

QUO VADIS EUROPEAN SECURITY?

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“Quo Vadis” or “Where are You Going European Security” is the question because the real threat to European security is the lack of solidarity among Europeans. Europeans are the biggest threat to European Security. This is not a new observation. Europe has a history as a continent at war. When there hasn't been war there have been periods, even long periods, of non-war but in these there has been little mood that there is true long lasting peace. During these there have stability that has enabled economic development. But the trends and historical cycles of integration and fragmentation are becoming shorter endangering the current state of non war.²

The European Union (EU) has aimed for enlargement and deepening especially since the end of the Cold War. This integration that could ensure a longer period of stability and non-war is being threatened by a process of fragmentation exemplified by the domestic threats of terrorism and cyber attacks, the BREXIT (British withdrawal from the European Union),³ and the recent events in Catalonia.⁴ This heralds a wake-up call for Europeans to reappraise European security measures to prevent the European integration process decomposing and Europe returning to being a continent at war.

Cold War sentiments

Few if any of the current generation of European leaders have experience or even knowledge of peace making and peace keeping with their immediate neighbours. There is a sentiment to continue to rely on existing security mechanisms and institutions, maybe because it is more

¹Dr. Glen Segell, Research Fellow, Ezri Center for Iran & Persian Gulf Studies, University of Haifa <http://gulfc.haifa.ac.il/index.php/publications/414-dr-glen-segell>

²Nye Joseph S., “Comparative Regional Integration: Concept and Measurement,” International Organization, Autumn 1968 (Vol. 22, No. 4), pp. 855–880. Deutsch Karl, and others, Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1957); Etzioni Amitai, Political Unification: A Comparative Study of Leaders and Forces (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965)

³Hunt, Alex & Brian Wheeler, Brexit: All you need to know about the UK leaving the EU, The BBC, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-32810887>

⁴Catalonia, The Independent, <http://www.independent.co.uk/topic/Catalonia>

cost effective to do so. The most formidable of these existing security mechanisms and institutions were created during the Cold War. Then the main threats were from other states. Then European security had the options of alliances (eg. NATO), being non-aligned, or being neutral.

Today the main threats that Europe faces are no longer from other states. But for the main part the most formidable security mechanisms and institutions are still to protect against other states with the option of alliances dominating (eg. NATO). Today the tactics and strategy are not compatible with the mainly non state threats that are posed against EU states and citizens.

Today the size and structure of the armed forces of European states for these, that is to say commitment to NATO, are not compatible with the open internal borders of the EU and with the EU policy of the free movement of people, goods and services. Weapons to counter other armies have aged and haven't been replaced as do soldiers since conscription has been abolished. For example the average age of Belgian military personnel is currently 41.2 (41.4 among men versus 39 among women). The goal of reforms is to reduce this to 34.5

There is no doubt that the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) as part of the Common Security and Foreign Policy (CSFP) has indeed resulted in successful missions deployed outside of the European Union. But the size and structure of forces for these persist in the philosophy in Cold War sentiments and a reliance on the United States for airlift capability for example with little practical utility to counter the daily threats that European citizens face.⁶

To a lesser extent there are some security mechanisms and institutions established by the EU that sought an independent identity in relation to NATO and within NATO in the days after the Cold War. Some of these are designed to ensure that EU states can play a role within the NATO alliance, or to replicate its functions but are mainly used to project EU foreign policy far beyond its borders. The chronology posts goals, treaties, strategies and arrangements that include: Petersberg Tasks, Amsterdam Treaty, St. Malo Declaration, Laken Declaration, Berlin Plus Agreement, European Security Strategy, Defence Agency, Lisbon Treaty, EU Defence Package, Ghent Initiative, Mutual Assistance, EU Global Strategy, Permanent Structured Cooperation (PeSCo).⁷

Some of these have achieved positive results but even the European Commission is sceptical as to the true value and this adds to a lack of European solidarity. Solidarity comes from unity but the European Commission in late 2017 said "A European intelligence agency would take too long to set up and distract from the urgent work currently needed to tackle terrorism".⁸

⁵DGHR Rapport annuel 2015: la DGHR et le personnel en chiffres; Defence Ministry, Plan stratégique pour la Défense 2030

⁶European Commission, Borders and Security, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/borders-and-security_en

⁷European Security and Defence, EUROPA, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/EUdefence%20leaflet.pdf>

⁸Nielsen, Nikolaj, EU intelligence agency not a priority, Euobserver 8 September 2017 <https://euobserver.com/justice/138939>

This was in response to the EU commissioner for migration, Dimitris Avramopoulos, who said it would have helped prevent the recent spate of terrorist attacks in Belgium, France, Finland, Spain and the UK. EU states see such an agency as far-fetched given the secretive nature of national intelligence agencies and their reluctance to share information over broader fears it may get leaked, or disclose the sources. In many instances hundreds of successes are overshadowed by a few failures that damage progress and solidarity. Last year, a former agent at the EU's police agency, Europol, leaked some 700 pages of data on 54 different police investigations.⁹

Goals to counter the daily threats that European citizens face

The lack of solidarity and progress is bleak. It was in December 2003, that the European Union adopted the European Union security strategy, which looked at the external aspect of Europe's security but it was only in February 2010 that the Council complemented this by adopting the European Union internal security strategy.¹⁰

The European Union internal security strategy demonstrates a firm commitment to making progress in the area of justice, freedom and security through a European security model which faces the following challenges: protecting rights and freedoms; improving cooperation and solidarity between member states; addressing the causes of insecurity and not just the effects; prioritising prevention and anticipation; involving all sectors with a role to play in public protection (political, economic, social, etc.); communicating security policies to the citizens; and recognising the interdependence between internal and external security in establishing a "global security" approach with third countries.¹¹

This is an ambitious and essential strategy with an objective to counter internal threats facing Europe, such as terrorism, serious and organised crime, drug trafficking, cyber-crime, trafficking in human beings, sexual exploitation of minors and child pornography, economic crime and corruption, trafficking in arms and cross-border crime. To be successful it will need to adapt extremely quickly to changes in science and technology, and in attempts to exploit and undermine the values and prosperity of societies.¹²

In other words the strategy requires the constant cooperation of all national and local law-enforcement and border authorities, judicial authorities and other services in, for example, the health, social and civil protection sectors, to exploit the potential synergies that exist in the areas of law-enforcement cooperation, integrated border management and criminal-justice systems.¹³

⁹Nielsen, Nikolaj, EU intelligence agency not a priority, Euobserver 8 September 2017
<https://euobserver.com/justice/138939>

¹⁰European Union, Internal Strategy for the European Union, March 2010
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30753/qc3010313enc.pdf>

¹¹Council of the European Union "Towards a European Security Model" March 2010,
<https://db.europol.europa.eu/db/en/doc/1540.pdf>

¹²Council of the European Union "Towards a European Security Model" March 2010,
<https://db.europol.europa.eu/db/en/doc/1540.pdf>

¹³Council of the European Union, Renewed European Union Internal Security Strategy and Counter-Terrorism Implementation Paper: report of the first half of 2017 and programme for the second half of 2017

Some of the European decentralised agencies that play an important role to this strategy are the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA), European Asylum Support Office (EASO), European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), European Police Office (Europol), and the European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit (Eurojust).

But these for the main part function as decentralised agencies to support coordination and cooperation between and within the EU and national governments and with third parties such as the United States and NATO. This is because they are reliant on member states willingness and contributions, which are not always forthcoming. Some are in their early stages as aspirations of work in progress and in some cases there is a lack of solidarity or willingness to relinquish national mechanisms for those of European Union. This is evident in the exchange of information and intelligence or the lack therefore.¹⁴

Trust as a security commodity is in short supply to make national assets available even for EU border protection so that role specializations can become possible. For example it was only in December 2016 that the the European Border and Coast Guard Agency launched a rapid reaction pool. It is made up of 1500 officers committed by EU member states and Schengen associated countries. But will take five working days to deploy, in a crisis situation.¹⁵

Such lack of willingness and /or lack of capability shows that for the main part then European states take for granted and treat security instruments and institutions carelessly together with a lack of public resilience giving rise to the undermining of European solidarity.¹⁶ The real threat to European security is the lack of solidarity among Europeans. Europeans are the biggest threat to European Security.

Who to the rescue?

Should European solidarity emerge in EU security instruments and institutions, which is not impossible, with a strengthening of European Union mechanisms then the Cold War syndrome may be phased out. The real undeniable truth is that maybe because of NATO European states still live in the Cold War mode that Europeans rely on Americans for their security.

<http://www.statewatch.org/news/2017/sep/eu-council-iss-report-2-10827-17.pdf>

¹⁴Segell, Glen. "Intelligence Agency Relations Between the European Union and the U.S.", International Journal of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence, Volume 17, Number 1, pp 81-96

¹⁵European Council, Strengthening the EU's external borders, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/migratory-pressures/strengthening-external-borders/>

¹⁶Techau, Jan, The Four Threats to European Security, Carnegie Europe, 2 October 2012. <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=49541>

The Cold War sentiments see the United States dashing to Europe's rescue, especially since NATO is the main alliance and not the European Union. With these Cold War sentiments there is also a residual Cold War apprehension of de-linkage across the Atlantic. Such apprehension illustrates that perhaps European leaders see their greatest security threat as the United States ditching Europe. That is to say that the main alliance NATO now dominated by America but without it would only have ephemeral European capability. This is a possibility should the United States evaluate the cost benefit ratio of defending through NATO a continent that doesn't need defending.

Such an apprehension has been heightened in the BREXIT moves of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union. The United Kingdom ardently devotes efforts to the trans-Atlantic alliance more than to the European Union. Although it may still contribute to European efforts to suit its own national interests after BREXIT it is showing a lesser interest even in debating and participating in common and single European interests, values, and principles.

This is not new historically and it is not solely related to conventional defence. It is also related to Cold War sentiments of deterrence. Even though the United Kingdom and France have nuclear weapons there has been no move for these to unite in a European security initiative to replace the American nuclear umbrella of Europe through NATO even as a deterrence to nuclear blackmail.¹⁷

BREXIT is portraying European fragmentation rather than integration, and a trivial rather than deepening of the European Union where national interests dominate.¹⁸ The United Kingdom and BREXIT is not the sole example leading to apprehension and highlighting the low level of European Union solidarity. Other European state leaders continue to make their own decisions often without talking to each other and without prior consultation among EU and NATO members on the reform of national militaries, cuts and restructuring.¹⁹

European nations continue to protect their local jobs in the armaments industries and to guard their own military assets at the expense of tax payers' money and defence efficiency. Rationalisation, standardisation and interoperability in NATO and the pooling and sharing efforts within the EU have failed to gain grip.²⁰

In practise there have been national cuts that have impeded continental wide efforts. Any further reductions in security efforts may only further increase the dependency on American

¹⁷Volkery, Carsten, A Look at Britain's and France's Nuclear Arsenals, Spiegle, 12 April 2010. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/deterrent-lite-a-look-at-britain-s-and-france-s-nuclear-arsenals-a-688504.html>

¹⁸Segell, Glen, "Intelligence cooperation between the UK and the EU: Will BREXIT make a difference to single, common and bilateral?" Journal of Intelligence History Vol. 16 No. 4 pp 83-86

¹⁹Liberti, Fabio, Defence Spending in Europe, Notre Europe paper 46, http://www.institutdelors.eu/media/policy46_fliberti_en.pdf?pdf=ok

²⁰The European Agenda on Security, European Commission COM(2015) 185 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52015DC0185>

services in Europe. They might contribute even less as partners for American led NATO “Out of Area Operations.”²¹

In doing so they make it harder for themselves to ensure that their own states are defended or capable of being a viable partner for other European states or America. This underlines the real threat to European security as the lack of solidarity among Europeans. The biggest threat to European Security is Europeans who flout measures to attain solidarity.

Confidence, self-reliance, assurance and commitment

This is echoed by the President of the European Council Donald Tusk who sees security threats partly through an economic lens from an assertive China, an aggressive Russia and war, terror and anarchy in the Middle East and Africa. He has a solution: The EU needs to stick together.²²

Solidarity in security terminology has historically been phrased as alliances and treaties. It has seen expression with the procurement of costly weapons to defend and the commitment of forces. Such all for one and one for all sounds chivalrous like an Alexandre Dumas novel²³ so long as there is something to defend, someone to defend against and something to defend with.

European solidarity of all for one and one for all requires resource commitment to EU wide security instruments, institutions, and mechanisms and not just increased expenditures on national and local police forces, surveillance, internal intelligence, and counter-terrorism though in its own right this is a positive step.²⁴

European solidarity of all for one and one for all requires trust and confidence. It is not that European states don't have the confidence to achieve a viable European security identity and capability independent of the United States and NATO. But there are some factors that are inhibiting, hampering and slowing it down.

One is to thrash the lack of public resilience that has been created because European political leaders have promoted Europe as a peaceful continent that lacks popular ambition for military adventures or a misguided, jingoistic competitiveness.²⁵ The European public has been bred to be anti-belligerent. To suit this for decades there has been a general rejection of increased spending on military security as a relevant factor of life in turn suiting a reliance on NATO and America.

²¹NATO, Operations and Missions, Past and Present, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52060.htm

²²Grey, Alex, The 3 biggest threats to the EU, according to President Tusk, World Economic Forum, 3 February 2017. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/02/the-3-biggest-threats-to-the-eu-according-to-president-tusk/>

²³Dumas, Alexandre The Three Musketeers, (Les Trois Mousquetaires) France 1844

²⁴European Parliament, Counter Terrorism Funding in the EU Budget, June 2015, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/559490/EPRS_BRI\(2015\)559490_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/559490/EPRS_BRI(2015)559490_EN.pdf)

²⁵Goals and Values of the EU, EUROPA, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en

But now no one could doubt that the European public, and leaders, are not concerned in daily life about illegal migration, terrorism, cyber attacks, and human and drug trafficking that can only be resolved through European solidarity.²⁶

Any threat must be taken as real. No matter how small threats they can work as force multipliers becoming substantive threats. European leaders need to make a much better case to the public for funding and resources for security strength also showing why European solidarity is required to achieve it. They need to overcome the fatigue or the defeatist feeling that nothing more can be gained by being more vigilant, prepared, and determined or in working together as a continent.²⁷

Conclusions

Today the apparent threats to European in part are from illegal immigration, terrorists, drug and human trafficking and cyber. It would seem to be a rational and prudent time to enhance efforts for an effective and efficient division of labour and collaboration. There are EU efforts for security instruments, institutions, and mechanisms. But these are alarmingly aspirations and still work in progress.²⁸

Many efforts have been made on paper to create European wide ability and capability but have not seen realisation and don't function in practise. Nationalism and individual states' recalcitrant views have seen European Union efforts continuing to only have a coordinating role. No EU state is capable of defending itself. yet progress towards solidarity is slow and lacks aptness. At risk is the security of each EU state due to this short sightedness.

Overcoming this trend is to surmount a profound sense of insecurity of a world full of nukes and drones and terrorists and amorphous threats from cyberspace that tends towards a strategy of reaction only on a tactical level and on an ad hoc basis. Being proactive in developing and implementing comprehensive policies, doctrines and strategies and in the process establishing European solidarity will see realisation in enhanced security for each state as well as for the Union as a whole. As the lack of solidarity among Europeans is the biggest threat to European Security only Europeans can solve it and they need to sooner rather than later. This is Quo Vadis European Security!

²⁶Zande, Dick, Jan Rood, Minke Meijnders (eds) The Relationship between external and internal security, Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, June 2014 <https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/The%20relationship%20between%20external%20and%20internal%20security.pdf>

²⁷Miller, N.L. and P. Matsangas and L.G. Shattuck "Fatigue and its Effect on Performance in Military Environments" in James L. Szalma and Peter A. Hancock (eds) Performance under stress, Ashgate Publishing, 2008.

²⁸The European Agenda on Security, European Commission COM(2015) 185 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52015DC0185>