. In some cases, even information conversations on these subjects are banned or highly discouraged. As a result, non-profit think tanks must take the lead in a number of areas."

mestic parliaments (for short-term gain) were doing their countries a disservice because ultimately, European security challenges cannot be solved on an individual basis. Moreover, from a taxpayer's perspective, real benefit and savings were possible through a federal, European-wide approach to defence and equipment acquisition issues.

Another reason for failure was seen as the continuing impasse between France and the UK (the Union's largest military powers) in reaching a strategic consensus for European defence. Without agreement between these two member states, and a restart of the St Malo accords, paralysis was likely to continue.

The second major hurdle perceived by respondents was not just a paucity of debate on budgets and budget-sharing, but a lack of sufficient funding in general to permit success. There was general agreement that more funding discretion be placed in European institutions (at the expense of national governments?), particularly the European Parliament. Currently the option of blocking the total CFSP budget in parliament is viewed as too "blunt" an instrument when what is needed is a bigger voice earlier in the budget-making process. Moreover, greater attention had to be

given to the strategic dimension of European security within European institutions. The mood of respondents was generally that the onus was on the EU to take back this responsibility by opening debate more and educating European publics.

Respondents from the defence industry were understandably concerned about the current state of the European Defence Technology Industrial Base and the debate that sustains it. One respondent felt that it was not necessary for the EU to become too involved in details;

it was far more important to provide the initial direction and political impetus and to monitor that member states were cooperating efficiently.

This would help keep member states focussed on preserving key sectors and technologies in Europe. Another said that so long as the defence market was monopolistic in relying upon a single customer, the state, then EDTIB would remain a national issue rather than a European one. A third felt that the EDA does not state its views clearly to industry, instead talking in generalities. More EU directness, as shown in the telecommunications field, should be applied to aerospace and defence.

"[Some French think tanks] seem stuck in a time warp of intent on the glorification of France."

If the above are all shortcomings, it is also interesting to note that many respondents indirectly offered potential solutions to cope with the challenges posed by controversial issues.

If EU structures themselves discourage open debate and dissent, then innovative ideas will have to be formulated and vetted outside of the EU – through the think tanks. These, according to several respondents,

can play a crucial role in sparking debate and ideas and in raising solutions up to policymakers. If the bureaucratic environment is “barren” in proposing vigorous debate, it falls to the private sector to inject life into the proceedings. In this sense, non-governmental actors become “idea brokers” to government institutions by holding short and long-term policy studies and seminars. Think tanks can also engage the public at large via the media to educate on ESDP concepts and benefits. This could, in the words of one respondent, make EU policymakers less risk-averse, but it possibly entails the problem of accountability to national decision-making processes and raises the issue of lobbying guidelines for Europe. To

quote one respondent: “The EU-level defence and security policy debate would indeed benefit from a greater role for think tanks/platforms and from increased openness from the institutions to outsiders’ views.”

“French thinking is probably shaping this debate most...maybe alone among its peers, [France] has articulated a relatively clear vision for the future of European security and defence.”

Finally, it was noted, the strategic dimension must be elevated at the EU-level. In the words of one respondent, “Without a strategy and without a strategic culture, the EU can only react to events; with a strategy, Europe

can shape them.”

Question 5: To what degree is French thinking shaping Europe's debate on defence and security policies, and are other EU countries' thinkers more influential or less?

Respondents from new and old member states, EU Institutions, non-governmental actors, and industry, were unanimous that France holds a significant level of influence in the

Europe-wide debate over security and defence. The degrees of difference appeared in just *how* that influence is shaped in the greater debate and what limitations to French ideas are being put forward.

Most participants often spoke in general terms – lumping all means of influence together without distinguishing whether they spoke in terms of governmental or non-governmental actors. However, the debate also implied that the level of influence of national think tanks in the Brussels debate is in line with the influence of that State in the political level of ESDP debate.

While some believed that French influence was the highest among member states and of paramount importance in the European project, the vast majority believed that the United Kingdom held equal influence in the community concerning ideas and policymaking as it affects the ESDP. Some respondents even felt that the UK enjoyed a higher level of influence than France. The majority agreed that France and the UK were the locomotives of ESDP (with the more recent additional of Sweden to the team followed closely by Germany), and further, that increased Franco-British cooperation is required

to raise ESDP to the next level.

“I do not think that the French thinking is influencing the debate as such. Rather, its influence is felt directly in the decision-making process.”

Most agreed that French influence is strong but that it is often seen as heavy-handed in approach. France has earned its position, said some respondents, for several

reasons including its size, its continued willingness to place its armed forces at the disposal of the UN and European Union (and even NATO in Afghanistan), and its continued commitment to a strong national defence budget. Some pointed to the fact that France has always been on the winning side of ambitions for ESDP, though their analysts and policymakers are too modest to boast about it. “Strategic vision” was mentioned as a French strength within the EU. France has enunciated a clear vision on how it sees the ESDP developing—and how it should be developing where it is not currently.

The problem for many respondents was that French influence to date has been in many ways self-limiting. While the French “voice” is felt to be strong, it has positioned itself at the extreme end of the debate regarding ESDP. By France’s continued intransigence in linking the EU and NATO in cooperative efforts, and its diplomatic efforts to

confine and restrain the Alliance vis-a-vis the ESDP, its arguments are often greeted with cynicism by policymakers from other member states. The same can be said for many French analysts who are seen not to be comfortable in a contentious debate setting, which is increasingly the trend in Brussels – the French tradition being to simply state positions.

While French policy is viewed as a useful counterbalance to US influence in European affairs and a major force in European integration

efforts, the perceived lack of compromise in developing EU relations with NATO is viewed as an undermining influence and, ultimately, a self-defeating one. Worries exist in some member nations that the French push ESDP for duplication purposes to counter NATO. This is divisive, respondents say, and again, reflected on the non-governmental actor level. One respondent postulated that if the French cooperated with NATO more constructively – a trend which might be pushed through its institutes and think tanks – it might remove some suspicions and thus enhance its influence on ESDP development—a kind of diplomatic *ju-jitsu*.

It was frequently highlighted that the

French reliance on the French language in a European context was often a barrier to spreading their viewpoints in published literature as well as during public debate. This was seen as an increasing limitation as English continues to grow as the international language. With the expansion of the Union to 27, French-speakers have fallen further into the minority since the second tongue for many Eastern Europeans tends to be English or German. “French experts

deal with a language barrier that somewhat isolates them from other European scholars,” said one respondent, “especially from the An-

glo-Saxon language world that in the case of security now also includes experts from Central Europe and beyond.” Another mentioned that he thought that French policy papers were less numerous and diverse in the European discourse than those presented in English. One respondent remarked “on voit toujours les mêmes têtes en France.”

Closely related to this limitation was the sense of some respondents that the French policy discourse was too confined to its national capital in comparison to other countries, for instance Britain. This perceived inward focus and lack of “projection” has the effect of compounding the language barrier. To be fair, this was a minority view and

“Of the top three questions on ESDP, one is always ‘What do the French think?’”

the problem most certainly extends to other member nations in addition to France.

Several rebuked the question and suggested that it is not useful to spend too much time looking at individual states' influence when what is needed is cross-fertilisation

at a higher level in the EU institutions and among European publics. One solution mentioned was that security experts might travel to speak and present their ideas in other member states, including talks with the media. The real

challenge for institutions and think tanks is to create a broad public perception that only *European* solutions can protect national security interests and protect against national vulnerabilities. Transnational debate is crucial to get ideas above the level of national prejudices.

In terms of other member countries making an impact on the ESDP debate, the UK was most frequently mentioned alongside France. "Because of their

professionalism, pragmatism and transatlanticism, UK thinkers are well placed to influence the European debate." "Pragmatism" was used most frequently when describing UK strengths in policy formulation at the EU level. Although British transatlanticism was mentioned as an influence-limiting factor (witness Iraq), it was seen as a lesser problem

than French transatlantic intransigence. Many respondents felt that UK thinkers had an edge over their French counterparts due to their means of message communication (English-language seminars, think tanks, open debate, internet sites) and their "realistic"

approach to problem-solving and compromise.

Many feel this fundamentally cultural difference is a shame, as the weakness does not lie in the message or expertise of the French non-governmental actors (to the contrary, they are seen as some of the most specialised in Europe), but rather in the means of delivering their expertise. Many feel the French non-governmental debate is re-

"While there are important French think tanks, their papers are less present in the European discourse than those written in English. British think tanks are second-to-none with regard to their internet presence and e-networking (mailing lists etc.)."

stricted to a handful of experts who are often so overloaded with events and publications that their actual participation is in the end limited. Additionally, the position of these reputed experts has, unintentionally, created a generational barrier for newcomers – often the conduits of fresh voices – who feel they are long away from being qualified to debate or that they will have an easier career path in the UK or US.

If the ESDP's future path lies with France and the UK, the current dichotomy of vision and approach between the two member states stands out as a major stumbling block. Said

one respondent, France promotes "strategic autonomy" while the UK promotes "a minimalist vision" of the defence of Europe. Can this gulf be bridged? Again, many respondents indicated that a refreshed St. Malo framework holds the key.

Sometimes divergent actions and continued disagreement in strategic vision with the British are seen as serious limiting factors in taking the ESDP forward. To paraphrase one respondent, France calls for a European defence market yet discriminates in favour of its

own market in this sector. The economic realities and the underlying differences in outlook between France and UK may mean that a technologically autonomous Europe remains a fantasy. Others were more optimistic given an increase in the quality of debate and leadership at the EU level. Trans-national European voices are needed and this requires the cultivation of a European culture on security and defence to underpin the development of the ESDP. Whatever

France's experts can do to encourage this trend, it seems, would be openly welcomed by all.

Addendum:
Franco-British and EU-NATO debate

"...the 'dispute' between Paris and London on whether the transatlantic relationship is sacrosanct crowds out other debates."

Two issues that were not specifically mentioned in our questionnaire, yet which were repeatedly raised in the course of the survey, concerned the Franco-British debate and also France's attitudes towards the NATO alliance. Neither of these subjects was a part of the direct questioning but respondents overwhelmingly felt that these were two issues essential to any comprehensive ESDP debate.

The key role of Franco-British cooperation in a European defence identity impinges on many aspects of the quality of the larger ESDP debate. The crucial St. Malo Agreement of 1998 (or

Franco-British issues in general) was repeatedly referenced by respondents.

To summarise these comments:

France and the UK are the most important players in the defence and security arena in Europe because of their capabilities, continuing defence commitments, and a history of expeditionary operations.

Since 1998, the spirit of St. Malo has dimmed considerably, to the point of atrophy in the opinion of some. St. Malo should be revisited and renewed by Britain and France as a means of enlivening the implementation of the ESDP.

Differences in strategic vision between France and Britain have probably led to the current impasse; the debate of EU autonomy vs. NATO alliance politics and transatlantic issues has somewhat polarised the positions of France and the UK. In the words of one respondent, "The whole ESDP debate came about when the UK and France pulled together, and I believe this will be necessary if we are to see significant movement again."

Relations between France and NATO and its effect on the ESDP debate, were also frequently referenced. This was particularly noted in the context of gauging the level of French influence vis-a-vis fellow member states in the overall debate on future European collaborative efforts in defence and security.

A perceived lack of willingness of the French to compromise on establishing a *modus vivendi* between the EU and NATO was hurting France's capability to determine the debate on ESDP. Surprisingly however, this seems purely a political issue that is not strongly affected by non-governmental actors. Some respondents felt that France had to work extra hard to convince other member states that its proposals in council were good for the Union in their own right and not just because of French interests. One might argue that such allegations could also be laid at the door of the other large member states such as the UK and Germany. However, the issue here is one of perception. The consensus is that suspicions over French national motives and nostalgia of 'grandeur' are damaging the country's valuable role as an arbiter and influencer in the strategic debate. The UK's close strategic relationship with the US, for example, was mentioned by only *one* respondent as an inhibitor of its influence in the European defence debate.

The inference is that France must redouble its efforts to reach a common strategic vision with the UK and Germany (as the major engines of the ESDP) in order to help build consensus throughout the *entire* European Union. The "go it alone" attitude that has characterised French thinking in the last several years would appear to have done more harm than good for its cause in Europe.

Some Interviewees' proposals:

When participants were given a blank check to make recommendations on how to improve the ESDP debate, the SDA discovered, the responses ranged from the practical and possible to the extreme and unrealistic ("why not dream?" as one participant plainly put it.) The following is a selection of the recommendations:

On generally improving non-governmental influence in the ESDP debate

- Move the European Union Institute for Security Studies to Brussels and have it coordinate and disseminate research on ESDP being conducted in capitals across Europe
- Encourage the UN, NGOs and others from countries where EU operations were conducted to come and brief EU institutions to provide "a reality check"
- Create an analytical task force that provides a global strategic outlook and analyses lessons learned from recent conflicts
- Create a single point, internet-based "clearing house" of data on

ESDP, possibly could be provided by International Relations and Security Network (ISN, Zurich)

- Extend European Parliament scrutiny over the entire ESDP process
- Improvement of communication channels and opportunities to bring public and private actors together on ESDP

On French influence in the ESDP debate

- Create a French-influenced think tank to debate ESDP issues in Brussels
- Do NOT create a French-influenced think tank to debate ESDP issues in Brussels
- Translate French thinkers' publications into English and develop a mechanism for distributing them in Brussels
- Utilise the French Presidency to highlight the importance of debate on ESDP
- Integrate networking into the French culture and encourage

participation in active debate

- Have France become a driver for pan-European debate
- Encourage and support the upcoming generation of security & defence experts

Suggestions on an institutional level

- Create a post of Deputy for Defence for the EU High Representative
- Formally link EU defence and NATO by giving Solana a seat in meetings of Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) or North Atlantic Council (NAC) and de Hoop Scheffer a seat in the Political and Security Committee (COPS)

"If France and Britain are considered the leaders of ESDP, yet unable to come together currently, who's punching above their weight? SWEDEN."

Part II: Summary of Debates

Expert lunch seminar

March 26, Bibliotheque Solvay, Brussels

During the course of preparing this study, the SDA prepared a lunch-debate at our headquarters in the Bibliothèque Solvay on March 26, bringing together some 30 top experts in European and transatlantic security and defence. This section reflects their debate and conclusions.

Participants, Lunch Debate March 26th

Brig. Gen. Ian Abbott	Deputy Military Representative, Permanent Representation of the United Kingdom to the EU
Marie André	Chargée de Mission in the Direction d'Affaires Stratégiques, French Ministry of Defence
Ron Asmus	Executive Director, Transatlantic Centre of the German Marshall Fund of the United States
Alyson Bailes	Director, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
Thomas Beer	Security Strategy and Partnership Development, Director General's Policy Office, European Space Agency
Geert Cami	Managing Director, Security & Defence Agenda
Christophe Cazelles	Adjoint du département Institutions et Société, Centre d'analyse stratégique, Office of the French Prime Minister
John Chapman	Rapporteur, Security & Defence Agenda
Pierre Conesa	Director General, Compagnie Européenne d'Intelligence Stratégique (CEIS)
Guillaume de la Brosse	Politico-Military Counsellor, Permanent Representation of France to the EU
Nicholas de la Grandville	Spokesperson, Permanent Representation of France to the EU

Sylvain de Mullenheim	Public Affairs Manager, Strategy & Business Development Division, DCN
Rob de Wijk	Director, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies
Ludwig Decamps	Policy Planning Advisor, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)
Christina Gallach	Spokeswoman for Solana, Council of the EU
Jessica Henderson	Senior Manager, Security & Defence Agenda
Karel Kovanda	Deputy Director General for CFSP, DG External Relations, European Commission
Girts Kristovskis	Vice-Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence, European Parliament
Lt-Gen David Leakey	Director General of the EU Military Staff
Philippe Le Corre	International Affairs Advisor in the Cabinet of Michèle Alliot-Marie, French Ministry of Defence
Gilles Marcoin	Vice President for EU Affairs, Dassault Aviation
Giles Merritt	Director, Security & Defence Agenda
Marion Paradas	Deputy Director of the Direction d'Affaires Stratégiques, French Ministry of Defence
Ioan Mircea Pascu	Vice Chairman of the European Parliament and former Romanian Minister of Defence
Gerrard Quille	Specialist, Security and Defence Policy Department, European Parliament

Christine Roger

Ambassador to the Political and Security Committee, Permanent Representation of France to the EU

Michel Troubetzkoy

Senior Vice President, Director for EU & NATO Affairs, EADS

Nick Witney

Chief Executive, European Defence Agency (EDA)

Summary

Setting the scene

Ambassador to the Political and Security Committee, Permanent Representation of France to the EU, Christine Roger, remarked that the study showed that despite the ESDP's successes, it was difficult to get the message to anyone outside of the Brussels village. Looking therefore at the need to improve both the communications policy and a wider understanding, Roger made a practical point, noting that it might be necessary in future to look at communications (inside Europe) as part of operational spending.

She described the interest in the ESDP from places such as Palestine, India, Indonesia, Israel and the US, especially in the Kosovo Police Mission from the last-named. Moving closer to home, Roger hoped to continue the France-UK impetus for the programme that had existed in the nineties. She did note problems in that domain, and Roger wanted France to convince the UK that it was not trying to undermine NATO, while she did not want the UK to turn the ESDP into a "sophisticated and cumbersome Red Cross". Progress was needed on both sides of the Channel.

The French Ministry of Defence's Philippe Le Corre, International Affairs Advisor in the Cabinet of Defence Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie, also saw the need for improved ESDP communica-

tions, but it had to be coupled with an element of strategic thinking. He was interested in developing coordinated work from academia, think tanks and the like, and Le Corre wondered if the Council wanted to follow this road, to get additional inputs on strategy, as opposed to purely in-house thinking.

The EDA's point of view

EDA Chief Executive Nick Witney had seen the results of the study (based on 100 respondents) and felt that they were not necessarily representative. He argued strongly that some achievements had been missed, naming, for example, the creation of the European equipment market. Witney dismissed, with some vigour, the notion that the ESDP should progress with "baby steps". He wanted the programme to proceed at speed, as the world was a dangerous place and Europe had to understand that on all fronts.

Acknowledging that the process was complicated, Witney had criticism for the NATO side of the house. The ESDP study report had said that little progress had been made on military interoperability, but Witney thought it was remarkable that NATO's radios (from various Member States) did not talk to each other after 50 years of the Alliance. He added that libraries were full of NATO standards that had never been implemented.

In conclusion, he added that governments and similar bodies needed assistance and that think tanks had a role to play - as they had more time. Europe should follow the lead of Washington. Later, Witney said he personally tended to avoid (in his in-tray) the ultra-sensitive issues and ones that were too complicated. With the latter he would pretend to address them but they would remain stuck in the in-tray. If think tanks had a role to play there, Witney would welcome them with open arms.

The Commission's stance (and words on EU-NATO)

The Commission's Deputy Director General for External Relations and former Czech Ambassador to NATO, Karel Kovanda, thought the public was interested in the ESDP, even though it might be tiring of the EU itself. Kovanda thought that the ESDP missions (to places such as Moldova and Ache) had been "self-proclaimed successes", but that it was difficult to convince citizens that these missions helped European security.

Looking internally, Kovanda had noted an element of "mistrust and jealousy" in the relationship between the Commission and the Council. However, he had seen progress. Despite that, he still saw institutional problems which he hoped that a revamped Constitution and all it might bring with it, could resolve.

Pressed to look at EU-NATO relationships, Kovanda said that the Joint NAC / PSC meetings had been some of the "worst he had ever attended". Kovanda said that even today, the meetings were legally and technically limited to discussions concerning the Balkans. This was undercutting overall cooperation, and both sides were being hamstrung.

Roger commented on the above and agreed that the NAC/PSC meetings were not particularly productive. However, on the ground she saw good cooperation (preparation of the Kosovo operation, i.e. the interface between KFOR and the ESDP future police operation). There were some problems between the EU and non-EU Member States (particularly Greece, Cyprus and Turkey), but Roger saw a major problem in the rather negative reporting of the ESDP following any high-level NATO meeting. That was not helping the situation.

Academia

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Director Alyson Bailes saw a distinction between the security research community, who had insufficient understanding of the EU and did not appreciate the "miracle of the ESDP" and EU experts, who did not have enough politico-military and technical competence. Some institutions (in Paris, London, Brussels and the Netherlands) did have expertise, but many

countries did not see an holistic picture. This was having an impact on young Europeans who were not hearing the complete ESDP story.

Bailes wanted more young people to be involved in ESDP research via scholarships and bursaries. Mentioning the Volkswagen Foundation as an example of the approach she favoured, Bailes wanted inter-disciplinary research that was not linked to a particular national direction. In that way, there could be added-value for European research and young people could bring a fresh view.

She was also fascinated by public opinion (as shown in the latest Eurobarometer) as it seemed to be demanding more from the ESDP at a time of deep scepticism about the EU. Bailes had a warning, however, that the public might think that the ESDP had a bigger agenda than it actually had, and that this might lead to disillusionment.

Bailes recommended the creation of more research networks and commented that the Commission (with its research framework) might not be the right place to debate ESDP issues such as EU-US relations and the defence industry, etc. Research organisations tended to follow the money and, since 9/11, funding was going to terrorism and to research on enemies outside of Europe. This was creating a vacuum where there should be a debate on Europe's defence identity.

Views from the new(er) Member States

Vice-Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence, European Parliament, Girts Kristovskis, had been the Latvian Minister of Defence at the Istanbul Summit. Now, as an MEP, Kristovskis was a strong – but frustrated – supporter of the ESDP. He wanted to know more about the EU's capabilities, today and in the future, but he now understood that the European Parliament was far from the centre of decision-making. Kristovskis had made serious efforts to understand the policies and the position on the ground, but he was finding it extremely difficult to play a supportive role as a parliamentarian. His frustration had been increased when he had met the (then) Commander of the Latvian Armed Forces who had admitted that he knew nothing at all about the ESDP situation.

Vice Chairman of the European Parliament and former Romanian Minister of Defence Ioan Mircea Pascu was not sure if an open debate on the future of European defence policy would necessarily be a good thing. It could involve think tanks, academia, NGOs and, of course, the public. The reasons for such a debate were not clear to Pascu, and he had serious doubts that decisions would be changed based on what the general public thought. He wanted the debate, if it was indeed needed, to be developed in a structured and controlled manner, as there was a danger in letting the genie out of the bottle.

But Pascu was critical. Although the various EU missions had been successful, they were individual actions unattached to a coherent policy. As for NATO-EU relations, Pascu was far from optimistic. He had talked to Romania's NATO military staff and there had been no meeting of minds during their discussions with EU representatives (the latter had been described as a "bunch of lawyers"). Making a general point, Pascu objected to the EU's complexity and hence that of the ESDP itself, claiming that this was due to the Roman legalistic tradition and the love of building Baroque institutions.

Returning to the EU missions, Pascu asked how the success (as described) could be measured. Was this against expectations? Against capabilities? Against objectives? It was not clear.

A military opinion

Director General of the EU Military Staff, Lt-Gen David Leakey, turned initially to communications. The reason why the ESDP was not making headlines was because the stories were not newsworthy. There had to be "bad news or splash hits" and the EU defence policy was delivering neither. Leakey reasoned that until the EU hit the front pages, it would have no credibility and no media coverage. He backed this up with a point about fashion and the media, noting that if the popular press felt that the EU was "bogged down in bureaucracy", it was

pointless trying to go against the fashion and say otherwise – that would not sell newspapers.

Moving to the problem of "dysfunctional institutions", Leakey accepted that this was a legacy that had to be dealt with. However, there were less problems on the ground, were people were not so set on "defending one's turf". Overall, Leakey wanted a different approach to military campaigns, advocating the views of Sir Rupert Smith; this meant looking at the root causes of instability. It was a waste of time to put sticking plasters on the wounds (Africa, Kosovo) when the patient might be suffering from a (not diagnosed) cancer.

There was no global approach, and he understood that this was because there were no votes to be won by taking such a comprehensive view. Nevertheless Leakey had been heartened during his (brief) time in Brussels to-date, and saw a "real opportunity". A "big leap" might not be possible for a number of reasons: too much bureaucracy, the individual agendas of Member States, attitudes and cultures in the capitals, etc. However, he called for a real and shared analysis that could bring deep strategic solutions for individual countries. The think tanks could set a leading example by providing this strategic view that was currently totally lacking in Europe.

A think tank's position

Rob de Wijk, Director, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, came to the point, stating that the EU defence policy had no strategic direction. This was a "huge problem". He argued that this made it impossible to explain the EU's role in the world (in the context of a rising Asia, the impact on European vital interests, the EU-US relationship, the fight against organised crime and terrorism, etc.). According to de Wijk, all these factors were interlinked and the EU had to look at the total picture from a strategic viewpoint.

If that was not done, then the EU could not explain the reasons for its missions to the public. With Article 5 and forces on the ground being important in the East, and expeditionary forces being vital in the West, it was a complex picture of capabilities and requirements. There had to be an overall doctrine (see table) and it had to be developed jointly by the EU and NATO.

The communicator's belief

The Council of the EU's Spokeswoman for Solana, Christina Gallach, argued that when there was a big story (Bosnia, the EDA's progress), it did catch the public's attention. She added that there was little more that Brussels could do and that the real focus had to come from Europe's capitals. Gallach had seen positive action from France, and to a lesser extent Sweden, but

there had to be more support from the Member States. Admitting that institutional in-fighting did exist, Gallach also saw the need to move from a series of ad-hoc communications to the development of a strategic vision. That had to encompass the involvement of NGOs and think tanks as they were now widely regarded as real players on the international scene.

The US has its say

The Transatlantic Centre of the German Marshall Fund of the US's Executive Director, Ron Asmus, had seen a shift in the US as it was now more interested in finding partners further afield. It therefore needed a European partner that could act and deliver in a flexible way on a range of issues. For this reason, Asmus felt that US observers were sometimes more supportive of the ESDP than the Europeans themselves.

Having heard the debate, and having been involved in NATO-EU discussions in the late nineties, Asmus was astonished that there had been so little progress. He reasoned that there were much bigger issues to resolve than the NATO-EU turf wars.

Comparing the situation in the US and the EU, Asmus felt that the US government made much more use of think tanks to help it with its strategic thinking and planning (long-term and tactical). He felt it was obvious that the EU

needed both types of assistance.

Within the EU, Asmus saw a lack of joined-up thinking, i.e. there were no strategic links between the various commissioners. The result was a lack of a holistic strategy at both the institutional and community levels.

NATO speaks

NATO's Policy Planning Advisor, Ludwig Descamps, felt there had been a number of excuses aired about the reasons for the poor relationship existing between NATO and the EU. Descamps had his own opinions:

Communications and the need for a strategic concept: The public would not understand the ESDP unless it was part of an overall (and preferably transatlantic) strategic concept.

The Berlin-plus agreement and cooperation: said to be originally developed as a way of "deconflicting" the EU and NATO, the priority now had to be a positive focus on cooperation.

As an example, Descamps saw Afghanistan as a call (by NATO) for the EU to get involved in the "comprehensive approach" to resolving the situation.

A view from the Space Agency

Thomas Beer, Security Strategy and Partnership Development, Director General's Policy Office, European Space Agency, wanted more use to be made of existing think tanks, such as the Paris-based "*Institut international d'études stratégiques*". Beer suggested revamping the institute to bring it closer to "the action". Going further, he saw the benefits of regrouping think tanks, so that the aforementioned Paris think tank and the European Space Policy Institute (based in Vienna) could be transferred to Brussels. This would result in an overall gain in efficiency.

UK Rep's point of view

Deputy Military Representative, Permanent Representation of the United Kingdom to the EU, Brig. Gen. Ian Abbott, remained optimistic despite the "endemic communications failure". That had to be resolved and Abbott said the capitals had a responsibility to do something. He was extremely unhappy about some of the terms used, e.g. ESDP progressing with "baby steps", as he found them to be derogatory. There had to be a strong and urgent resolution as to whether the ESDP would be a "sophisticated and cumbersome" Red Cross or something more substantial. Overall, Abbott had found the study to be refreshing and he was appreciative of the work of think tanks, as mentioned by Beer. For Abbott, life was Darwinian, and external factors would bring extremely useful input.

Private industry

DCN's Public Affairs Manager, Strategy & Business Development Division, Sylvain de Mullenheim, said his company believed that think tanks could do a useful job. DCN was therefore prepared to inform and lobby the national capitals to make progress in the formation of such organisations.

In conclusion

SDA Director Giles Merritt looked back at how far the ESDP had progressed in five years. Despite that, a strategic picture was lacking and he argued that think tanks could help in that endeavour. They would avoid a national focus and help bring consensus. Acknowledging that the institutions had to get their act together, Merritt wanted his own organisation, the SDA, to develop a wider view, as the defence industry – one of its main supporters – tended to focus on its own problems (procurement, trade, export controls, etc.). Lessons could be learned from Washington, as it had a longer history of linking think tanks with officialdom. It was not just a question of a short-term industrial policy debate, but also of taking a strategic look at the future of European defence.

One missing link was a real debate that covered, amongst other topics: defence industrial policy including national issues such as protectionism, the nitty-gritty of defence & security (defence

budgets, funding, burden sharing, etc.). Some blame was being placed on the governments who were more concerned about their own agendas. Merritt added that think tanks could widen the debate and that was a lack of: a) a doctrine (a real intellectual framework) and b) a comprehensive strategy on European defence. Coupled to those factors, there was no public awareness of the issues.

Key Discussion Points

- Create a strategic vision for European defence and security policy
- Investigate the increased use of think tanks to assist the European institutions and Member States in the development of the above vision (possible tasks to include):
- Assist in the development of an overall doctrine and strategic direction for ESDP
- Review the root causes of instability in crisis regions
- Develop a tactical plan, to be implemented by all the actors, including EU, NATO, NGOs, local governments
- Create a high-level working party to revamp Berlin-plus with the aim of making cooperation the number one priority.
- Develop a strategic vision for communications (of the ESDP), developed with cooperation of Member States

- Approach industry with the view of creating more scholarships and bursaries to attract young qualified people into security research

Annex : "Off the Record"

A Selection of Quotes from Questionnaire Respondents

Respondents took part in this survey of opinion on the understanding they would not be directly quoted. The following is a selection of their views that are not attributed.

Question 1: What accomplishments can the ESDP point to and what continue to be its shortcomings?

"Milestones:

- The European Security Strategy
- Direction of the European Defence Agency
- ...civilian capabilities in Crisis Management through the supply of police men, judges, lawyers, experts of civil administration and disaster relief.
- Battlegroups
- The EU has become a security policy actor and has successfully led deployments."

"Europe is going through a strategic reawakening, but that is happening at the national level, NOT the EU level."

"There is too little cooperation both inside the EU (e.g. between the Council and the Commission) and with NATO, i.e., there is still duplication of effort leading to a waste of scarce resources."

"The very fact that an ESDP exists within the EU is an accomplishment as such."

"ESDP is one of the issues Europe agrees about the most in the end – 80% of ESDP remains agreed. The same cannot be said for budgetary or agricultural issues within the EU."

"The fact that the ESDP is still limited in its scope and can not point to big success stories does not diminish the importance of its existence. Limitations in making the ESDP more effective are perhaps the lack of (visible) linkages between the ESDP and an EU Foreign Relations Policy. Although the EU-led operations are a consequence of the latter, it appears sometimes haphazard and lacking a more integrated approach. The same could be said of linking second and third pillar activities."

"The shortcomings relate to means not meeting ambitions, where there is a political will to engage but sometimes a lack of resources being provided. However these shortcomings cannot diminish the substantial accomplishments and contributions made by the EU to crisis management during the last few years, where operations, (e.g Aceh, DRC, EU COPPS) have found a niche that other players are unable to deal with."

"...the EU still suffers from severe capability shortfalls on multiple fronts and has not reached consensus on how and when to use some of the new capabilities it has recently created."

"Overall, missions tend to define the strategy. It should be the other way around."

"Accomplishments: in Solana's words, over 10,000 women and men deployed on 10 ESDP missions on 3 Continents in 2006."

"What the EU hasn't realised yet is that there's a sizeable group more pro-EU, pro-ESDP than 10 years ago"

Question 2: Is EU-level policymaking on defence and security issues a sufficiently “porous” process, with enough input from non-governmental sources?

“The non governmental input seems to be sufficient especially given the interplay between NGO actors and ESDP actions.”

“Sufficiently ‘porous’ for ‘brainstorming’ yes, but not with respect to decisional ‘output’.”

“Ironically, the contribution from non-governmental sources to European institutional decision-making in these areas is inversely proportional to the power of the respective institutions: the European Parliament is the most porous, while the Council is the least porous.”

“Officials dealing with ESDP are increasingly involved in public events organized by NGOs, think tanks, industry etc. explaining ESDP...how the views expressed by non-government actors are taken into account in EU policymaking is less clear.”

«Definitely – it is not.»

« Yes »

“Problem: the ultimate decisions in matters of ESDP belong to the Member States, notably (if not solely) to the most powerful of these - Britain and France especially - whose decision-making processes are much harder for outsiders to join in. So real challenge: to convince these ‘sovereign’ States to Europeanise their policy-making and become a routine part of the EU decision-making process.”

"The ESDP system is too closed (e.g. access to council documents is surrealistically and condescendingly limited) with virtually no interest in disclosure or meaningful engagement. On the other hand, most 'experts' are poorly positioned to provide meaningful inputs."

"This is clearly a cultural issue. Think tanks in Europe are limited in number and scope (as well as funds), which in turn affects the degree to which they can influence the ESDP debate."

"First of all, there is no intensive network of relationships among official national institutions, responsible for ESDP in the EU policymaking process. Hence, there is no big need of the input from NGOs, think-tanks, academic institutions on security and defence."

"The [EU] policymaking process is more reactive than progressive."

Question 3: How could a wider and more coherent EU defence and security policy debate be structured? What would be your wish list for fresh voices in the ESDP debate?

"We need to move towards a single European market for security and defence research...Some of the adjectives I would use for this market: bottom-up, net-centric, competitive."

"There should be an 'ESDP road show' that enables a small group of ESDP experts to travel around Europe to host public debates in small towns."

"...the model for the EU defence and security policy debate should be akin to that of the United States: a lengthy, informal process of opinion-making (through think-tank analyses, policy papers, op-eds, seminars...); formal debates within the Parliamentary assemblies (both European and national); the "executive branch" (national governments and EU institutions) collectively making the decision, after its various officials took part in the debates and justified their positions."

"I would like to see political parties across Europe more involved in generally "selling" the EU to the population, and particularly emphasizing the successes of ESDP and its importance for the global image of the EU. "

"Certainly a larger role for the European Parliament [and national parliaments] would be useful."

"I'm not sure that a broader debate might be useful at this stage."

"The EU Institute for Security Studies (in a larger format) could become the organizational body of involving its partner institutes among the member states of the Union on a regular project basis in making an inventory, monitoring and analysing the evolving process of ESDP."

"Each Presidency could, for example, host such an event in its first month plus a similar forum in its home capital. One idea might be to stage a more political kind of debate about public opinion on ESDP each time the annual findings on this are published by Eurobarometer, and/or the excellent 'Transatlantic Trends' publication of the Marshall Center and Compagnia di San Paolo."

"An interesting idea to consider would be to invite, at certain occasions, representatives from European think tanks to debates with relevant working groups and committees in the Council."

"What is crucial is not necessarily fresh voices, but a broader perspective on security and defense issues. A more coherent debate might start from the assumption that the EU (and NATO for that matter) have become very small in the face of many current and future security challenges."

"Greater involvement of women with expertise in security and defence would[...] be welcomed."

Question 4: Is the EU-level defence and security debate as presently structured capable of addressing the more contentious strategic, budgetary and industrial policy issues?

“The knowledge and expertise is there. The focus and structures are not. We should learn from both the positive AND negative lessons from some key countries (US, France, UK, even Russia).”

“Innovative ideas for addressing highly charged issues such as budgets and industrial policy must be developed and vetted outside of the normal EU structures. In some cases, even informal conversations on these subjects are banned or highly discouraged. As a result, non-profit think tanks must take the lead in a number of areas.”

“Short answer is no. Answers to these dilemmas must be resolved at the highest level.”

“Strategic, budgetary and industrial policy issues need brokers and sources of ideas that could be found among the NGOs, universities, think-tanks, research centres.”

“In general terms, yes. But it suffers from excessive preoccupation with ‘who gets what’ among EU members.”

“ESDP seems to be a very small part of debates at the top political level in the EU and too often issues are presented through the prism of national interest (for instance the recent debate about the restructuring of EADS) than what is in the interest of the EU as a whole.”

"ESDP seems to be a very small part of debates at the top political level in the EU and too often issues are presented through the prism of national interest (for instance the recent debate about the restructuring of EADS) than what is in the interest of the EU as a whole."

"Individually, I think that all the issues you mentioned are being evaluated outside the decision-making circle. However, I am afraid that [...] networking does not exist to a sufficient extent. As a result, I am sceptical that one could speak about an integrated approach..."

"Strategy: I don't see a problem here; budgetary: this is being carefully edged forward in typical EU construction style; industrial policy: more contentious but EDA et al are beginning to nudge things in the right direction."

"No. Everyone likes to talk about political and institutional issues but the more practical ones get neglected, also in pure research terms."

"Sometimes, ESDP debates are perceived as producing 'more heat than light'."

"...any real debate has up to date been strongly biased with national interests and inability to discuss what would be good for Europe."

Question 5: To what degree is French thinking shaping Europe's debate on defence and security policies, and are other EU countries' thinkers more influential or less?

"French thinking plays a crucial role in the debate given the size, strength and traditions upon which the thinking is based."

"[Some French think tanks] seem stuck in a time warp or intent on the glorification of France"

"French thinking is probably shaping this debate most...maybe alone among its peers, [France] has articulated a relatively clear vision for the future of European security and defence."

"I do not think that the French thinking is influencing the debate as such. Rather, its influence is felt directly in the decision-making process..."

"More influence of 'thinkers' from countries 'from the middle', i.e. countries which cannot be seen by anybody, rightly or wrongly, as too much or too little European or Atlantic, would be positive."

"...more effective would be an Anglo-French-German common approach to the debate [...] which could be used to lead discussion."

"Personnel in qualified French think tanks are few and do not like travelling, it is typical for them to accept a seminar invitation and drop out at the last minute. Sometimes, even unwillingness to speak English becomes a disproportionate obstacle. [Due to a wide range of reasons such as these], US and UK voices are heard disproportionately often, and German ones to a lesser extent: but overall I

would say there is just not enough being done. (Italy and Netherlands could be mentioned as countries that really do their best.)”

“Paris’ policy drives what debate there may be, with much less input from other capitals—outside of responding to French initiatives.”

“The French have always been very active in this debate and they have a certain influence. But perhaps this is limited by the fact that they are seen to be at one extreme of the debate.”

“There is less French influence today than there was ten years ago.”

“[French thinkers continue] to be too focussed on Europe’s “autonomy” vis-à-vis the US, at a time when the risk is US neglect more than overwhelming influence in and on Europe. This is limiting French influence.”

“...it is much more important that ESDP and the European debates in the fields of Foreign and Security do lead to policies that SOLVE PROBLEMS. Whether or not suggestions originate in one single country is much less relevant.”

“Paris remains [...] the only European capital with a genuine strategic debate. But it is unfortunately too corporatist, state-centred, navel-staring and closed. Of all the factors that are currently influencing ESDP, I would not put ‘thinking’ in the Top-5. That is both the fault of the ESDP-bureaucrats AND of the thinkers themselves.”

“...it is much more important that ESDP and the European debates in the fields of Foreign and Security do lead to policies that SOLVE PROBLEMS. Whether or not suggestions originate in one single country is much less relevant.”

"If we are talking about think tanks or personalities, I think the list is pretty well established."

"Yes, definitely so. France 'walks the walk and talks the talk'."

"...the French attempt to be a decisive voice in European defence and security matters is sometimes part of the problem, not of the solution."

"It is politically incorrect for the French to recognize how much influence they have and that they've been right on ESDP all along."

"France does contribute greatly to the debate, yet its voice doesn't reflect its power."

"Of the top three questions on ESDP, one is always 'What do the French think?'"

"FRANCE MUST LEARN TO NETWORK"

"While there are important French think-tanks, their papers are less present in the European discourse than those written in English. British think-tanks are second-to-none with regard to their internet presence and e-networking (mailing lists etc.)"

Franco-British relations

"...the whole ESDP debate came about when the UK and France pulled together [...] this will be necessary if we are to see significant movement again."

"The UK and France are polarizing at times. Germany is currently a better centre of gravity."

"If France and Britain are considered the leaders of ESDP, yet unable to come together currently, who's punching above their weight? SWEDEN."

"The French can be a nuisance, but not as much as the UK. If I had a choice between the two, I'd get rid of the UK."

"...the UK [...] has the added advantage that the European-level debate takes place in English. So the influence of British thinking sometimes appears to be even stronger."

"In preaching Europe, France too easily overlooks the fact that it and the UK sit in the driving seat and remain unable to agree on the fundamentals."

"Should we not think of instituting that 2% of GNP decoted to defence becomes a criteria for EU membership? This wouldn't happen with out the Brits and could be a project of Franco-BIrish leadership."

"...one does not hear many new UK initiatives to make the ESDP work."

France-ESDP-NATO

“We have to keep telling ourselves—ESDP is not a collection of defence entities—that’s NATO.”

“The press in [some countries] largely ignores the ESDP, as it seems too exotic and confusing. In some countries...NATO crowds out the (academic, specialized) debate about European security and defence.”

“France tends to consider ESDP as counter balance to NATO. For this reason, its views are often discredited.”

“The EU-NATO debate only concerns NATO.”

“It will be extremely difficult to get 27 nations to agree. NATO has tried for years to get cooperation and failed. All their cooperative programmes are coalition of the willing (NH90, EFA, AGS, AWACS, MEADS etc).”

“French anti NATO attitude is diminishing their influence. The French are advocating an autonomous EU with the price of duplication of resources and not taking full benefit existing assets and structures.”

“French thinking is part of the success of ESDP so far. However, its resistance to opening up the EU-NATO discussion restrains further progress in ESDP.”

“The strategic relationship with the US is as important as the inner-European cooperation.”

About the Security & Defence Agenda



THE SECURITY & DEFENCE AGENDA (SDA) IS THE ONLY SPECIALIST BRUSSELS-BASED THINK-TANK WHERE EU INSTITUTIONS, NATO, NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, INDUSTRY, SPECIALISED AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA, THINK TANKS, ACADEMIA AND NGOs GATHER TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN AND TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICIES IN EUROPE AND WORLDWIDE.

Building on the combined expertise and authority of those involved in our meetings, the SDA gives greater prominence to the complex questions of how EU and NATO policies can complement one another, and how transatlantic challenges such as terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction can be met.

By offering a high-level and neutral platform for debate, the SDA sets out to clarify policy positions, stimulate discussion and ensure a wider understanding of defence and security issues by the press and public opinion.

SDA Activities:

- Monthly Roundtables and Evening debates
- Press Dinners and Lunches
- International Conferences
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The Security & Defence Agenda would like to thank its partners and members for their support in making the SDA a success



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