

THE ATTITUDES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY

Colonel PhD. Eng. Angelov I.

National Military University „Vasil Levski“ – Veliko Tarnovo, Republic of Bulgaria

ivailoaa@abv.bg

Abstract: *By asking the question of the creation of a single European army, we must say that the political will to integrate EU security and defense action is a primary factor. If Member States really want to guarantee the security of their citizens, to protect their humanitarian values in a global context, they have to have a huge political desire and not just "written documents".*

Keywords: SECURITY, DEFENCE, "BRUSSELIZATION", "EUROPEIZATION"

1. Introduction

Even at present, it is still difficult to find one uniform definition of the European Union because of its unique and complex character. Leading reference books give different definitions for the Union, and while some emphasize on the free market as one of its distinguishing features, others are focused on the political element, whereas the rest of them pinpoint its uniqueness. If we have to summarize, it could be said that the EU is a political and economic union without an equivalent, having its own internal logic associated with the gradual formation of a specific European identity based on universal values, shared by all European citizens, as well as, the formation and implementation of policies such as the Common Foreign Policy and Common Security and Defense Policy of the European Union.

2. European Union - The Common Security and Defense Policy

Despite the imperfections that the Union has today, in view of budgetary restrictions, military capabilities and historical overlaps, the EU has its uniqueness and potential for its rightful presence on the global stage. The development of this potential is a prerequisite for building a strategic vision for the future, supporting the European citizens, enhancing its political will and capabilities for its implementation, recognizing the fact that achievable security and defense solutions are increasingly associated with a renunciation of national sovereignty.

Its uniqueness lies also in the fact that it possesses the largest (non-military) capabilities to overcome crises and is the largest net contributor of funds to support the development of other countries¹. From institutional point of view, it should be noted that we have:

- on the one hand, a bureaucracy that is quite different from the classical bureaucracy, as the Brussels bureaucrats are historically a brand spanning new type of employees being the first ones to serve neither their sovereign nor their government, and the first ones to call into question the national bureaucracy and even sometimes to revise or reject the regulations and decisions of their own national governments;

- on the other hand, there is an attempt the concept of democracy to be institutionalized and a perception of political responsibility to be developed, a perception which will be able to peel itself away from the short term moods of the political majority.

In Eurobarometer 80 in a survey published in the autumn of 2013, European citizens say that after the free movement of people, goods and services, among the most positive results of the EU are: the peace among the member states of the Union (cited by 53% of respondents) and the political and diplomatic EU influence in the world (cited by 19% of respondents). On the question which of the values best represent the EU, the highest percentage of respondents point out - peace (37%), then human rights (34%) and democracy (30%)².

According to Prof. Ingrid Shikova, three are the fundamental pillars of the European project: First, the European Union is a political project and a common vision for its existence is necessary. What citizens expect from the present day leaders is the intellectual model of the future European political unification. This is not necessarily a federation or any of the already familiar models. It can and must be original and unique, as is the current European integration system. It is very important to provide a shared vision for creating and operating effective policies in important areas such as energy, infrastructure, including common foreign policy. Second, unity does not mean unification. This fundamental principle is very important because United Europe has different cultures, different languages, different sensitivities; each country has its own ambience and specific traits.

Individual differences can very well co-exist with the European and universal values. Thirdly, the shared vision for the future of the European project should be based upon the fact that in the conditions and characteristics of the world's 21st century development, in order to conquer a solid position and influence, for the sake of its voice to be heard, Europe must be really united, not only on paper. Probably, the most prominent example that could be given here is the Common Foreign and Security and Defense Policy Programs, which exist as an option in the Treaty of Lisbon, but are still not actively implemented in practice, and Member States often act differently and even quite contradictory³. Despite the significant changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty in the CSDP decision-making procedures, the principle of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination is still applied.

The decision-making process within the EU is a complex combination of institutional interests and practices, governments' positions, binary democratic control, from national parliaments on one hand and from the citizens on the other. It is also a combination of leadership strategies, regulatory and bureaucratic procedures for reaching consensus and efforts to initiate and implement certain policies. The theory of rational choice has contributed to the explanation of the dynamics of intergovernmental relations and the decision making processes concerning important issues. The theory proposes two solutions that would help to boost the confidence among the member states that their duties and responsibilities will be respected:

- collecting and sharing sovereignty - when states strongly engaged in the management of supranational institutions agree to decide on mechanisms other than unanimity;

- delegated sovereignty - when supranational institutions attain the capability to take autonomous decisions without intervention by voting or one-sidedly imposed veto.

According to the rational choice theory, CSDP brings together the benefits of cooperation so that Member States can increase their influence on the world stage⁴.

There is also an additional logic for the "sharing" of sovereignty in the field of security and defense, based on the so-called "Two-

level games" ⁵ according to which governments prefer to have the support of international organizations in order to be able to lay the blame on such organizations in the event of failure and to make it easier for them to justify the extended use of force as legitimate at national level. Having into consideration the opportunities provided by the Lisbon Treaty, there are still theoretical gaps in explaining the daily dynamics of policy making in the sector, "Brusselization" and "europeization", which also greatly influences the fundamental image of the CSDP. The process of brusselisation means the transfer of duties and functions from national capitals to the enlarging expertise capacity of the structures and institutions located in Brussels, thus aiming for greater efficiency.

Closely linked to the process of "brusselization" of the CSDP is the process of "Europeanisation" of the national policies, i.e. the expertise accumulated in Brussels, the processes and activities that take place there, have an impact on national policies⁶. Thus, the European institutions are currently developing both their political and military capabilities. Therefore, it seems possible for the EU to develop its strategic culture perception, despite the still persisting problem related to the reluctance to use hard power ⁷. Institutions are part of the political processes in a given society and, in this respect; public opinion is a key factor in the process of institutional response to the changes in the security environment.

An interesting trend is observed in TNS opinion⁸ research and analysis, which examines citizens' attitudes to defense policy in Europe, whether it is a priority and whether it should be managed at national or European level. The study focuses on two dimensions - present and future. Empirical results show that "today" EU security and defense is important for citizens. On one hand, this is due to the possibility of receiving real-time information about emerging and existing conflicts and tensions in every part of the world, as well as problems in their own countries. On the other hand, this trend is due to the economic and financial crisis, which has grown into a social one, and this is what citizens consider a potential threat to increase tension between states and, respectively, it is linked to the defense policy. Although at present 74% of respondent EU citizens support the Common Security and Defense Policy, an interesting moment are the discrepancies in the results in terms of the future. Despite the strong support for the EU security and defense policy at present, in the future the citizens will prioritize social and public policies that will have an impact on their everyday lives.

As a result, the problems of defense and security rank an unenviable position in comparison to the problems of poverty and social exclusion, the economic, budgetary and fiscal coordination, the problems of improving further the consumer protection and public health. This shows the mixed feelings of Europeans on the topic. On one hand, they strongly support further integration into the CSDP and, at the same time, consider that defense expenditures should be kept at the current levels or reduced. The lack of unambiguous understanding on the side of public, which takes into account the challenges in the security environment yet still prioritizing other areas does not justify, but gives some explanation of the current situation in the security and defense sector. Under these attitudes, the Lisbon Treaty is an adequate response, providing a regulatory framework for the future security and defence policy of Europe.

However, the limited resources allocated to security and defense question the realistic assessment of the situation that should be underlain in a future Common European Strategy. The feasible level of integration of European security and defense policy is specified in Articles 42 to 46 of the specially developed section 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon but the real one depends on the level of political will and civil support for the application of the new provisions.

Over the past years, following the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007, the EU has managed to implement practically a large part of the planned changes in the field of CFSP and CSDP. New structural units at political, military and administrative level have been established within the Union and are functioning. A High

Representative of the EU for Foreign and Security Policy was appointed and the External Relations Office was established. A Political and Security Committee has been established and functions as a permanent body. The established European Defense Agency fulfills its assigned missions and tasks. The EU carries out a number of operations, using military and civilian capabilities thus contributing to strengthen security in the world. Since 2003 under the auspices of the EU, dozens of missions have been carried out, such as: the military operations in the Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the civilian-military supporting operation in Darfur, the Congolese defense reform mission, in Aceh (Indonesia), a border guard mission in Ukraine, Moldova and Rafah (Gaza Strip), police missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Palestinian Territory and Congo, as well as missions in Georgia and Iraq.

A distinguishing characteristic of the CSDP is the focus on coordination rather than cooperation as a problematic element of collective action, given the nature that most European missions are sporadic and reactionary. CSDP is dominated by crisis management system which demands from the Member States to respond to regional and international crises in limited time. The scattered nature of these missions shows that the EU has no common vision of how it views the global environment and what image it wants to project on it⁹. Although the EU has been achieving significant progress in adopting and implementing a number of policies to respond to post-Lisbon challenges, it is still felt the need for new ways to be found to enhance integration in the area of foreign policy, security and defense.

The EU's ability to speak with one voice on economic matters enables it to influence the international scene. The transfer of this capability to foreign, security and defense policy would outline a power capacity that would earn the EU its corresponding position in the global system of international relations¹⁰. Economic and military interdependence is characterized by the fact that it is an integral part of traditional international politics and to a great extent is a consequence from social conditions and perceptions¹¹.

3. Conclusion

However, not the domestic political needs of the separate EU Member States, but the serious global challenges will most likely be the ones to incite the speeding up of the integration process in the field of security and defence policies. The Union undoubtedly needs its own strategy, a bold vision of a well-thought-out wholeness between high goals and means to achieve them.

With regard to European citizens' attitudes towards defense policy in Europe, the following two conclusions are to be drawn: firstly, in terms of overall influence, the EU sometimes finds it difficult to position itself on the international scene against the United States, China, even Russia. Therefore, having a European army capable of intervening quickly and effectively in a crisis situation would strengthen the voice of the Union among the international community.

Second, from an economic and budgetary point of view, defining European military needs and pooling defense spending, EU member states would avoid duplication and unnecessary costs. Member states should put aside their differences in the strategy and develop a common European strategy. This, in turn, would benefit not only member states but also non-EU members when they need assistance to improve their situation and resolve the crises they face.

The state and the traditional understanding of sovereignty are based on both approaches - supranational and intergovernmental. Differences arise from the final goal of whether to change the understanding of the currently existing concept for nation state or to create a new European super-state.

For some, the Lisbon Treaty is a step towards the European superstate, for others it invalidates the "federal vision" for the European Union.

In fact, the Lisbon's Treaty final evaluations by analysts, commentators and policymakers are at cross-purposes primarily due to differences in the perception of past and present expectations of the EU's future development. It can hardly be said that the Lisbon Treaty finds the right balance between supporters of deeper integration and radical Eurosceptics.

On the other hand, the Lisbon Treaty does not address a number of issues in the economic sphere: the further development of the Single Market and the Economy of Knowledge, increasing the competitiveness of the European economy, and last but not least, finding the most appropriate means to deal with the environmental and energy issues.

Solving these issues does not necessarily require new mechanisms, but rather a rigorous implementation of existing legislation, creativity, and new approaches to globalization. A good contract can be an important tool, but it cannot replace the need of political will and the determination to carry out particular tasks that correspond to the goals and ambitions set.

4. Reference

1 In 2012, net payments made by the European institutions to partner countries and multilateral organizations amounted to 17.57 billion dollars. <<http://www.oecd.org/dac/europeanunion.htm>>

2 Standard Eurobarometer 80. European citizenship report. November 2013 <http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80_citizen_en.pdf>

3 Shikova, I. Policies of the European Union. University Publishing House St. Kliment Ohridski, 2011. pp. 331-334

4. Wagner, W. Why the EU's common foreign and security policy will remain intergovernmental: a rationalist institutional choice analysis of European crisis management policy. Journal of European Public Policy. August, 2003.p. 576–595

5. „Two-level games“, Putman (1988)

6 Breuer, F. Sociological Institutionalism, Socialisation and the Brusselisation of CSDP. Chapter 6

7 Matlary, J.H. When Soft Power Turns Hard: Is an EU Strategic Culture Possible?

8 TNS opinion. What place is there for defence in the context of crisis?, <<http://www.tns-opinion.com/sites/default/files/Defence%20and%20security%20policy.pdf>>

9 Seselgyte, M. „A Grand Strategy for the EU: Top-down or Bottom-up Approach?“ EGS Towards a European Global Strategy 2013. 22 Feb 2013. <<http://www.euglobalstrategy.se/nyheter/opinions/a-grand-strategy-for-the-eu-top-down-or-bottom-upapproach>>

10 Pantev, P. Centers of Force in International Relations and the Problem of Polarity in the 21st Century. Sofia, 2014, p. 74

11 Nye, Josep Jr. Understanding International Conflicts An Introduction to Theory and History.,1993. p. 203