

TØNNESSEN
BURGESS

The new challenge of European security research

Talk by Stein Tønnesson, Director, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), at the opening of the Norwegian Research Council's new office in Brussels, 21 November 2005. (The talk was drafted by the leader of PRIO's Security Programme, Dr. J. Peter Burgess.)

I

Ten days ago the European Commission hosted the 3rd meeting of its Preparatory Action for Security Research. The aim of the meeting was to plan the final phase input to the formulation of the research priorities of the 7th Framework Programme. Based on the recommendations of the newly formed European Security Research Advisory Board, the aim of the action is to assess the new challenges faced by security research in Europe, and to formulate the principles for applying a major increase in funding for security research in the coming Programme. Of the total proposed FP7 budget of €73 billion, the new "Security and Space" programme will have an annual research budget of approximately €500 million, 9% of the total budget for thematic research (called "Cooperation"). This investment can be compared with the 6% that is allocated to research on Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology, the 18% on Health, 6% on the Environment, and the no less than 28% on Information Technology.

Clearly security is an area of political concern to which the Commission has responded vigorously, both in terms of making funds available, calling for technological and institutional innovation that may help us cope with new threats, and also in terms of taking initiative to revisit and conceptualize security, its premises and assumptions.

It goes without saying that the attacks of 11 September 2001 put the notions of "security" and "insecurity" on the lips of the Western world. First in relation to the US led war on terror,¹ then, after the Madrid bombings of March 11, 2004, and again after the London bombings of 7 July 2005, Europe has embraced a new global discourse of security.

Security, however, has not always been a central issue for Europe and for European research. Like many things European, the idea of security has had a unique history in this part of the world. Like many things European it is bound to a certain set of traditions, a distinct historical experience, and a repertoire of ideas, customs and traditions.

The notion 'security' is tied up closely with the notion of threats, so our understanding of security depends on what we see as the main threats. If they are external or internal. If they come from states or non-state actors. If they come from someone different from ourselves, or if the threats reside in ourselves, our divisions, fears, and our propensity to sometimes overreact, ^{to attacks and change;} and undermine our European values, when facing a certain kind of particularly awesome challenges. A basic question also is to what extent the response to threats against security should be met on the global or the European level, and how European states should co-ordinate their action with the rest of the world's states.

How can, and to what extent should, research reflect the particularity of the European experience of security and insecurity? To answer this question, we must look back in time before looking forward.

II

The project of European construction was not originally concerned with security in today's sense of the word. At that time, the threats were of a different kind. The core issues that have marked European construction over the past 55 years have been dominated by economic concerns and largely organized by a kind of economic rationality. They have revolved around negotiating the rules and arrangements for a common economic policy, trade regulations, a Common Agricultural Policy, the single market, the dismantling of internal trade barriers and, of course, the putting into place of a common European currency.

To its extraordinary merit, the European Union that we see today – and I can assure you that we see it even in Norway – was conceived and evolved largely as a project of peace. With the horrors of the Second World War freshly in mind, Robert Schuman, together with Jean Monnet and with the support of German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, formulated the basic idea that the only sure way to prevent future armed conflict on European soil—and in particular between France and Germany—was not to shelter the nations from each other, but rather to *integrate* them. The path to that integration, as we all know, was economic.

In this sense, Europe's most clear enemy was Europe's own historical divisions. European "security politics" in the early years of the EU's construction was the "insecurity" caused by Europe's own internal divisions, cultural differences and historically shaped animosities. The quest for peace and security was based on a perceived need for overcoming ^{these} ^s division. To some extent it also came to be based on the ambition of jointly overcoming the excesses of fascism and nazism as a shared European experience. This was more accentuated later, with a focus on studying, remembering, denouncing and preventing ~~in all future~~ any possible recurrence of the civilizational breakdown of the holocaust.

It is often forgotten that the economic integration model of European construction proposed by Schuman had a competing model. In 1949, a year before the announcement of the Schuman Plan, an *intergovernmental* model of European unity was proposed in the form of the Council of Europe. According to the intergovernmental model, the individual European nation-states would cooperate without yielding any of their sovereignty. The central sub-category of the "Europe" and of any future European unity would remain the nation-state.

One year earlier, France, the United Kingdom and the Benelux counties had signed the Treaty of Brussels forming the Western Union, based on the same intergovernmental principles as the Council of Europe. Yet unlike the Council it was more of a traditional security-oriented alliance, organized around an *état-major* with the task of coordinating the military operations of the member states.

Needless to say the formation of the Western Union caught the attention of the Americans, in much the way the maturing European Common Foreign and Security Policy is today capturing both the positive and more sceptical attention of our friends *outré-mer*. On the 11th of June 1948 the US Senate completed negotiations to form the basis of what today is the NATO alliance, effectively absorbing the Western Union.

NATO was an alliance with a basis in a shared conception of a distinct external threat. The EU was more of an integrative, innovative trans-national project, overcoming the internal threat inherent in historic divisions.

Thus whereas the Schuman Plan took aim at reducing the salience of national sovereignty through integration, in order to assure peace and unity, the intergovernmental approach saw

peace and unity as the objective of international alliances and mediation. These two models of European unity still co-exist in today's institutional architecture, although the threats and the perceptions thereof have changed completely.

In terms of *security* there is reason one might ask what form of European construction best serves the purpose of reducing threats to Europe. Comparing the two forms of European cooperation against their historical backgrounds, it seems clear that Schuman's "communitarian" strategy of economic *integration* was more viable than the *intergovernmental* approach in terms of dampening the interstate insecurity of the time.

Here, however, it is essential to note that the idea of security and the usage of the term "security", was even in the 1950s fundamentally different from today. "Security" was still primarily seen within the logic of "national security", according to which the most significant threat is an attack by another state. This logic made NATO more relevant from a security perspective than the EU. The EU was rather, much in the same way as the United Nations, an attempt to overcome, or remove the basis for internal threats. But the EU was of course far more radical than the UN in its integrational ambitions. *quest for regional integration than the UN and the family of global institutions (CAFT, World Bank, IMF) could be in general, integrated globally.*

Today, as we know, the scenarios of threat and insecurity that both ordinary Europeans and European policy-makers confront have changed. Although the notion of "terrorism" has a long tradition in European history, the fusion of terrorism and globalization has created forms of trans-national and supra-national threat that defy the tried-and-true state-based institutions designed to safeguard the modern nation-state. In one sense or another—and for better or worse—we have entered an era in which not only loyalties but also capabilities are no longer mainly aligned with any particular state, not even with inter-governmental agencies.

The present pre-occupation of the EU with security may be seen as timely in terms of addressing this new threat environment. This is *partially* true. Through its supra-national institutional arrangements Europe possesses the potential to address a threat environment that resists national approaches, in the same way it once overcame Europe's internal division, but at the same time the present focus on terrorist threats may easily lend itself to the idea that the threat comes from the outside. In that case the new threat perception could reinstate retrograde conceptions of Europe as a historical bastion of Christianity, with a need for clearly defined borders.

once-and-for-all

Yet, in what sense is the *new* threat environment *new*, and what form of European collaboration can best address it? In order to answer these questions we must look more closely at the evolution of the European security and defense apparatus over the last decade or so.

The long Cold War *intermezzo* of European construction nearly succeeded in tapping the European project of its geopolitical lifeblood. From the Europe-of-six in the first years, to the expanded Europe-of-9 from 1973, of-12 in 1986, of-15 in 1995, and the Europe-of-25 in 2004, the project of European construction maintained an impressive ability to adapt to new circumstances, and change its geography. At the same time the focus here in Brussels gradually turned inward and became increasingly oriented towards legal, bureaucratic and economic issues rather than the most burning political questions of the time. This tendency was consolidated by the Commission under Jacques Delors from 1985, which decisively focused on the goal of integrating Europe through the realization of the Economic and Monetary Union.

The turning point for contemporary Europeanization is, of course, the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. From the point of view of security politics Maastricht seemed like the beginning of a new age. But what is essential in terms of European security is the institutional *architecture* it sets out for the newly born EU. As you know, the new EU according to Maastricht is most notably organized around three pillars. The first revolves around the (further) development of the common market; the second deals with external relations; the third concerns police and judicial coordination.

In 1997 the Amsterdam Treaty revised and updated the Maastricht Treaty, designating a High Representative for Foreign Policy and introducing qualified majority voting for implementing the details of what would be Europe's *de facto* foreign policy.

At the St. Malo meeting the following year the EU declared its hereto unheard-of intention to take on a role in military affairs and create a "rapid reaction force", beginning in 2003, comprising up to 60,000 troops, all as part of a new and coherent European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). This was partly an attempt to correct Europe's relatively introvert



and bureaucratic evolution in the 1990s, and compensate for the crushing disappointments of European powerlessness in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Finally, at the Brussels summit of the European Council in December 2003, High Representative for Foreign Policy Javier Solana presented the revised document "A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy". For the first time in its history the EU proclaimed its engagement in a threat-driven analysis of global security, including concern for global terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the prevention of the emergence of "failed states". If not as a global state or superpower it started to behave as a globally responsible security organization.

Today, at the end of this long and sometimes haphazard development, we must ask some ^{basic} essential questions: On the one hand, what does this uniquely European institutional evolution imply for the *security* of Europe? Is there a distinctiveness in European history and culture with implications for how we confront security challenges? On the other hand, what, indeed, is "European security"? What would it mean to say that "Europe" is insecure? Is it the subways, bridges and railways, nuclear plants and other buildings that are under threat? Is it Europe's "borders" or its political leaders who are threatened? Or do threats concern something else, something more?

The research planning for the security in the 7th Framework, guided by the newly-formed European Security Research Advisory Board, gives us partial answers to these questions. According to the guidelines established by the Board for the Preparatory Action on Security Research, security research in the coming Framework programme will encompass four mission areas: (1) protection against terrorism and crime, (2) security of infrastructures and utilities, (3) border security, (4) restoring security in case of crisis. In addition, the Programme will include three areas of "cross-cutting" interest (1) security systems interaction and interoperability, (2) security and society, (3) security research co-ordination.

Do these ambitions adequately serve Europe? Yes, they do. To some extent. But not sufficiently.

III

15 A

And when I say "fundamental" now, I'm not thinking of our financial system on the Internet. I'm thinking of what's even bigger.

Is it the ships and harbours, the sealines from Middle East? Is it the oil and gas in the north sea?

of which threats such as considered most serious.

No oil-security

One of the aims of peace research is to promote the study of security at the meeting place of the humanities (such as ethical philosophy and history) and the social sciences (such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, economy and political science).

This relationship is essential because security is not only a technical concept. It is also a ^{primarily} human one. In 2003 the Commission named a Group of Personalities in the Field of Security Research (GOP), with the task of setting the principles for the Preparatory Action on Security Research now in the last phase of its work. The Group of Personalities correctly affirmed in its 2004 report, that “technology itself cannot guarantee security, but security without the support of technology is impossible”.

Security (and insecurity) is an experience of the world, an experience of human life, values, hopes and fears, an experience of what might be lost, what is worth keeping, what, indeed, is worth fighting for, or sacrificing liberty for.

In its wisdom, the Group of Personalities understood that technology and technological research is not enough to assure security for Europe. Yet if technology alone cannot guarantee security, what is it that is missing from the formula? The answer is to be found in the Group’s “primary mission”, handed down from the Commission in October 2003, “... to propose principles and priorities of a European Security Research Programme (ESRP) in line with the European Union’s foreign, security and defence policy objectives and its ambition of constructing an area of freedom, security and justice.” The principles of freedom, security and justice are central European values, and commonly evoked in the discussions and documents surrounding the evolution of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy, and most forcefully and eloquently articulated in Javier Solana’s 2003 European Security Strategy document “A Secure Europe in a Better World”. Just as the European Union grew out of an urge to secure future peace among the Europeans themselves, there is also today a need to ensure that the new threats do not divide Europe internally into hostile camps, to ^{insight that we} prevent fear-based overreactions, and to continue integrating our part of the world in a way that leaves room for all of its inhabitants. ^{make sure that we do not succumb to}

For this reason we can be pleased to note the awareness the Commission has shown toward the human dimensions of security in its planning for the 3rd call of ^{the Preparatory Action} PASR. Among the priorities are “studies in support of security solutions with a particular emphasis on human

behaviour; perception of security and privacy; resilience of society to acts of terrorism; and macro-economic effects of security". The integration of human issues in security research is essential and praiseworthy.

Yet with this praise come also a *warning* and a *challenge*.

The *warning* is based on the way that the notion of security is used in planning security research. When "the human" is named in the Preparatory Action on Security Research (PASR) agenda it is most often in an instrumental way. In other words, human knowledge and human behaviour are seen as *tools* to be used in order to effect technological solutions to security problems. The human is seen as a means to an end, instead of the end itself. But technological solutions to security which do not seek to address the human at the heart of security and insecurity may end up defeating themselves or even the fundamental aims of the European project.

Human life is the aim and end of security. Technology applied in security research which does not seek its finality in human value will ultimately have no value. Security research that by design or neglect becomes detached from the fundamental humanity of the European project risks becoming a source of insecurity instead.

Among the oldest traditions of European construction is the notion that Europe is a project based on a set of shared values. It is these values that permit the EU to constitute itself as a supra-national political body, endowed with the legitimacy necessary to execute monetary policy, enact law, and deploy a Foreign and Security Policy. These values must thus be the alpha and omega of the ^{over}Preparatory Action on Security Research. If the European Union faces a security challenge, it is related, in one way or another, to its security as a set of values to which all material, technological, industrial, and military means must ultimately return.

Thus the *challenge* to European security research must be to integrate fully the question of the relation between security and human values into the research agenda of the 7th Framework Programme.