EUROPEAN UNION'S STRATEGIES FOR STRENGHTENING THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: *Security can be perceived as a dynamic process that constantly relates to new types of threats from the external environment that tend to adapt to the vulnerabilities of a state, amplifying the security risk at regional level. This represents a primary goal within the policies of the European Union, including in the relationship with third countries, which is why, through the security strategies and the security activities carried out, it aims to ensure the safety of all citizens in the European space.*

Goals of the European Security and Defense Policy of the European Union

The period that followed the end of the Cold War is defined by the outbreak of a series of crises within several states, which is why the military forces of the European states participated to numerous missions in regions such as the Balkans, Afghanistan, Somalia, Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Thus, the USA has become the main state with a significant role in asssuring the European security, both through the security commitments towards Europe undertaken within NATO, and through the support given for the European integration.

At the same time, the international security environment changed after the terrorist attacks from September 11, 2001, in the sense that there were new types of threats from the external environment that European states cope with, such as terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, economic criminality and corruption, cybercrime, cyber attacks, human trafficking or arms trafficking.

These threats have experienced a fast evolution and have acquired new forms, jeopardizing the security by undermining the main values underlying the existence and development of the rule of law. Given this

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context, the European Union has become increasingly concerned with protecting its fundamental interests, strengthening its own security and implementing a common defense policy, as also mentioned in the Treaty of Amsterdam[1].

With the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, the institutions of the European Union take on a new form through the creation of pillar II, respectively that relating to the Common Foreign Security Policy, regulated by art. 42 of the Treaty[2], it becoming, together with the Council of Justice and Internal Affairs (JAI), one of the two political pillars, that represent the external and internal policy size of the European Union.

The goals of the CFSP are aimed at promoting international cooperation, developing and strengthening democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, protecting common values, fundamental interests and the independence of the Union, maintaining peace and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter, the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the goals of the Paris Charter.

With regard to the EU's ability to participate to missions with its own military forces, the European Council held in Cologne in 1999 passed the statement on the strengthening of the European Security and Defense Policy, where one mentioned that the members of the EU states must to develop new military forces for the organization to use to respond to international crises without harming NATO[3].

The EU's participation to missions alongside NATO and the UN, especially in Bosnia and Kosovo, has proved the European dependence over the US, which led the European institutions to adopt their own security and defense policy (European Security and Defense Policy -ESDP). , having its own means for conflict prevention and crisis management. Later, through

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[1] Treaty of Amsterdam, title V, art. J.1, available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/-EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11997D/TXT&from=RO, accessed on 21.10.2022.
[2] Treaty of Maastricht of 7 February 1992, available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/-resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bfa3f84ab2b506fd71826e6da6.0001.02/DOC_1&format=P DF, accessed on 21.10.2022.
[3] Presidency Conclusions, *Cologne European Council 3 and 4 June 1999*, pct. 4, p. 40, text available at https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21070/57886.pdf, accessed on 21.10.2022.

the Treaty of Lisbon, ESDP was named the Common Security and Defense Policy.

The foundations of the European Security and Defense Policy concept were established following the Franco-British conference from Saint Malo in 1998, where the EU has undertaken its role in the field of military cooperation[4] and were completed during the Koln Conference, this concept being also mentioned in the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Treaty of Nice.

The ESDP involves the development of an autonomous decision-making capacity and, if the North Atlantic Alliance as a whole is not engaged, the launch and coordination of military operations under the EU authority, in response to crisis situations, while the commitment of resources by the member states for such operations are based on the decisions of the heads of state and governments[5].

From military point of view, ESDP fields of activity cover: humanitarian and evacuation missions, peacekeeping missions, armed forces for crisis management, disarmament missions, military conciliatory and assistance missions, conflict prevention and stabilization operations after the cessation of conflicts, as follows from art. 43 para. (1) of the Treaty on the European Union.

However, the main goal established by the Helsinki European Council in 1999 was represented by the condition that the member states have the capacity to mobilize until 2003, respectively to carry out within 60 days and to support at least a year, military forces that can reach the level of 15 brigades, about 50,000-60,000 men to carry out Petersburg-type missions[6].

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[4] Declaration de Saint-Malo sur la defense europeenne 1998, pct. 2, available at https://mjp.univ-perp.fr/defense/1998malo.htm, accessed on 21.10.2022.

[5] European Union: *Politica Europeană de Securitate şi Apărare*, European Institute from Romania, 2005, p. 6, available at http://ier.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/publicatii/Securitate-_si_aparare.pdf, accessed on 24.10.2022.

[6] Helsinky European Council 10 and 11 december 1999, pct. 28, available at https://www.-consilium.europa.eu/media/21046/helsinkieuropeancouncilpresidencyconclusions.pdf, accessed on 24.10.2022.

Thus, in order to fulfill the goals established by the ESDP, the European Union must collaborate with the other international organizations, namely the UN, NATO and the Council of Europe.

Military operations carried out by the European Union under the auspices of the European Security and Defense Policy

In 2003, took place the first civilian ESDP mission, with the EU sending a police force to Bosnia-Herzegovina to replace UN troops.

Also, the first military peacekeeping operation of the EU, which took over the mandate of NATO troops, was launched from March 2003 in Macedonia, known as Operation Concordia. This was carried out with means and capabilities made available by NATO, being organized on the basis of the Berlin Plus Agreements.

NATO authorities considered that NATO's goals had been met and that the military presence in Macedonia was no longer necessary, but political interests prevailed. For this reason, Operation Concordia was of low risk, deployed with an already existing force structure, with NATO advice through a Military Liaison Office in Skopje and with NATO assets in close proximity available for assistance in case of need.

Also, in 2003, the EU carried out Operation Artemis, the first autonomous mission, without logistical support from NATO, in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Another military operation carried out without NATO support is the one from Bosnia-Herzegovina, known as Operation Althea. At the NATO meeting in Colorado Springs in 2003, the defense ministers of NATO member countries decided that part of SFOR's duties in Bosnia should be taken over by the EU. In this context, NATO decided to reduce the SFOR forces, which currently have the main duty of preventing the recurrence of ethnic violence.

Also, in Kosovo, alongside NATO's KFOR peacekeeping mission, the EU, since 2008, has carried out in parallel the civilian support mission of the Kosovo authorities regarding the rule of law, known as EULEX.

In 2018, the Council of the European Union decided to reorient the mandate of the EU rule of law support mission, EULEX Kosovo. The mission had two operational goals: on the one hand, a monitoring, guidance and advisory goal, providing support for the operation of the institutions that

ensure the rule of law in Kosovo and for the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, and on the other hand, an executive goal, supporting the delivery of constitutional and civil justice, as well as prosecuting and adjudicating a selection of criminal cases.

At the same time, starting from June 14, 2018, one decided that the mission will focus on: monitoring a selection of cases and trials in the criminal and civil justice institutions in Kosovo, monitoring, guiding and advising the correctional service in Kosovo, continuing the operational support for the implementation of EU-facilitated dialogue agreements to normalize relations between Serbia and Kosovo.[7]

In Afghanistan, alongside ISAF, from 2007 until 2016, the EU carried out the EUPOL mission, of a civilian nature, with the aim of supporting the reforms of the Ministry of Interior in Kabul, respectively helping the police forces to cooperate with other law enforcement agencies to combat crime and support the Afghan police to contribute to justice reform.

The EU's attempt to get out of the sphere of dependence on the US can also be observed today, through the initiative of the European Commission to create an European Defense Fund, on which basis the EU can finance common defense projects. However, this project does not produce the desired effects due to the insufficient funds allocated by the member states.

Although the European Union was actively involved in these military operations, acquiring a significant role in the European security area, currently it cannot be said that the EU has become an equal partner of NATO in terms of security and defense.

The common vision that the two organizations have on the international security environment, on risks and threats, is constantly evolving, especially in the cooperation field of defense planning, based on the two concepts of smart defense and pooling and sharing.

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[7] *EULEX Kosovo: un nou rol pentru misiunea UE de de sprijinire a supremației legii, Consiliul UE,* press release from 8 June 2018, available at https://www.consilium.europa.-eu/ro/press/press-releases/2018/06/08/eulex-kosovo-new-role-for-the-eu-rule-of-law-mission/, accessed on 24.10.2022.

However, at NATO level the interest in finding a solution to develop and acquire military equipment was determined by the decrease in the financial contribution of the European states to the NATO budget, concurrent with the need for the USA to decrease its financial contribution, while at EU level equipment development aims to support the political ambitions of the Union.

As a result of the process of dividing the responsibilities between the two organizations, the idea that the EU member states should contribute equally to maintaining the international security is likely to take shape more and more difficult due to the decrease in financial resources, but also the changes that will intervene on the basis of the strategic priorities of the member states.

Evolution of the European Union security strategies with role in protecting the human rights

Due to the many challenges that Europe continued to face in security field, in 2003 the European Council decided to implement the European Security Strategy, "A secure Europe in a better world", designed by Javier Solana and also known as "The Solana Strategy".

Among the arguments that were the basis for implementing this strategy, the preamble mentions the need for EU cooperation with NATO in the field of crisis management, taking into account the fact that no country can face alone the complex risks and threats it would have to cope with in the future[8].

This document seeks to identify strategic goals and to propose policies that can be applied to the main security challenges and threats. The category of threats to which the Strategy refers include: regional conflicts, epidemics, hunger, corruption, poverty, climate change and energy dependence, as well as international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and organized crime.

Although the Solana Strategy establishes what these threats and vulnerabilities are, it does not provide actual details on how to solve them in cases where they arise at the level of EU member states.

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[8] European Security Strategy, *A secure Europe in a better world*, p. 9, available at https://-www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30823/qc7809568enc.pdf, accessed on 24.10.2022.

Based on the threats identification, the strategic goals of the European Union promoted by the Strategy were established, namely the implementation of an effective conflict prevention policy, by using the military and civilian capabilities at its disposal and building security in the immediate vicinity (the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus), the major interest being that neighboring states are well governed and administered.

At the same time, the third goal seeks to maintain the international order by promoting multilateralism, which aims to develop an international society characterized by the existence of effective international institutions, based on good governance, to promote the fight against corruption and abuse of power, compliance with the law international and the protection of human rights[9].

Regarding EU collaboration with other international organizations, it is considered necessary to support UN actions to combat threats to international peace and security, but also to develop capabilities by "*transforming armies into more flexible and mobile forces and (...) to enable them to face new threats"[10]*.

Also, the Solana Strategy emphasizes the need to use a wide range of political-diplomatic instruments at the EU's disposal, but recourse to armed force remains the responsibility of the UN Security Council.

In this regard, the significance of the international control of the states' armaments for the internal and external security of Europe is highlighted, as well as the significance of the EU and NATO strategic partnership, by strengthening the EU's military capabilities and continuing to participate to peacekeeping operations.

In addition, the development of cooperation policies with foreign partners remains a priority for the Union, especially with China, Canada,

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[9] European Institute from Romania, *cited work,* pp. 8-9, available at http://ier.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/publicatii/Securitate_si_aparare.pdf, accessed on 24.10.2022.

[10] A. Dumoulin, *La semantique de la <<strategie >> europeenne de securite. Lignes de forces et lectures ideologiques d`un preconcept,* AFRI, vol. VI, 2005, p. 636, available at https://www.afri-ct.org/wp-content/uploads/2006/07/afri2005_dumoulin.pdf, accessed on 25.10.2022.

India or Japan, including the conclusion of partnerships with any country that shares its values and is prepared to act to defend them.

In order for the security and defense policy of the EU to become more effective, it is necessary for the organization to become more active in pursuing its goals by civilian or military means, respectively by allocating larger resources and by better coordinating the current resources.

After implementing the Solana Strategy, its concepts were taken up and developed in other legal instruments. Given this context, also in 2003, the Joint Statement on cooperation between the UN and the EU in the field of crisis management was passed, through which the use of civilian and military PSAC components and the implementation of joint training actions were pursued.

Later, following the conclusions of the European Council in Brussels in 2004, one decided to implement the Statement on the fight against terrorism[11], that, together with the Global Action Plan against terrorism, will form the basis of EU action against terrorism.

Also, the implementation of the European Neighborhood Policy in 2007 aimed at cooperation on several levels for the expansion of security, stability and good governance, beyond the geographical borders of the EU, respectively in the eastern neighborhood with the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and in the southern vicinity with Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Palestine and Lebanon.

In 2009, its main goals aimed at projecting in the region a climate of security, stability and democratic reform, economic and social progress, through a stronger political association and economic integration, as well as facilitating the approach of the partner states to EU values and norms, in accordance with their individual aspirations and capacity[12].

After 2020, its goals were extended to concluding partnerships that promote the decrease of inequalities, the creation of new jobs and economic opportunities, good governance and the operation of democratic institutions,

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[11] Brussels European Council 25 and 26 March 2004, pct. 1 și 5, available at https://data.-consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9048-2004-INIT/en/pdf, accessed on 25.10.2022.
[12] European Neighborhood Policy, text available at https://www.mae.ro/node/1531, accessed on 25.10.2022.

the rule of law, anti-corruption policy and the fight against organized crime, ensuring security, as well as respect for human rights.

Once with the entry into force of the Stockholm Program and its Action Plan in 2010, the idea of developing an internal security strategy for the EU, to increase the protection of citizens and the fight against organized crime and terrorism, took shape[13].

This program established the priorities of the European Union for "consolidating an area of freedom, security and justice, through actions focused on the citizens' interests".

Through the implementation of the Stockholm Program Action Plan, the way to implement the political priorities stated in the Program in the field of justice, freedom and security was established, aiming to prepare the European Union for challenges at the European and global level.

Thus, the Plan regulates the obligation to implement measures to ensure the protection of fundamental human rights and which consist in "*strengthening data protection legislation through a new comprehensive legal framework, as well as incorporating data protection provisions into all policies EU and in the field of law enforcement, crime prevention and international relations, actions aimed at combating all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and homophobia"[14].*

The EU Internal Security Strategy – Towards a European security model adopted in 2010[15], set out the basic principles to be applied when coping with threats related to corruption and organized crime, terrorism, cybercrime, border security and for limiting the effects of natural disasters. At the same time, it aimed at strengthening police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

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[13] Stockholm Program, available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/-HTML/?uri=LEGISSUM:jl0034&from=RO, accessed on 25.10.2022.

[14] Stockholm Program Action Plan, text available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content-/RO/TXT/HTML/?uri=LEGISSUM:jl0036, accessed on 27.10.2022.

[15] Internal Security Strategy – *To an European security model,* available at https://www.-consilium.europa.eu/ro/documents-publications/publications/internal-security-strategy-european-union-towards-european-security-model/, accessed on 27.10.2022.

In order to deal with these types of threats, EU member states must in turn have their own national security policies and strategies and, at the same time, cooperate on a bilateral, multilateral and regional level.

To facilitate this cooperation, the EU has established a series of agencies, including Europol, which has the duty of facilitating the sending of information between the states authorities regarding enforcing the law to combat organized crime and terrorism. Eurojust also ensures cooperation between national judicial authorities to prevent cross-border crime, together with Frontex which at the same time has responsibilities in controlling migration.

For the implementation of the strategy, strategic goals were established, with the aim of making the EU a safer space, namely destructuring the international criminal networks, increasing the security level for citizens in cyber space by strengthening legislation and the judicial system in the field of cybercrime prevention and better border management to combat illegal migration.

Starting from 2020, the European Commission published a new internal EU Strategy on a Security Union. This builds on previous progress under the European Agenda on Security 2015-2020. In this regard, the document regulates the tools and measures to be developed over the next five years to combat terrorism and organized crime, prevent and detect hybrid threats and increase the resilience of critical infrastructure, promote cyber security and encourage research and innovation[16].

Given the context of the health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, social divisions and uncertainties have created a security vulnerability, which has led to the development of potential hybrid attacks and implicitly to cybercrime acts, through the placing of pharmaceutical products on the market or counterfeiting protective equipment, by stealing trade secrets or intellectual property, or by promoting disinformation campaigns.

These new categories of threats along with the old ones are causing the EU to implement new security policies and to oblige member states to

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[16] European Union Strategy for an Union Security, available at https://ec.europa.eu/-commission/presscorner/detail/ro/ip_20_1379, accessed on 28.10.2022.

review their legislation in the field so that they comply with the organization's directives.

The new internal security strategy for the period 2020-2025 is a global framework for security policies and sets four goals at EU level: a forward-looking security environment, combating emerging threats, protecting Europeans against terrorism and organized crime, an European ecosystem of solid security.

For implementing the aforementioned goals, the EU implemented new strategies through which it established the priorities for combating the threats faced by the states at internal level, but also at international level, among which the following can be mentioned: EU Drug Strategy for period 2021-2025, EU Firearms Trafficking Action Plan for the period 2020-2025, EU Strategy on Combating Human Trafficking for the period 2021-2025 or EU Strategy on Children's Rights.

Considering the interdependence between internal and external security, the EU's Internal Security Strategy must be applied by reference to the EU's Global Foreign Policy and Security Strategy implemented in 2016.

The strategy presents a global vision of the EU's position in an unstable world, in various fields, such as political, economic or security, and highlights the EU's role in promoting international law, policies aimed at preventing armed conflicts and managing crises in the context of applying the External and Common Security Policy of the EU.

A significant place in this strategy is occupied by the EU's eastern and southern neighborhood policy, since in order to ensure security within the European Union, security must be generated in its proximity. It is highlighted that the internal security of the EU is interconnected with the security of neighboring states, and this aspect creates premises for a proactive attitude on the part of the EU[17].

The strategy starts from the premise that the EU is currently facing a series of major crises, that is expressed both internally and beyond it. Thus,

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[17] Shared vision, Common action: A stronger Europe, A global Strategy for the European Union`s Foreign and Security Policy, pct. 2, p. 9, available at https://eeas.europa.eu/-archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf, accessed on 28.10.2022.

the threats to the Union have different origins, in what regards that some come from the neighborhood and others have a global feature[18].

The structure of the Global Strategy is based on five important goals: the Union security, the resilience of states and societies from the east and south of the Union, an integrated approach to conflicts, regional orders based on cooperation and global governance for the 21st century.

This multidimensional approach requires a larger involvement from the EU member states, so that they can implement the missions established by the Strategy and manage them effectively, which requires the European institutions to take care of updating the regulatory framework.

Conclusions

EU's active involvement in crisis management, peacekeeping and conflict prevention operations highlights the significant role that the organization has acquired internationally, and the attempt to develop military capabilities significantly contributes to strengthening its status as a global power.

In this regard, it is necessary for the EU to continue developing active policies that propose clear measures for new types of threats, which includes the development of military capabilities and paying more attention to multilateral cooperation and strategic partnerships.

The constantly changing security environment in the Euro-Atlantic area will also determine in the future the need for coexistence and close cooperation between NATO and the EU, as well as adapting the roles and goals of these organizations in order to be able to respond as effectively as possible to security issues.

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