

SDA CONFERENCE
DEFINING A EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY

Does the EU's broader approach to security yet add up to a strategy?

- Yes, of course we already have a **European Security Strategy since December 2003**; and this despite, or actually because of, the European division caused by the invasion of Iraq that same year;
- The ESS reflects a broad assessment of what the threats are, but also of what the tools should be to fight them; in its words [and I quote] "*in pursuing our strategic objectives*", we should make use of the "*full spectrum of instruments for crisis management and conflict prevention at our disposal, including political, diplomatic, military and civilian, trade and development activities*";
- In other words, besides obvious concerns with the classical 'hard' aspects of security, such as the importance of pooling and sharing scarce defence capabilities, **the ESS emphasizes the need for coherence between different EU policies** in the fields of defence, foreign relations, justice and home affairs, and development;
- This strategy has been successful both in shaping European discourse on security *and* in providing a general framework for the EU's external action;
- The European Defence Agency; the 19 ESDP operations already conducted on the ground or in preparation (such as Afghanistan, Kosovo and Chad); the EU Strategy against proliferation of WMD and the EU Strategy to fight terrorism; the EU's efforts at improving African peacekeeping capabilities in the context of the European Development Fund; the EU's Small Arms and Light Weapons Strategy; the EU's emerging doctrine on Security Sector Reform; the European Neighbourhood Policy's aspirations to solve frozen and not-so-frozen conflicts and even, I would say, the CFSP-related novelties included in the Reform Treaty: **all these**

were either direct consequences of, or inspired by, the same strategic vision that was spelled out in the ESS. This vision is made up of three main elements;

1. Firstly, the need to see **security as a multifaceted and scarce commodity, which has its roots as much in good governance and sound development policies**, as in rapidly deployable, sustainable and interoperable Battlegroups;

2. Secondly, the **need for more Europe**; the europhobic right and left extremes of our European political spectrum **are right to see the ESS as an important step in the deepening of EU integration**; Sarkozy's speech on France's return to NATO under the condition that some countries stop holding back the development of ESDP demonstrates that this is the only way the European pillar in NATO will actually be reinforced; the ESS makes it clear that **there isn't one major threat to the Union that can be fought by individual states making use of the limited tools put at their disposal by old-fashioned national sovereignty**; **"in a crisis there is no substitute for unity of command"** the ESS states unequivocally - this **applies both** to the need for **coherence between EU policies** on one hand, and **between the external activities of the EU and its Member States** on the other;

3. Finally, and most importantly, the well-known principle of **effective multilateralism**, which is more than the simple recognition that **Europe will only be safe in a rules-based international order, with the UN as its major source of legitimacy and legality**;

- But, of course **the more interesting question is not whether the EU's broad approach to security adds up to a strategy, but rather whether that strategy is working** - the fragmentation problem Ambassador Roger mentioned earlier;
- And here **a considerable amount of scepticism is in order**: for example, while on one hand we promise to shower Africa with development aid - which we don't, in fact - on the other we still find European Small Arms and Light Weapons in the worst African conflict zones - the EU's Code of Conduct on Arms Exports is *still* not yet a legally binding document; actually Bosnian weapons found in Iraq and Liberia were transferred under the noses of NATO and EU forces;

- Another example: while our Foreign Ministers swear they want to bring the Western Balkans closer to Europe, Interior Ministers in a *their narrow definition of security*, stand in the way of a radical overhaul of the visa facilitation scheme for the region;
- Finally, while we Europeans commit ourselves politically to effective multilateralism and a robust support to UN-mandated peacekeeping missions, our Member States are still only slowly getting engaged in an excruciatingly slow - but urgently necessary - process of cooperation, coordination, pooling and sharing of the very limited military resources at our disposal;
- **In other words, it is not the broad concept of security that is missing; it is not the strategic vision we are lacking: what we need to on work in Europe is the political will to turn that vision into a reality and the institutions to put it into practice;**
- Part of the solution will come with the Reform Treaty and its implications for CFSP and ESDP, namely the creation of a European Foreign Minister (call it what you want...), the setting up of a European Diplomatic Service and the concept of 'structured cooperation' in the defence area;
- In what the political will is concerned, I urge you not to be too impatient; if our partner the US, a large, wealthy and unified actor is sometimes unable to grasp the very basics of what sustainable security is and implement them in places like Afghanistan, **I think the EU** - a newcomer to this game, a unique creature made up of a myriad of interests and agendas - **isn't doing too badly;**
- A last word on the ESS: in a recent visit to the European Parliament, Javier Solana confirmed that this document was going to be reviewed during 2008;
- We, at the European Parliament, who have for years actively contributed to the EU's distinctive approach to security, expect to be fully involved in the redrafting of the ESS;
- To conclude, let me underline the fact that the EU is quite good at drawing up strategies, action plans and policy documents; translating services in Brussels are certainly thriving...; **it is not a new strategy we**

need, but rather a greater sense of urgency in implementing the one we have.

- A final remark:

A lot has been said on the threat of terrorism this morning. Let me just tell you that we at the European Parliament - as demonstrated in the plenary debate last month with the Council and the Commission - don't think that EU governments are doing a great job in coherently fighting terrorism: neither in stepping up resources and coordination mechanisms for intelligence at national or European level, nor in public diplomacy - that terrorists have not been dealt with as crude criminals and have been upgraded to the status of political soldiers in the rhetoric of the 'war on terror' (and I am glad that rhetoric is being abandoned even in the USA) and the fact that the rule of law has been violated do deal with terrorists, basically downgrading our states to the methodology of terrorism, does not enhance our capacity to fight the extremist political ideologies which use terrorism; rather it plays into their hands and only provides them with more recruits and arguments.