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A New Agenda for US-EU Security Cooperation

Daniel Korski
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A New Agenda for US-EU Security Cooperation

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Introduction

Post-Cold War, the world has seen a shift from inter-state tension and conflict to intra-state concerns, ethnic and sectarian strife, civil wars, weak and failed states, war-lordism and terrorist havens. Military intervention to resolve these problems is a blunt and expensive tool, one that can cause significant collateral damage and may not address the conflict's underlying causes. With large numbers of troops deployed abroad, the US and European governments should strengthen civilian options to be used in a preventive as well as post-conflict mode.

To date, US and EU capacities for conflict prevention and what are termed 'comprehensive' stabilisation and reconstruction missions have developed independently of each other. The US experience has been driven by the Iraq War and its aftermath while the EU has been working on building civil-military capabilities since the Balkan Wars. Yet at the same time there has been a growing desire for practical transatlantic collaboration not only within NATO, but between the US and the EU.

Such cooperation makes sense. In a number of unstable regions, close US-EU cooperation could bring benefits that similar cooperation inside NATO or bilateral links alone will not. Few analysts can envisage a broader role for NATO in Pakistan or even in the Maghreb. It is similarly hard to image US-UK cooperation, for example, making a substantive impact. But the EU could probably play a role in such regions through close partnership with the large US engagement. Second, US-EU cooperation holds the promise of bringing the full range of governmental – even societal – resources to the task of conflict prevention. The EU will not be a high-end military operator for decades, but it has advantages that NATO can never fully enjoy, such as civilian institution-building capacity and the potential to blend civilian and military assets.

For these reasons, bureaucratic ties between the US and EU have grown over the years. USAID and the European Commission have a history of cooperation in the field, via bilateral talks and through discussions under OECD auspices. Examples of security cooperation can, in turn, be found in the Balkans. For many years, the US seconded customs officials to the European Commission's CAFAO programme in Bosnia and US officials are today part of the EU's police-and-justice mission in Kosovo (EULEX), the first case of US participation in a formal European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) mission.

On-the-ground cooperation has been complemented by an official US-EU Work Plan signed in 2007, which lays out areas for cooperation. The plan is the most significant case of security cooperation between the US and the EU outside the scope of NATO. As such it marks a change in view by US policy-makers on the merits of ESDP.[1] For years Washington had opposed – and actively blocked – European efforts to strengthen its military defence components on the grounds that it undermined NATO. But this attitude has changed and, as Alice Serar notes, the 'warming of attitudes toward a bilateral security relationship will likely continue'.[2]

Yet despite positive experiences of US-EU cooperation in the field, in many of the world's hotspots and in the countries most at risk of instability, it remains at best mechanical and episodic. When cooperation does take place, US and EU activities are often coordinated rather than part of a genuinely joined-up effort. In Kabul, for example, the US-run Department of Defense (DoD) programme and the EU's police mission (EUPOL) – both of which are building the Afghan National Police – have sought to cooperate and disentangle their mandates, but the two missions were developed in isolation from each other and still struggle with this divergent inheritance.

[1] In a speech on 22 February 2008 in Paris, then US Ambassador to NATO Victoria Nuland noted: 'With 15 missions now on three continents, the EU has proven its ability to deliver a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts'. Accessed at http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/February/20080222183349eaifas0.5647394.html. See also Esther Brimmer, 'Seeing Blue: American Visions of the European Union', Chaillot Paper 105, Paris, EU Institute for Security Studies, 2007.

[2] Alice Serar, 'Tackling Today's Complex Crises: EU-US Cooperation in Civilian Crisis Management', p. 3 Diplomacy Papers, 4/2009, p. 3.

There are concrete reasons why US and EU cooperation has not developed further. One reason is a residual 'NATO-first' mentality within the US military, which impedes whole-of-government cooperation between the US and the EU, as opposed to civilian-to-civilian work. This mentality remains entrenched despite the shift in US attitude towards ESDP. To override such scepticism, the EU will have to show that it can bring something to the table on what the US considers priority security issues, principally Pakistan's stabilisation and NATO's Afghanistan mission.

On the EU side, obstacles remain too. A small (but committed) group of holdouts in the EU bureaucracy still see any form of collaboration between NATO and the EU as undermining the EU's security aspirations, and will work to undermine any moves towards cooperation. This hampers cooperation in the field, but creates mistrust among US policymakers. Even more problematic is the view of many EU states. While most agree on the aim of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CSFP), some EU governments back a stronger CSFP, others do not and a third group prefers to put an emphasis on the EU's military, rather than civilian capabilities. This differentiated view on CSFP hampers US-EU cooperation.

With the fifteenth anniversary of the New Transatlantic Agenda due to be celebrated in mid-2010 at a US-EU summit in Madrid during the Spanish EU Presidency, an opportunity exists to set out a new agenda for US-EU security cooperation.[3] This paper traces the development of US and EU capabilities, the history of transatlantic cooperation, the continuing problems and obstacles and what a more robust future agenda might look like.

US Capabilities

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has contributed to more than 17 reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) operations.[4] This has occurred despite a generally strong American preference not to intervene abroad except in instances of clear threats to US national security, and lengthy periods in which one or the other political party eschewed nation-building. In Iraq and Afghanistan, its two largest recent interventions, the US intended to terminate military operations quickly and then depart, leaving Iraqis and Afghans to fend for themselves. Need, not preference, has driven the US to increase its capabilities for what it persists in calling 'reconstruction and stabilization (R&S).' Though widely used, this is a misnomer, since stabilisation is only the most immediate requirement (and should certainly come first) in 'post-conflict' societies and rarely do contemporary international interventions aim to reconstruct what was present previously (certainly not in either Iraq or Afghanistan). Nor are these operations really 'post-conflict': conflicts usually continue, though with luck and effort they may become more political than military in societies emerging from large-scale violence.

Created in August 2004, the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in the State Department is intended to become the main coordinating mechanism for US government civilians in R&S operations. S/CRS was launched to applause from many, not the least the US military, which hoped it would relieve them of burdens once derided as 'doing windows'.

However, its dedicated and experienced staff still numbers just over 120, many of whom are detailed from other agencies (or contracted). Funding has been limited: Congress gave S/CRS $45 million in FY09 for

[3] The New Transatlantic Agenda sets out the most important areas of cooperation between the EU and the US. It was signed at the EU-US Summit in Madrid on the 3 December 1995 and followed the signing of the Transatlantic Declaration (TD) in November 1990 between the European Community (EC) and the US.

[4] John E. Herbst, 'Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations: Learning from the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Experience', Statement Before House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Washington D.C., 30 October 2007.

S/CRS, but its FY10 budget is $323 million (most of which would go to the Civilian Response Corps discussed below).[5] In addition, S/CRS can receive substantial sums (up to $200 million was authorised for FY09) from the Defense Department, on a case by case basis for 'whole of government' projects aimed at stabilisation and reconstruction.[6] Even with this funding, available resources are clearly insufficient to lead, coordinate and develop all the US government civilian capacities in anything but limited instances, causing some to suggest that a number of S/CRS's responsibilities be transferred to other strengthened US agencies.[7] S/CRS has a long way to go before it can carry much of the burden currently shouldered by the military.

S/CRS nevertheless houses the grandest American attempt so far to operationalise US civilian capacity for responding to conflict situations. The Civilian Response Corps (CRC) aims to provide US R&S operations with a cadre of trained professionals and experts ready to deploy at the onset of an international crisis. It is a partnership of eight different US government agencies and departments: the Department of State, US Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, and Department of the Treasury. The CRC contains three Components: Active, Stand-by, and Reserve. The Active Component (CRC-A) will be composed of 250 full-time employees who can deploy within 48 hours to put into place all aspects of an interagency R&S mission, such as assessments, planning, base standup and field coordination. The Stand-by Component (CRC-S) will contain 2000 members who are full-time employees at US government agencies and specialise in a particular aspect of R&S. They can deploy within 30 days. The Reserve Component (CRC-R) – not yet funded – would be composed of 2000 non-US government employees who can supplement CRC-A and CRC-S in numbers and expertise. They will be available to deploy (as US government employees) within 45–60 days.[8]

Even with full funding, the CRC would have limited capacities. CRC-A is designed to remain in the field for up to only six months. It is clear from past experience that its expertise – approaching planning, problems and tasks from an interagency perspective – will be needed in many instances for far longer. There have also been doubts about the size of the CRC. In their report on US civilian capacities in complex operations, Hans Binnendijk and Patrick Cronin of the National Defense University suggest that the CRC must have at its disposal at least 5000 readily deployable government civilians and 10,000 civilian reserves.[9] A third concern, particularly for the topic of this paper, is that the CRC is organised around a unilateral mission. There is no contingency plan for how it will operate in a multilateral setting. This is a major gap; one that if not repaired could limit effectiveness in cooperating with EU, UN and other operations. The current political climate in the US does not suggest that the US would be prepared, except in the most dire circumstances, to conduct unilateral R&S operations.

It should not be surprising that the US military continues to shoulder most of the burden. Current US operations in Afghanistan and especially Iraq lie largely outside S/CRS's purview. In addition to greatly beefed up but essentially conventional diplomatic operations, the US has deployed both civilian/military Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and ministerial advisor teams, as well as substantial numbers of contracted police trainers and monitors (1200), in both Iraq and Afghanistan. More than half of the US government employees in Iraq and

5 US Department of State, *The Budget in Brief: Fiscal Year 2010.*

6 Robert M. Perito, 'Integrated Security Assistance: The 1207 Program', Special Report No. 207, Washington DC: US Institute of Peace, July 2008.

7 Frederick Barton and Noam Unger, 'DRAFT Civil-Military Relations, Fostering Development, and Expanding Civilian Capacity: A Workshop Report', Center for Strategic and International Studies.

8 Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, 'Introduction to the Civilian Response Corps', Accessed 1 June 2009. http://www.crs.state.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.display&shortcut=4QRB.

9 Hans Binnendijk and Patrick M. Cronin, 'Civilian Surge: Key to Complex Operations, A Preliminary Report', Washington, DC: The National Defense University, December 2008.

Afghanistan – American and international – are contractors, many working with civilian and military forces to fill the US government civilian gap. While contractors have often been criticised, sometimes for good reason, they do offer some advantages, such as surge capacity, special expertise, and political acceptability.[10] Much of this state-building effort is de facto in the hands of the US military, which not only provides security to the PRTs but also provides the bulk of the PRT personnel as well as many of the ministerial advisors. In addition, the first Defense Department Human Terrain Team was deployed in 2007, embedding civilian anthropologists and other social scientists with combat troops to improve military understanding of the local socio-cultural environment. As of March 2009, there were 20 Human Terrain Teams in Iraq and six in Afghanistan.[11] The Defense Department has a substantial civilian reserve force of its own. Until recently, this had been used to backfill positions of soldiers when they are deployed abroad, but the Defense Department now plans to send these civilian volunteers to serve in Afghanistan, where they will fill shortfalls in both the Defense Department and the State Department.

In 2005, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05 declared stability operations a core (and equal) US military mission along with defensive and offensive combat operations.[12] The US Army has issued a new doctrine for stability operations,[13] and the Marine Corps is working on a counterpart (there will also be a joint doctrine document). The US military recognises the role of civilians and gives priority to them in R&S functions, but the Defense Department Directive also states that the military needs to be ready to fill the gap if civilian effort is lacking. While civilian capacity is improving, military capacity is still very much required.

EU Capabilities

The European Union lacks anything like US military capabilities. It relies on forces provided by member states on a case-by-case basis. Plans exist for a Rapid Reaction Force that would have the ability to deploy as many as 60,000 troops within 60 days for up to one year,[14] but as yet no agreement has been made to actualise this Force. Several European leaders – particularly French President Sarkozy – have expressed interest in hastening the creation of the Rapid Reaction Force and in the overall development of European military capacity, but most seem to agree that the civilian component has long been Europe's forte.

While the US government is still building civilian capacity for R&S, the EU has already established substantial capabilities. Within the European continent, the EU's enlargement process and European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) can be a driving force behind reforms that lead to peace and stability.[15] For conflicts outside the European neighborhood, the ESDP – part of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy – guides strategic planning and operations of the EU's missions for international crisis management. After launching its first mission in 2003, the EU has conducted 22 crisis management operations as of May 2009, 12 of which are still ongoing.[16] In 2000, the European Council defined four primary areas of civilian action in crisis management: police, strengthening the rule of law; strengthening civilian administration; and civil protection.[17] The EU is developing and diversifying its operations in these areas, strengthening its police actions, expanding the

10 Robert Perito, 'The Private Sector in Security Sector Reform: Essential But Not Yet Optimized', *USI Peace Briefing*, Washington, D.C.: US Institute of Peace, January 2009.

11 Karen DeYoung, 'US Moves to Replace Contractors in Iraq', *The Washington Post*, 17 March 2009; Vanessa M. Gezari, 'Rough Terrain', *The Washington Post*, 30 August 2009.

12 US Department of Defense, 'Directive Number 3000.05: Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations', 28 November 2005.

13 US Army, *The US Army Stability Operations Field Manual: US Army Field Manual No. 3-07* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2009).

14 Deutsche Welle, 'EU United on Rapid Reaction Force, Divided on DR Congo', DW-World.de, 13 December 2008.

15 European Council, 'Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: Providing Security in a Changing World', Brussels, 11 December 2008.

16 Council of the European Union, 'European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)'. Accessed on 30 May 2009, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=268&lang=en.

17 European Security and Defence Policy, 'European security and defence policy: the civilian aspects of crisis management', civ/02, June 2008.

rule of law sector and monitoring peace accords and borders.[18]

The Europeans are particularly strong in policing capacities, having sent six police missions in the last five years into crisis zones. EU police missions are staffed by the EU Police Force, which is a reserve force of up to 5,000 civilian police officers, including a 1,400-member rapid reaction force that can leave on 30-days notice. Unlike the US, which lacks a national police force and therefore relies on contractors, the EU Police Force draws its officers from a variety of European police forces, including the European Gendarmerie Force and the Italian Carabinieri. It is intended to cover a range of conflict prevention and crisis management operations – including providing security, advice and mentoring – in international missions. Ongoing police missions include EUPM in Bosnia-Herzegovina, EUPOL COPPS in the Palestinian territories, EUPOL Afghanistan, and EUPOL RD Congo.[19]

While EU-led police missions have the training and expertise necessary for the job, they do not always have the numbers. But there are developments afoot to change this. In the European Gendarmerie Force (EGF), a partnership between France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Romania, Poland and, most recently, Turkey, the EU has a police force that knows how to operate in a multinational environment. The EGF can deploy up to 800 gendarmes within 30 days and reach 2300 with reinforcements. It can provide rapid civil security in crisis situations, either alone or under military command, can offer expert training, and is capable and willing to perform under the most difficult circumstances: particularly useful when the EU has trouble recruiting police for dangerous environments.[20]

The EU has one crucial experience that the US lacks entirely: running Interior Ministries. While courageous and committed Americans are mentoring the Interior Ministries in Iraq and Afghanistan, none of the them has had a career in an Interior Ministry, since the US does not use them at any level of government (the Interior Department of the Federal Government is responsible mainly for administering Federal lands, conservation and Native Americans; it does not provide strategic direction to police, except the US Park Police). The EU by contrast has prepared 21 Interior Ministries to meet EU standards since its founding. Germany has 17 Interior Ministries (one Federal and 16 provincial). There is a substantial reservoir of expertise and experience in Europe that the US is lacking.

The European Union can also offer experienced rule of law specialists to R&S operations. As of June 2008, EU member states had committed 631 officers – prosecutors, judges and prison officers – to rule of law crisis management operations. These missions aim to strengthen the rule of law and promote human rights through properly functioning judicial and penitentiary systems.[21] The EU's largest civilian mission under the ESDP is the ongoing EULEX Kosovo but it also continues to support its EUJUST LEX mission to Iraq.

EU monitoring missions – recognised by the European Council in December 2004 as a civilian ESDP priority area – serve as a tool for conflict prevention, management and resolution, by deterring conflict through physical presence. The ongoing EUBAM Rafah mission monitors operations at the border crossing point in Rafah in support of Israel and the Palestinian Authority's 'Agreement on Movement and Access'. The Aceh Monitoring Mission oversaw the implementation of a 2005 peace agreement between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh movement.[22]

18 European Security and Defence Policy, 'European security and defence policy: the civilian aspects of crisis management', June 2008, civ/02.

19 European Commission, 'New peacekeeping force staffed by police officers from across EU', Accessed on 1 June 2009. http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/police/peacekeeping/fsj_police_peacekeeping_en.htm.

20 Federiga Bindi, 'Europe's Problematic Contribution to Policy Training in Afghanistan', Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 4 May 2009. http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0504_afghanistan_bindi.aspx .

21 European Security and Defence Policy, 'European security and defence policy: the civilian aspects of crisis management', civ/02, June 2008; Peter Feith, 'The Aceh Peace Process: Nothing Less Than Success', USIP Special Report 184, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, March 2007.

22 European Security and Defence Policy, 'European security and defence policy: the civilian aspects of crisis management', civ/02, June 2008.

Encompassing much broader territory is the EU's growing interest in security sector reform (SSR). This concept is not new, as the EU has incorporated aspects of SSR into its accession and development policies. But it was not until 2005 and 2006 that the EU presented a single policy framework for SSR in the form of three key documents, defining a holistic approach that takes into account the entire security sector. The framework remains a work in progress. The EU is making an effort to fix the flaws that hamper the planning and design and lessen the impact of SSR missions and to ensure that all missions on the ground reflect the framework's holistic approach.[23]

In the meantime, the EU has continued to provide SSR assistance to weak and failed states, including two current ESDP missions: EUSEC DR Congo – where activities include providing technical and logistical support to military institutions – and EU SSR Guinea Bissau – where the mission is helping implement the country's National Security Strategy.[24]

Overall, the EU is well-placed to be a civilian powerhouse in R&S operations but is not yet living up to its potential. Weaknesses include the absence of civilian capacity in EU member states, conceptual problems and institutional wrangles among EU institutions in Brussels.[25] But capacities exist: EULEX in Kosovo has an international staff of approximately 1600, many of whom could be put to better use elsewhere. The Lisbon Treaty should help EU and member state foreign policies – and in turn ESDP missions – become more consistent and coherent.[26]

23 Maria Derks and Sylvie More, 'The European Union and Internal Challenges for Effectively Supporting Security Sector Reform: An overview of the EU's set-up for SSR support *anno* spring 2009', Netherlands Institute for International Relations – Clingendael, June 2009.

24 European Security and Defence Policy, 'European security and defence policy: the civilian aspects of crisis management', civ/02, June 2008; Daniel Flott, 'European Union Security Sector Reform Missions: The Case of Guinea-Bissau', *European Security Review*, No. 38, ISIS-Europe, May 2008.

25 Daniel Korski and Richard Gowan, 'Can the EU Rebuild Failing States? A Review of Europe's Civilian Capacities', London, UK: European Council on Foreign Relations, October 2009, p. 24.

26 Giovanni Grevi, Damien Helly and Daniel Keohane (eds), 'European Security and Defence Policy: The First Ten Years', Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2009.

EU-US Cooperation

Given the steady development of US and EU capabilities, it was natural for greater cooperation on prevention, stabilisation and reconstruction to begin. In late 2004, senior US officials began coming round to the idea that the US had to improve its capacities for stabilisation and reconstruction while reaching out to like-minded allies. The US-led invasion of Iraq was rapidly moving from a conventional success to irregular warfare with US plans and resources held up as inadequate for the task. The bi-partisan Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction, which published its report in early 2003, argued forcefully for the US to 'leverage international resources', finding allies to help out with the growing number of post-conflict tasks. In Congress, key leaders such as Senator Richard Lugar began urging the administration to work with allies.

Taking this pressure to heart, from 2004 to 2006, US diplomats instigated talks with the UN, NATO and EU Council Secretariat and Commission officials in Brussels. In total, four sets of consultations took place in two years. Beginning little more than a year after then-US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had provocatively divided Europe into 'Old' and 'New' parts, the overtures to the EU were a significant departure from US policy. For this reason they did not go unopposed inside the US administration. An internal State Department memo noted: 'DoD saw S/CRS as overstepping US policy red-lines about US-EU cooperation and fears that the strengthening of EU capacities will come at the expense of NATO'.

But as US diplomat John Herbst explained to European ambassadors in late 2006: 'The US still sees several gaps in both international and national capabilities. As nation-building, peace-building or stabilisation operations [...] has become the dominant paradigm for the use of force in the post-Cold War world, it will be important to fill these gaps. A practical, results-focused desire to do so offers a framework for EU-US collaboration'.

At the same time, US diplomats sought to take advantage of an initiative led by Denmark inside NATO to focus allied resources on improving cooperation between civilian and military assets, what became known after the Riga Summit as the 'comprehensive approach'. The US overtures to the EU happened during three successive EU presidencies – those of Britain, Austria and Finland – each one of which was keen to advance the build-up of civilian ESDP for their own reasons. For all three, collaboration between the US and EU on crisis management presented an opportunity to advance their agenda. For many inside the EU institutions, EU-US security collaboration was seen as the ultimate sign that the EU has come of age as a security actor. Collaboration on crisis management thus provided the least contentious avenue for such cooperation, with many EU officials hoping that it would eventually pave the way forward for greater US-EU military cooperation, something that the Pentagon has long resisted.

At least three additional factors seem to have together acted as a catalyst for closer US-EU collaboration on the 'conflict agenda': the increased post-9/11 cooperation on counter-terrorism, which paved the way on issues such as data-sharing; the confluence of institutional interests of a number of newly-created organisations in the US administration, European governments as well as the Council Secretariat; and, especially since the US-led invasion of Iraq, the need for policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic to show domestic stakeholders that transatlantic cooperation had not been made completely impossible as a result of their respective views on the Iraq War.

These prosaic reasons for greater US-EU cooperation were replaced by more poetic language in the text of a US-EU declaration, which was meant to be issued at the 2005 US-EU summit, but ultimately failed to gain agreement: 'This cooperation between the United States and the European Union – from prevention to stabilisation and reconstruction – is founded on shared values, the indivisibility of our security and our determination to tackle together the challenges of our time.' US and EU officials could not gain agreement on the final text because the European side felt the US administration wanted to emphasise the EU's civilian capabilities in order to hold off on military cooperation.

But a consensus was eventually reached in time for the US-EU summit in 2006, where it was agreed to advance cooperation on 'confronting global challenges, including security'. The idea of increased collaboration on conflict prevention and post-conflict stabilisation was now well-established. Contacts between EU and US officials – from the cabinet level to the working level – began multiplying in Brussels and in the field. US and EU officials for example met at two Multinational Exercises conducted by the US and NATO. Institutional ties were strengthened between the Council Secretariat of the EU and the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction. The Policy Unit in the Council Secretariat and the State Department's Policy Planning Staff began to consult more regularly on conflict issues while talk of sharing intelligence-based watch lists of countries at risk increased.

At the 2007 US-EU summit, the final statement acknowledged that 'modern crisis management requires a comprehensive approach': language seen by at least the European side as an implicit recognition that the US and EU had to cooperate on both civil and military issues. The summit paved the way for a Work Plan, or as it is formally known, an agreement on 'EU-US Technical Dialogue and Increased Cooperation in Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention'. It covered such areas as lesson-learning, training and the exchange of watch-lists.

Though policy cooperation developed only recently, links were already particularly strong in the Balkans, where the EU has taken on a broad-based peacekeeping role, having assumed responsibility for the military mission from NATO in Bosnia-Herzegovina and most of the role of the UN in Kosovo. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, where police reform is steered by an EU mission, a number of US programmes have been aligned to support the EU-led effort. For example, the US and the EU jointly funded Bosnia's Independent

Judicial Commission. In Kosovo, US and EU envoys (alongside a Russian representative) made up the so-called mediating troika, which sought to negotiate agreement on the terms of Kosovo's final status. In the run up to Kosovo's independence on 17 February 2008, US experts worked with their EU counterparts to plan for the EU-led international presence in the independent state and are now contributing to EULEX.

Further south, in Macedonia, the double-hatted EU envoy, Erwin Fouéré, and successive US ambassadors to Macedonia have worked as diplomatic double-acts, making joint démarches to the local government and issuing statements on issues of common US-EU concern. The closeness of US-EU cooperation in Skopje is illustrated by the USAID's Macedonia programme, which explicitly 'supports Macedonia's entry into the EU' by implementing 'programs focused on economic growth, good governance, and education.' The US has for a long time supported EU accession for all the Western Balkan countries, but it now specifically ties its assistance programmes to this goal.

Problems and Obstacles

Despite US-EU strides since 2006 to foster closer cooperation, a shared commitment to do so, and many positive field-based experiences, many challenges remain. Technical cooperation between ESDP missions outside the Balkans – for example in Kabul and Baghdad – and their US counterparts has been patchy. Though experts in the field overcame some of the institutional obstacles, ad hoc cooperation has shown to have it limits, is time-consuming and cannot address some of the major problems in the areas that the US considers vital to its national security interests.

Real US-EU policy cooperation in the areas where analysts expect future conflicts to emerge, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, has been scant. A number of recent examples illustrate the lack of US-EU cooperation on conflict prevention. When violence broke out in eastern Congo in mid-2008 there was little sign of a common US-EU stance. Problems in Nepal over the (failed) integration of Maoist fighters into the Nepalese army did not lead to a joined-up US-EU analysis of the situation.

Of the ten countries on The Failed States Index from 2008 published by the magazine Foreign Policy, some degree of US-EU cooperation can be said to exist in policies towards Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.[27] But in the remaining countries, which include Zimbabwe, Congo, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, and the Central African Republic – all of which are likely to suffer from continued conflict in the future – US-EU cooperation is at a rudimentary level and exhibits no signs of genuine collaboration such as developing joint analysis of the problems, or drafting a set of comprehensive, joined-up strategies. The occasional US-EU press release masks the absence of real cooperation.

The reasons for the dearth of cooperation across many regions, as opposed to the Balkans, hark back to earlier US policy preferences of working with what the US sees as reliable security partners (not necessarily inside NATO) and the reluctance by European governments to use the EU institutions. To a lesser extent differences of doctrine – such as how to undertake police reform – have been a stumbling block to efficient cooperation. There is, however, little sign of differences in ultimate objectives: the EU and US share commitments to security, rule of law, stable governance and economic and social development.

Though the Bush administration signalled in its final years a desire to end NATO-EU competition, a policy that has been embraced by President Obama and aided by Nicolas Sarkozy's reintegration of France into NATO's military structures, the history of institutional rivalry continues to hamper closer US-EU cooperation. This is the case both inside the US government and the

[27] See www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4350

EU. A delegation of the EU Military Staff participated in the Multinational Experiment-5 sponsored by the US Joint Forces Command (JFC), but many US defence officials still have a lingering 'NATO first' mentality, which, though it may be waning because of US military frustrations with NATO's Afghan role, still translates into a reluctance to intensify US-EU mil–mil collaboration.

External events, especially in South Asia, have also drawn the US back to traditional allies or even a 'go-it-alone' policy. Though a number of European governments have seconded diplomats into the US bureaucracy, Britain has by far the greatest number, with experts seconded both into the State Department's regional and functional bureaux as well as the Pentagon. When General David Petraeus began reviewing CENTCOM's mission, he invited almost twenty British diplomats and officers to join his Joint Strategic Assessment Team. No other European government, let alone the Council Secretariat or the European Commission, was given this offer. The agreement between the Council Secretariat of the EU and the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction to exchange staff officers has similarly come to naught.

The paucity of real US-EU cooperation cannot only be blamed solely on the US, however. The lack of European commitment to EU processes plays a large part too. Most EU governments are happy to sign up to a greater EU role in conflict policy in general, and successive EU Presidencies have agreed several relevant documents and statements. But when it comes to specific policy areas, the same EU governments often prefer to maintain a tight national grip on policy or use the EU only when convenient.[28] European governments seem unable to have real strategic discussions on issues such as Russia, China, or the Middle East within the EU context. If EU governments cannot agree among themselves, there is little hope for US-EU collaboration.

Cooperation between the US and EU, rather than between the US and individual European governments, has also been hampered by a number of technical obstacles. To date there is no method to share sensitive documents in anything other than face-to-face meetings and through the medium of a sealed envelope. Though there is now scope to share with US counterparts the analytical products cobbled together by the EU's Situation Centre for EU policy-makers, none of the underlying source material can be shared. For obvious reasons, this impedes collaboration. Finally, the task of developing common analyses and joint strategies is hampered by the nature of the US inter-agency process and the vicissitudes of EU decision-making. Both parties arrive at meetings with a set of already negotiated policy positions, the alteration of which is extremely difficult.

A New Agenda

If US-EU cooperation is to improve, changes will be required at a number of levels, including of policy, process and institutions. Of these, the institutional change may be the easiest. Institutions do not by virtue of their existence create a common strategy. But a coherent institutional structure for cooperation could help.

With the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the new EU institutions – the permanent EU President, the new EU 'Foreign Minister' and the European external action service (diplomatic corps) – may create a framework for greater European cooperation, a prerequisite for improved US-EU discussions. But it may also facilitate links with the US more directly. The Lisbon Treaty provides for a stronger European interlocutor in the shape of the 'High Representative', who is given power to coordinate EU foreign policy. The US Secretary of State and the EU's High Representative should develop a schedule of regular consultations with at least one of these dedicated to emerging conflicts and post-conflict missions.

The 'High Representative' will also be supported by a European diplomatic corps, the External Action

[28] Charles Grant and Mark Leonard, 'What New Transatlantic Institutions?', *Bulletin* 41, London, CER, April/May 2005, p. 2.

Service, which will incorporate future EU delegations. As the EC delegation in the US is reshaped into a broader EU mission, so it would seem logical to create a staff element dedicated to cooperation between the US and EU on assessments of emerging conflicts and the development of joint strategies. Under the head of mission, a Deputy EU ambassador could be appointed with a specific remit to liaise between the US and EU institutions on conflict issues.

In a number of countries at risk of instability, the appointment of a senior EU envoy, representing both the Council Secretariat and the EC, offers an opportunity to replicate the diplomatic cooperation between the US and EU that currently exists in Macedonia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It would be worthwhile identifying ten countries at risk of instability where consultations can take place at both a country level and at the Political Director level alternately in Brussels and Washington.

Agreement should also be sought on a common strategic framework for civilian/military state-building missions. The lack of such a framework has been particularly apparent in Afghanistan, where European military were deployed as part of a UN approved and NATO-led peacekeeping mission (limited initially to Kabul at US insistence) while the Americans were still fighting a counter-terrorism war (now morphing into counter-insurgency). It was least apparent in Kosovo, where the pillar structure – while faulty in a number of respects – gave all concerned a clear sense of strategic direction.

This is on the one hand understandable – neither the US nor the EU has formally adopted a strategic framework for a stabilisation and reconstruction mission – and on the other hand completely incomprehensible: how do we expect to be able to work together effectively for common purposes without defining what the desired end-states are? Unity of command – clearly desirable in many instances – is usually unachievable: the US will not generally put its troops under any civilian command other than its own, and Europeans are often unwilling to put their civilians under a military commander. Unity of purpose is the best we are going to get, but we have not been adept at spelling out what it means. A joint EU/US working group should undertake the task of defining widely applicable end states and cross-cutting principles that constitute a common strategic framework.

This process will not be easy or smooth. The US has a hard enough time creating and supporting its own interagency operations – largely due to interagency competition, different cultures and lack of political will – making the development of a new transatlantic 'whole of government' approach seem daunting, especially given that Europeans have 'a distinctive European approach to foreign and security policy' that may at times seem at odds with an American approach.[29] While challenging, agreement on an overarching strategic framework is not out of reach: there is a good deal of agreement on end-states, as outlined in the US Institute of Peace's *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*.[30] The end-states outlined there were drawn from a comprehensive review of major strategic policy documents from American and European ministries of defense, foreign affairs and development and from key inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations. They therefore represent neither a strictly American nor a strictly European approach but are common to both. If the NATO Strategic Concept were to adopt a similar set of end states for stabilisation and reconstruction, it would significantly ease tensions around the NATO/EU/US triangle.

The US and EU should also consider creating a US-EU Conflict Prevention Task Force, with a small, permanent secretariat housed in Brussels, which could coordinate intelligence about developing conflicts, produce joint analyses and propose conflict-mitigating strategies for discussion by US and European leaders. If progress on NATO-EU relations takes place, then a

[29] European Council, 'Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: Providing Security in a Changing World', Brussels, 11 December 2008.

[30] US Institute of Peace, 'Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction', Washington, DC: Endowment of the United States Institute of Peace, 2009.

NATO/EU School for Conflict, Post-Conflict and Stabilisation could be set up to provide training for deploying officials – a sort of Harvard for state-builders heading into war zones. The US Institute of Peace, Germany's ZiF, the Netherlands' Clingendael Institute and others might be enlisted to provide appropriate courses and conduct training that ensures US/EU collaboration.

A third potentially useful institution would be a US-EU Diplomatic Centre in Washington, on the model of the German Marshall Fund, which could bring US and European diplomats together on courses, workshops, and training programmes as well as facilitating secondments between the different foreign services. As part of this, a 'Marshall-Monnet Fellowship' for younger US and European officials from the European Commission, Council Secretariat, European Parliament and EU governments could be set up, with a programme to include an annual retreat, six-month secondments, and course work. Dealing with crisis and conflict could be a core part of what the US-EU Diplomatic Centre and the fellows focus on. Tied to this, the US and EU could commit to specifically recruiting and training 100 civilian planners, offering them courses in the US and EU countries and experiences in planning with the military.

Continued US scepticism of the utility of transatlantic collaboration can only be overcome by improving EU capacity and effectiveness. Unless the EU can offer support in the areas that the US cares about or spend money and send experts in greater numbers to the world's hotspots, working with the EU is unlikely to be a priority for the new US administration in its own right. The situation in South Asia is likely to remain a US national security priority for the next decade. A greater European commitment in these two countries will be crucial to advance broader US-EU cooperation.

Of particular importance are the Interior Ministries in Pakistan and Afghanistan. While many in both Washington and Brussels resist division of labour, there is good reason for Europe to play a primary role in developing the civilian institutions that give strategic direction to police and other internal security forces. The EU should consult with the US in the design of an assistance effort to the Pakistani Interior Ministry, while at the same time the US consults with the EU on what it is doing with the Afghan Interior Ministry. Cross-fertilisation of this sort could help raise human rights and other standards in both ministries while extending civilian control and oversight.

Finally, the US and the EU need to develop a clear agenda for conflict prevention and crisis management at the UN.[31] In many of the world's unstable regions, it will not be US soldiers or even European diplomats who will broker ceasefires, police demilitarised zones or even staff the post-conflict reconstruction missions (though the US and EU will likely continue to carry the costs). The burden will mainly fall to the UN, which in turn will rely on contributions from Asia and Africa. This makes it all the more important for the US and EU to join forces in building both UN and developing world capacity, while agreeing common approaches where conflicts are likely to occur, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

Through the ups and downs of the US-European security relationship, including stark disagreements over conflicts such as the Bosnian War in the mid-1990s and the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, there has been growing desire on both sides for more practical collaboration on conflict prevention and crisis management not only within a NATO framework, but also directly between the US and the European Union (EU). With the opportunity afforded by the fifteenth anniversary of the New Transatlantic Agenda in mid-2010, the EU and US ought to shape a new cooperative agenda with a primary focus on conflict prevention and making their respective capacities for 'comprehensive' stabilisation and reconstruction missions interoperable and mutually supportive.

[31] Simona Lipstaite, 'EU-US Cooperation in International Peace and Security: Bilateral versus Multilateral Dialogues', Bruges Regional Integration & Global Governance Papers 2/2009.

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On the eve of the fifteen-year anniversary of the New Transatlantic Agenda, which forms the basis of the US-EU relationship, three scholars - one European and two Americans - examine the history of the relationship, US and EU security capabilities and lay out an agenda for the future.

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