

THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN ENSURING SECURITY OF THE MEMBER STATES

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Abstract: *The European Union needs its own strategies, which set out the objectives to be achieved and the tools and means necessary to realize them.*

The European Union must join forces and ensure unity of command in situations of security risk, allocate greater resources and better coordinate the existing ones.

The European Security Strategy sets out when, where, why and how the European Union will act. By adopting the European Security Strategy, the Union has explicitly assumed its role as a global player, able to assume global responsibilities as well.

Keywords: *European Union (EU); security; Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP); strategic objectives; actors in international relations*

Introduction

Most contemporary debates speak about issues regarding the way in which the (state and non-state) actors of international relations appear and act, what is their status, as well as how their action is connected to the international political reality. The European Union wants to be a real player in international relations, through the way in which the economy and trade determine the bases of the actions that are carried out. *"The role and importance of the European Union are growing in the international diplomatic environment, given its involvement in managing the great problems of the contemporary world that concern it directly, such as achieving a climate of security and stability, the fight against international terrorism, stabilization of the close neighborhood, North-South relations and finally, sometimes controversial relationship to the common foreign and security policy, as well as the general European defense policy".¹*

The commitment of the European Union is manifested in the conditions of sharpening and radicalization of changes in the international

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¹ Dumitru Matei, “Strategia de securitate SOLANA - răspunsul UE la noile riscuri și provocări din mediul internațional”, *Gândirea Militară Românească* nr. 2/2005.

environment, the acceleration of the two fundamental trends of the XXI century - globalization and fragmentation - in which the economy and trade become increasingly controlled by international financial and economic institutions and bodies. The European Union plays an important role in world affairs, taking into account global climate change, human rights, local conflicts, the degradation of state authorities or any other global issue.

The historical evolution of the European Union has led to a multitude of tools, means and capacities for action in the chain of international relations, including a strong, harmonized and high-tech economy, trade, IT developments, diplomacy and security and defense capability; these developments are, in part, a response to their own political and economic challenges and, on the other hand, to global challenges that call for joint and coherent European action.

Following the signing of the Treaty of Lisbon on 13th of December 2007, the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) appears, following the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). The CSDP is a policy with important valences in achieving continental security, a component part of the CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy), the premises of their development being established by the Treaty on European Union.

Europe already has a free, efficient market economy, a single currency, trade regulated strictly by its own Community legal system, its own policies in various fields. In these circumstances, it is natural for the European Union to defend its own interests, as a union, and those of the Member States, as a true global player, seeking to respond, as realistically as possible, to these major problems of the 21st century. In this sense, logically, *"the European Union needs its own strategies, which set the objectives to be achieved and the tools and means necessary to realize them."*²

The strategic objectives of the European Union and the way of action in order to achieve them

"The risks of a traditional military confrontation on the European continent have decreased significantly. The explanation for this evolution

² Cornel Paraniac, George Tibil, "Politica europeană de securitate și apărare - cinci ani de la lansare", *Gândirea Militară Românească* nr. 2/2005;

*lies in two aspects: the current security interests and objectives of the European states do not generate conflicting states, on the contrary, they favor cooperation and solidarity; the international security environment is positively influenced by the processes of European and Euro-Atlantic integration, in fact by the expansion of the community of states that share and promote the values of democracy and market economy, in the context of deepening regional cooperation ”.*³

When it comes to security threats, the European Union has three strategic objectives:

- **“ensuring stability and good governance in the immediate vicinity;** This will involve expanding the security zone around Europe and ensuring that the states in this area (Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans, the Mediterranean states) are well governed. This goal will also involve the continuation and development of Europe's involvement in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict”,⁴

- **“creating an international order based on effective multilateralism;** In a world characterized by globalization (global threats, global markets, global media), security and prosperity depend on the existence of an effective multilateral system. Therefore, one of the objectives of the European Union must be the development of a strong international society, characterized by the existence of efficient international institutions, as well as the existence of an international order based on compliance with laws, primarily the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations”.⁵

- **way of action in case of new type threats;** counter-terrorism measures, non-proliferation measures of weapons of mass destruction, as well as measures against the latest threat, namely the COVID-19 pandemic.

The European Union must join forces and ensure unity of command in the event of a crisis, allocate greater resources and better coordinate the existing ones.

³ *Strategia Europeană De Securitate - O Europă sigură într-o lume mai bună*, Bruxelles, 2003;

⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁵ *Ibidem.*

In order to achieve the security and defense objectives, we consider that the development of collaboration with other actors on the world stage should not be neglected: privileged relations with the USA, as well as the interaction with Russia, Japan, China, Canada and India.

Last but not least, *“The European Union must show the openness needed to develop active partnerships with any country that shares its goals and values. Through this approach, the European Union can make a significant contribution to achieving a multilateral security system that allows for a more prosperous, equitable and secure world”*.⁶

The European security needs to be able to combine achievable goals and means, in which the purely military segment of defense is a small part of the effort, a goal in itself. In our view, for the European Union to be a legitimate, effective and credible security actor, it must also have a limited and credible military component, firmly anchored in the *“effective multilateralism”* of the Union's broad security responsibilities.

New approaches to the European Union's Global Foreign Policy and Security Strategy and strengthening the concept of *Common Security and Defense Policy* (CSDP)

The European Security Strategy adopted in 2003 in Brussels states when, where, why and how the European Union will act. *“This strategic concept generates consensus, which can bring together all the security instruments of the Union (aid and development, prevention of terrorist acts, active and effective policing, rules of law, support for effective administration and credibility of the armed forces, etc.) in a unique institutional framework, demanded by the contemporary concept of security.*

The European Security Strategy must be developed by the competent European institutions and by all the Member States towards a true strategic concept, which would represent a different kind of beginning in the thinking and organization of transnational security, as it could develop both in a

⁶ Gaburro, Mr., Rapporteur, “Prospects for the European Security and Defence Policy-Contribution to the Intergovernmental Conference”, *Draft Report, Assembly of Western European Union, The Interparliamentary European Security and Defence Assembly, Political Committee (Forty-ninth session), Paris, 13 October 2003, A/WEU/POL [2003]*;

single civilian and military framework, as well as in a defensive and offensive security system (if necessary) and a specific defense system".⁷

The new strategic concept on common European security is needed to defend critical European infrastructure, such as energy sources, food, public health, IT products and centers, transport systems, etc. Defense must be transnational, professionalized and harmonized in terms of language, training, exercises and doctrine.

*The European Union's Global Strategy on Foreign Security and Policy (EUGS)*⁸, adopted in June 2016, fuels the ambition of strategic autonomy for the European Union, which is necessary to promote the common interests of citizens and European principles and values, based on a international system established by rules and multilateralism. Strengthening the transatlantic link and partnership with NATO and opening up to new security partnerships are key to the European foreign and security policy.

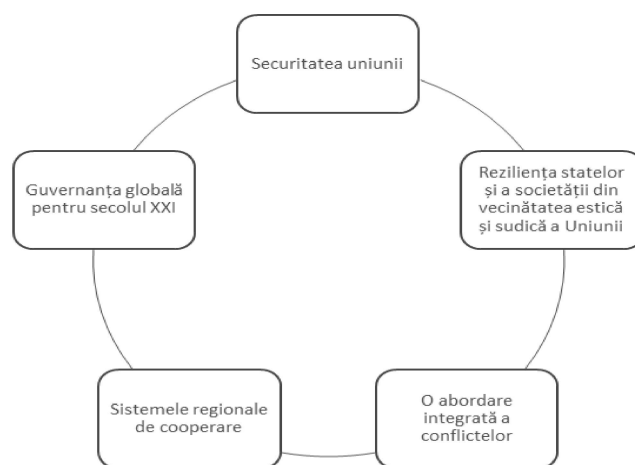


Figure 1. EU priorities in foreign and security policy

⁷ Cornel Paraniac, George Tibil, "Politica europeană de securitate și apărare - cinci ani de la lansare", *Gândirea Militară Românească* nr. 2/2005, p. 25;

⁸ *The European Union's Global Foreign Policy and Security Strategy - A Common Vision, Joint Actions: A Stronger Europe*, Bruxelles, 2016.

Figure 1 legend:

Securitatea uniunii = Union security

Guvernanta globala pentru secolul XXI = Global governance for the 21st century

Sistemele regionale de cooperare = Regional cooperation systems

O abordare integrata a conflictelor = An integrated approach to conflict

Rezilienta statelor si a societatii din vecinatatea estica si sudica a Uniunii = Resilience of states and society in the eastern and southern neighborhood of the Union

*"The first direction of action, the security of the Union, brings to the forefront the European concern about security risks and threats such as terrorism, hybrid threats, economic volatility, climate change and energy insecurity."*⁹

Increasing the resilience of states and society in the eastern and southern neighborhood is another interest captured in the EUGS. "A credible accession process, based on strict and equitable conditionality, is vital for strengthening the resilience of the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey."¹⁰

Regarding the integrated approach to conflict, the EUGS states that: "The EU will engage in a practical and principles-based way in the peace-building process and will promote human security through an integrated approach. Implementing the "global approach to conflicts and crises" through a coherent use of all EU policies is essential. But the meaning and scope of the "global approach" will be further expanded. The EU will act at all stages of the conflict cycle, acting promptly in the prevention phase, responding responsibly and decisively to crises, investing in stabilization and avoiding premature disengagement in the event of a new crisis. The EU will act at different levels of governance: conflicts such as those in Syria and Libya have local, national, regional and global dimensions that need to be addressed"¹¹.

⁹ *The European Union's Global Foreign Policy and Security Strategy - A Common Vision, Joint Actions: A Stronger Europe*, Bruxelles, 2016;

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

The promotion of regional cooperation systems *"provides an opportunity to better manage security concerns, to reap the economic benefits of globalization, to give a broader form of expression to cultures and identities, and to exert influence in international affairs, being a fundamental principle for the EU's own peace and development in the 21st century"*.¹²

The 5th direction outlined in the EUGS is the *global governance for the 21st century*. International law, sustainable development and sustainable access to the global common goods are fundamental, while supporting the United Nations is a goal for multilateral order.

With an important role in the European security strategy, initiatives have been adopted through the CSDP, both in the military field through: the European Defense Fund - EDF (2021-2027), the Annual Coordinated Defense Analysis (CARD) and the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), as well as in the civilian field, to respond to current threats to international security (illegal migration, terrorism, hybrid threats, cyber threats, maritime security, border management, organized crime).

The need to rapidly achieve European military effectiveness calls for a distinct concept and action to trigger a process of transforming European forces (at Member State or European level) into electronic capability systems for conducting operations capable of integrating European security and defense forces, a specific European concept on interoperability and standardization, its own database for generating forces for operations led by the European Union, including non-EU states willing to participate in such operations. This can be achieved through the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP).

"Since 2003 and with the first interventions in the Western Balkans, the EU has launched and carried out 36 operations and missions on three continents. As of May 2021, 17 CSDP missions and operations were under way, including 11 civilian and 6 military, involving approximately 5,000 EU military and civilian personnel deployed abroad. The latest missions and operations have supported security in the Central African Republic (EUAM RCA) and implemented the UN weapons embargo on Libya (EUNAVFOR

¹² *Ibidem.*

*MED IRINI). The EU's decisions to carry out missions or operations are normally taken at the request of the partner country assisted and / or on the basis of a UN Security Council resolution."*¹³

The European Commission also presented on 24th of July, 2020, the EU Strategy for a Security Union for the period 2020-2025, which “*focuses on capacity building, so as to ensure a security environment adapted to the requirements of the future. The strategy sets out a company-wide approach to security that can respond effectively and in a coordinated manner to rapidly evolving threats. The strategy sets out strategic priorities and appropriate actions to address digital and physical risks in an integrated way throughout the security union ecosystem, with an emphasis on areas where the EU can add value.*”¹⁴

We appreciate that the European position on building a solid and viable security architecture, both on the European continent and internationally, is a realistic position based on strong political and economic instruments. Even if it has its own military structure, well organized, equipped and trained, capable of carrying out actions both on and off the continent, the issue of European security cannot be outside global security and, as such, between the European Union and other regional international security organizations, and between it and the two major political, economic and military actors, the United States and Russia, strong cooperative and collaborative relations based on common interests must be established in order to ensure peace, regional and global stability and security.

Conclusions

We can say that since its inception, the European Union (EU) can be considered the pole of stability in maintaining European security. At the same time, we can say that in order to counter the new threats, we need a consolidation of European states, first and foremost, of the world in all areas, by establishing forms of joint action of all nations that share common interests and values.

¹³ CSDP Missions and operations for the period 2003-2021, accessed on 25.10.2021, available at <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/ro/sheet/159/politica-de-securitate-si-aparare-comuna>;

¹⁴ COM(2020) 605, *Strategia UE privind uniunea securității*, Bruxelles, 2020.

We argue that European states must apply and promote the concept of European security, the judicious distribution of tasks being indispensable for the unwavering support of the common approach to security. The process of modernization and rallying to technological change is an important element in strengthening security and must constantly take into account changes in the international environment and the reshaping of the European space.

We appreciate that any security policy becomes useful only when it is complied with. It is therefore necessary to follow up, the implementation of initiatives and actions aimed at ensuring European security, situations, reports, regular assessments of progress in the field being mandatory for the safety of the citizens, respect for their values and rights.

Given the above, we can highlight the following:

- The CFSP provides an international correspondence between the EU's economic tasks and the political impact of the organization;

- The CSDP, as an intrinsic component of the CFSP, aims to step up European action to combat risks in both the military and civilian fields, as a mechanism in addition to the existing legislative framework at EU level;

- *"The foreign and security policy of our country will be based on the following triad of action: increasing Romania's role and efforts in the European Union, consolidating the strategic profile in NATO, as well as deepening and expanding the Strategic Partnership with the USA"*²⁵;

- Romania is a member of the European Union, so it must encourage the consolidation of the CSDP and participate, in an active way, in it;

Finally, we can say that the European Union is already a security community according to the concept launched by Karl Deutch. We consider that the directions of action in the implementation of the European security strategy cannot be outside the global security. In these circumstances, between the European Union and other international and regional security organizations, as well as between it and the two major political, economic and military actors, the United States and Russia, strong, interest-based cooperation and collaboration relations must be established in order to

²⁵ *Strategia Națională de Apărare a Țării pentru perioada 2020-2024, Împreună, pentru o Românie sigură și prosperă într-o lume marcată de noi provocări*, București, 2020;

ensure peace, regional and global stability and security.



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