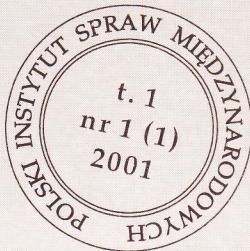


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European Security and Defence Identity. The Polish Viewpoint

The Meaning of the European Security and Defence Identity

The most popular interpretation of the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) limits the scope of this concept to the so-called European pillar of NATO. However, we should bear in mind that the idea of European identity as regards security and defence not only featured prominently in debates on how to reform the North Atlantic Alliance and revitalise the Western European Union, but also contributed to the process of European integration within the framework of the EU. The functional approach, which marked the integration process and was reflected in the legal solutions incorporated in the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties, is based on the assumption that security and defence cooperation will gradually eradicate the differences between the national interests of the member states. Both Treaties provided for cooperation between more than just the fifteen member states. Hence, there is scope for convergence of essential national interests in the domain of security and defence, as well as the economy.¹ The European Union may build this political union through gradual, step-wise unification of security and defence policies. This is not an easy task, but the process of creating such a union is already under way. The second pillar of the European Union does not have a

¹ U. Nerlich, "La défense commune de l'Europe et ses interactions avec l'OTAN, l'OSCE et les Nations unies" [in:] L. Martin, J. Roper (eds.), *Vers une politique de défense commune*, Paris 1995, p. 105; A.J.K. Bailes, "European Defence: What Are the 'Convergence Criteria?", *RUSI Journal* 1999, No. 3, p. 64-65.

strictly international character. It features certain solutions connected with the community approach (the role of the Commission, the European Parliament, the Western European Union).²

Supporters of the EU argue that the European integration process may be successful and irreversible if it is extended to encompass security and defence issues. The EU member states have common interests in these areas, and these interests represent values crucial to the national interests of EU member states and the EU as a whole.

In the methodology of social sciences, identity is a value that embodies the high-level needs of any individual, by which he can be distinguished from other individuals. In the case of aggregate individuals (consisting of many individuals), identity is constituted by common values created by factors that attract the attention of the given aggregate's members and differentiate them from others. This identity is engendered by participation in international alliances. Identity signifies specificity and is the opposite of antinomy. Just as cultural identity differentiates cultures and languages differentiate people—the identity of security needs and interests differentiates the policies of states and international communities.³

The analysis of the European Security and Defence Identity should start with the definition of this concept. If we set aside the "bureaucratic approach" (which reduces it to a political category in the language of NATO bureaucrats and documents), we will discover that we need a new working definition of the concept, appropriate to the subject of our analysis.

The identity of any individual object defines its specific, unique character. So, what are the special features denoted by the concept of the ESDI? In our investigation we will focus on the three main aspects of the ESDI: the subject (Whose security and defence is in

² For more information see: J. Monar, "The European Union's Foreign Affairs System after the Treaty of Amsterdam: a 'Strengthened Capacity for External Action?", *European Foreign Affairs Review* 1997, No. 4, p. 413-436; B. Soetendorp, "Foreign Policy in the European Union: Theory, History and Practice", London 1999, p. 68-82; F. Cameron, "Building a Common Foreign Policy: Do Institutions Matter?" [in:] J. Paterson, H. Sjursen (eds.), *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe?: Competing Visions of the CFSP*, London 1998, p. 68-76; K. A. Eliassen (ed.), *Foreign and Security Policy in the European Union*, London 1998; S. Nuttall, *European Foreign Policy*, Oxford 2000.

³ Cf. J. Bially Matteern, "Taking Identity Seriously", *Cooperation and Conflict* 2000, No. 3, p. 299-308; M. C. Williams, "Identity and the Politics of Security", *European Journal of International Relations* 1998, No. 2, p. 204-225.

question?); the object (What does the ESDI mean? What are the resources? What is the essence of the identity?); and the institutions (What is the framework within which the identity is being built?).

As André Dumoulin correctly pointed out, the European identity as regards security and defence is closely related to what 360 million Europeans want to retain, preserve and defend. The author, like many others, asks what the security and defence policy of the expanding European Union—the number one trade power, the number two economic power and the top provider of aid to other countries—should be.⁴ The concept of the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) belongs to Europe, or rather to the European Union as a player on the international scene; this means that the European Union is the subject of the ESDI.

A. The subject

The analysis of the European Security and Defence Identity should start with the question, whose identity it is that the term signifies. Since identity is always connected with its subject, the first specific problem to address in the analysis is to clearly define the subject of the ESDI.

The concept of the ESDI is the response of Western Europe during the time of its integration to the changing conditions of European security. It entails the creation of an autonomous system of security and defence, capable of acting when the USA or NATO as a whole are unwilling to undertake a common action. It expresses the desire to extend the European Union to a new dimension, enabling it to play a key role on the international arena. At the same time, it is the manifestation of the lack of trust in American security guarantees. The implications of the ESDI have been discussed since the mid-1980s, causing rivalry between NATO (or rather the USA) and the European Union.

B. The object

Generally speaking, one can say that the object of the ESDI includes common European values that are being protected; a perception of the risk and threats; the civilian and military capabilities at the disposal of the European security and defence policy; and the security and defence policy pursued by Europe.

⁴ A. Dumoulin, "L'IESD, entre le nouveau concept stratégique de l'OTAN, la guerre au Kosovo et le sommet de Cologne", *Securité et Stratégie* 1999, No. 62, p. 7.

Common values

The ESDI has to do with certain common values that should be protected by the security and defence policy. It would be difficult to define these values precisely, since each European country has a specific system of values that it wants to defend and develop. The process of building a common security and defence policy is obstructed by differences in historical experience. However, as Václav Havel said, "Europe should rediscover its awareness and responsibility."⁵

Common perception of risk and threats

European identity as regards security and defence is increasingly manifested in a common perception of the challenges and threats facing European nations and countries. This perception is reflected in the judgements of Western European states and the European Union. Through these judgements, Western Europe was led to adopt the following assumptions, which motivated the ESDI programme:

- a) the security guarantees provided by the Washington Treaty are insufficient;
- b) the arms race and the disarmament of Europe have weakened the American nuclear umbrella over Europe;
- c) the Mediterranean basin has become the source of new challenges and threats, such as the conflict in the Middle East, terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism and growing migration;
- d) the international order in Europe broke down at the turn of the 1990s and the former socialist countries became destabilised;
- e) there has been an escalation of nationalism and ethnic conflicts in the Balkans and the former Soviet-dominated territories;
- f) neo-separatist and hegemonic trends in United States foreign policy encourage unilateral actions on the part of Washington, without any consultations with America's partners;
- g) certain problems must be overcome to achieve further progress in European integration.⁶

⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

⁶ For more on this topic, see R. Zięba, *Europejska Tożsamość Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony: koncepcja—struktura—funkcjonowanie*, Warsaw 2000, p. 21-46.

Common actions to reduce risk and eliminate threats (the security and defence policy)

Although Western Europe has not been very successful in this area—as evidenced by its failure to bring peace to the former Yugoslavia—it continues to build up a civilian and military capability to deal with crisis situations and to defend itself. The following trends demonstrate this development:

- a) the build-up of military capability to react in situations of conflict and crisis: the Petersburg missions of the Western European Union and, subsequently, the European Union; the establishment of the European military force; and numerous attempts at cooperation in the defence industry and the procurement of arms and military equipment;
- b) the enhancement of Europe's role in NATO and a reinforcement of NATO itself;
- c) the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU, including the Common European Security and Defence Policy (CDSDP), initiated in June 1999 and designed to help build a common European defence capability.

C. *The Institutions*

The third aspect of the ESDI has to do with the institutional forms supporting the European identity. The institutional framework for the ESDI is being developed within three international structures, established either by the Western European countries or with their assistance. These structures are the Western European Union, NATO and the European Union. Its latest formula—the Common European Security and Defence Policy—was announced as an implementation instrument within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. Such a broad interpretation of the institutional framework will enable us to examine the entire development and evolution of the ESDI.

Most researchers fail to define the ESDI and to link it to any specific international institution; they prefer to speak vaguely of a term or concept related to the security and defence interests of the European states, members of NATO, the WEU and the European Union. Such an approach assumesas a given a certain internal coherence of the above-mentioned international structures. However, it is difficult to imagine that the European identity could be built and could function effectively within NATO—a broad

structure encompassing non-European countries (such as the United States and Canada) as well. The adjective "European" means that such an identity should be built within a purely European structure (or structures) and that this should continue to foster the convergence of European needs and interests. Speaking at the Czech Foreign Ministry in October 1999, the French Admiral Jean Marie Viriot, Director WEU Military Staff, openly stated that it was a mistake to restrict the ESDI initiative to the NATO framework, and even admitted that, in his personal opinion, Europe was attempting to bring about a permanent reduction in the role of the United States in the North Atlantic Alliance.⁷

Therefore, we must address the question of what structure will best serve the development of the European identity as regards security and defence, or, in other words, what organisation will best serve European interests as regards these problems. So far, there have been several attempts to answer this question:

- the ESDI should be firmly anchored within NATO⁸
- the ESDI should be "suspended" between NATO and the Western European Union,⁹
- the ESDI should be anchored within the structure of the European Union (this option has recently been growing in popularity).¹⁰

If we take the coherence of the ESDI and the control over its development as the guiding criterion, then we should conclude that the best solution would be to anchor the ESDI within the European Union. However, this solution may not be sufficiently effective, considering the military weakness of the European Union vis-à-vis NATO (even if we include the resources of the WEU).

The enormous economic potential and the political authority of the European Union allow it to play an important role in supporting economic reconstruction and the creation of new democratic structures in countries destroyed and destabilised by

⁷ J. M. Viriot, „Evropska obranná a bezpečnostní identita—pohled na Západoevropskou unii”, *Mezinárodní vztahy* 2000, No. 1, p. 63-65.

⁸ See, for example, K. Donfried, P. Gallis, “European Security: The Debate in NATO and the European Union”, *CRS Report for Congress*, RL30538, 25-04-2000, p. 1.

⁹ An interesting discussion of this approach can be found in E. Kirchner, J. Sperling, “Will Form Lead to Function? Institutional Enlargement and the Creation of a European Security and Defence Identity”, *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 21, 2000, No. 1, p. 23-43.

¹⁰ Cf. F. Arteaga, *La Identidad Europea de Seguridad y Defensa: El pilar estratégico de la Unión*, Madrid 1999.

wars. The European Union has worked out a broad and comprehensive concept of security, which combines military and civilian aspects.¹¹ One might even claim that the EU is the only guardian of peace able to combine civilian and military capabilities (the former include some elements of the first pillar). Due to this, the European Union's crisis-management abilities are quite unique.

Nevertheless, at least hitherto, the WEU and the EU have not shown any evidence of a political will to intervene militarily to pacify ethnic conflicts and civil wars. This has been caused partly by the lack of military capability at the operational level. This weakness prevented Europe from taking any military steps on its own. The dependency on the United States is still a decisive factor. However, as the WEU Political Director Alyson Bailes pointed out, it would be an oversimplification to hold (as the Americans do) that Europeans fail to take military action because they are unable to come to an agreement among themselves.¹²

While looking for arguments to support the claim that the European Union is an adequate embodiment of the European identity as regards security and defence, it seems useful to refer to the current trend in the evolution of state security in international relations. The trend has been very clear in post-Cold War Europe.

Generally speaking, the meaning of security has changed. As many analysts have pointed out, the concept of security has been extended to include economic, social, humanitarian and environmental aspects. This has resulted in its demilitarisation and in putting more stress on the existential needs of people. All this encourages states and international organisations to change their approach to the issue of security and to choose non-military, cooperation-based means and methods of action in defence of

¹¹ Bertelsmann Foundation (eds.), *Enhancing the European Union as an International Security Actor: A Strategy for Action by the Venusberg Group*, Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, Gütersloh 2000, p. 29.

¹² A. J. K. Bailes, "European Defence: Another Set of Questions", *RUSI Journal*, vol. 145, 2000, No. 1, p. 40. For more on this topic, see A. J. K. Shepherd, "Top-Down or Bottom-Up: Is Security and Defence Policy in the EU a Question of Political Will or Military Capability?", *European Security* 2000, No. 2, p. 13-30.

shared values.¹³ To investigate international security, we should take into account the constantly expanding set of values protected by the growing array of means and methods capable—in the opinion of Daniel Colard—of bringing about a democratic, cooperative system in an undivided Europe.¹⁴

If we take into consideration the new post-Cold War international environment—marked by new challenges and threats, mainly of a non-military nature¹⁵—it will become obvious that the security and defence identity of the newly-integrated Europe can be effectively developed and protected by recourse to a broad array of means and resources. The European Union, aspiring to become a holistic and global international actor,¹⁶ commands most of the non-military instruments, though admittedly the traditional—that is, military—resources are controlled by NATO.

We should investigate the utility of all these instruments and decide, which organisation the ESDI should be attached to. Currently, the European Union is taking over the military resources of the WEU and is constructing its own military potential. The EU has always treated the WEU as part of the integration process, and has gradually developed the Common Foreign and Security Policy. In 1999, it announced the new Common European Security and Defence Policy as a successor to the CFSP. Nevertheless, the North Atlantic Alliance still exists and is the common defence organisation with enormous military potential. The United States—its unquestioned leader—has not fully accepted the new

¹³ For more on this topic, see R. Zięba, "The Need of a New Approach in the Research on European Security", *Perspectives. The Central European Review of International Affairs*, (Praha) 1999/2000, No. 13, pp. 113-130; Ch.-Ph. David, *La guerre et la paix: Approaches contemporaines de la sécurité et de la stratégie*, Paris 2000, p. 101 ff.; Ph. Černý, "The New Security Dilemma: Divisibility, Defection and Disorder in the Global Era", *Review of International Studies* 2000, No. 4, p. 623-646; O. P. Richmond, "Emerging Concepts of Security in the European Order: Implications for 'Zones of Conflict' at the Fringes of the EU", *European Security* 2000, No. 1, p. 41-67.

¹⁴ D. Colard, "De la paix par la force à la paix par la sécurité coopérative et démocratique", *Arčs* 2000, No. 2, p. 20.

¹⁵ Cf., for example, V.-I. Ghebali Brigitte Sauerwein, *European Security in the 1990s: Challenges and Perspectives*, New York—Geneva 1995; R. Zięba, *Instytucjonalizacja bezpieczeństwa europejskiego: koncepcje—struktury—funkcjonowanie*, 2nd ed., Warsaw 1999, p. 59-115.

¹⁶ Cf. R. H. Ginsberg, "Conceptualizing the European Union as an International Actor: Narrowing the Theoretical Capability-Expectations Gap", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 1999, No. 3, pp. 429-454; F. Heisbourg, "Europe's Strategic Ambitions: The Limits of Ambiguity", *Survival* 2000, No. 2, p. 5-15.

initiative of the European Union.¹⁷ The development of the CESDP may jeopardise the future of NATO. Many analysts are already asking whether the North Atlantic Alliance will be able to survive—and for how long;¹⁸ others are searching for criteria of “convergence” between NATO and the EU,¹⁹ or are examining the evolution of the entire European security architecture.²⁰ This situation poses a serious challenge to the foreign and security policy of those Central European states—such as Poland—that joined NATO and aspire to EU membership.

Stages in the Development of the ESDI

It is possible to distinguish three levels in the analysis of the European Security and Defence Identity: the formulation of the concept; the building of structures; and the practical application of the concept to security and defence policy. In this approach, we may distinguish three separate stages in the development of the ESDI concept:

- 1) the formulation of the concept: 1984–1992 (from the WEU Rome Declaration to the Maastricht Treaty);
- 2) the further development of the concept: 1992–1998 (from the Maastricht Treaty to the Amsterdam Treaty);
- 3) the elaboration of the concept: 1998–2001 (the definition of the Common European Security and Defence Policy—CESDP).²¹

In the next part of our paper we will discuss Poland’s perception of each of the stages in the development of the ESDI, as well as

¹⁷ S. R. Sloan, “The United States and the European Defence”, *Chaillet Paper* 2000, No. 39. Cf. Ch. A. Kupchan, “In Defence of European Defence: An American Perspective”, *Survival*, 2000, No. 2, p. 16–32; A. Vershbow, “The American Perspective on ESDI/ESDP”, *Perceptions* 2000, No. 3, p. 96–107. See also P. Van Ham, “Europe’s Common Defence Policy: Implications for the Trans-Atlantic Relationship”, *Security Dialogue* 2000, No. 2, p. 215–228; J. Lindley-French, “Leading Alone or Acting Together: The Transatlantic Agenda for the Next US Presidency”, *Occasional Paper* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union) 2000, No. 20.

¹⁸ Cf., for example, Denis Badré, “L’Otan et l’Union européenne”, *La revue internationale et stratégique*, 1998–1999, No. 32, p. 25–35; B. Tetrais, *L’Otan existera-t-elle encore en 2009*, ibid., pp. 121–129; J.-M. Guéhenno, “L’OTAN après la guerre froide”, *Critique internationale* 2000, No. 7, pp. 101–122; G. Parmentier, “Redressing NATO’s Imbalances”, *Survival* 2000, No. 2, p. 96–102.

¹⁹ R. de Wijk, “Convergence Criteria: Measuring Input or Output?”, *European Foreign Affairs Review* 2000, No. 3, p. 397–417.

²⁰ S. Croft, “The EU, NATO and Europeanisation: The Return of the Architectural Debate”, *European Security* 2000, No. 3, p. 1–20.

²¹ For more on this topic, see R. Zięba, *Europejska Tożsamość...*, op. cit., p. 48–100.

Poland's position on the main actions taken by Western Europe to build a common identity as regards security and defence. The analysis of Poland's position will be based on government announcements and press reports. In many cases we will compare Poland's stance with that of other Central European states belonging to the Visegrád Group. The starting assumption is that Poland adopted an individualistic approach to the policies of the Western European Union and the European Union. It is worth asking why Warsaw chose this strategy.

Our analysis should provide at least partial answers to the following detailed questions: How is Poland going to adapt the ESDI to its national interests and at the same time to the requirements of pan-European security? How can the differences in the interpretation of the ESDI presented by the United States and by the European Union be reconciled? What can Poland contribute to the ESDI? However, we should be aware that it would be premature to expect full answers to all of these questions. The ESDI is an enormous challenge, particularly for the Central European states—conceptually and materially unprepared to respond to this initiative. Even the European Union has not developed the concept of its security and defence identity in full detail.

The ambiguity of Poland's stance during the first stage in the development of the ESDI

During the first stage in the development of the ESDI, commenced in the mid-1980s, Poland and the other Central European states belonging to the Warsaw Pact were not interested, and could not be interested, in taking a position on the revival of the Western European Union. At that time, the Eastern block countries regarded the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation as their enemy, posing a serious threat to their security. Under the conditions of a divided Europe, it mattered little to them which part of the Western block would be stronger militarily. For the USSR, the reinforcement of the Western European Union could only be significant as a factor contributing to the disintegration of NATO and a check on US influence in Europe. This was cold-war thinking, and it did not seek to bolster the security and the defence system of Western Europe—rather, to weaken the whole Western block.

Some countries, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, saw the increased role of the WEU as a threat to their security. The lifting in May 1984 of the remaining conventional arms restrictions in West Germany was sharply criticised by the governments of these

countries, and this criticism was supported by the entire Warsaw Pact. Warsaw and Prague regarded the decisions of the WEU as a violation of the Potsdam Treaty of 1945 and the Paris Agreements of 1954. One should bear in mind that Poland and Czechoslovakia were apprehensive mainly because of the ostentatiously revisionist rhetoric of the West German government and calls for the reunification of Germany under conditions of strained international relations in Europe and the deployment of new medium-range nuclear weapons on the continent. Consequently, any moves that could lead to increased West German power were perceived by these countries as hostile and a threat to stability in Europe.

The situation changed radically after the demise of the "real socialist" system in the Central and Eastern European countries and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet block. All those countries that embarked upon the path of political transformation changed their foreign policy and adopted a pro-Western orientation. In the words of Václav Havel and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the countries decided to "return to Europe". They bridged the gap separating them from the Western security institutions and saw the process of Western European integration as an opportunity. They set themselves the goal of joining NATO, the WEU and the European Union. Consequently, they wanted to be able to influence the evolution of these international structures. When in late 1991, the WEU Ministerial Council, the North Atlantic Council and the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht) officially announced the European Security and Defence Identity initiative, the Central European countries could not avoid taking a stance on this new idea.

However, working out a position was not an easy task. One should bear in mind that, at that time, the idea of the ESDI proved injurious to the internal cohesion of NATO, sparked transatlantic disputes and shaped debates on the future of NATO. To join NATO became the new strategic goal of Poland's security policy. Under such conditions, discord between the future allies and the integration partners became a very sensitive issue. For this reason, Poland never stated its position on the ESDI concept in very clear or detailed terms. Warsaw did not wish to get involved in transatlantic disputes and declared only its general support for the ESDI.

In a joint statement issued in February 1991, the leaders of the Visegrád Triangle states (Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary) announced that European integration, to be achieved through "full participation of their countries in the political, economic, security and legal systems of Europe" was the goal of their policy.²² Several months later, the Visegrád Triangle countries clarified their goal in the Cracow Declaration of October 6, 1991. They announced that their goal was European integration, that is, "the association with the European Community, the strengthening of relations with the North Atlantic Alliance (including the embodiment if these relations in institutional forms), as well as the conclusion of an international agreement (...) and an agreement with the Western European Union."²³

During subsequent months, Poland and the other members of the Visegrád Group refrained from articulating their positions on the ESDI. When they began to work with the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and when they initiated preparations leading to the conclusion of the agreement establishing an association between their countries and the European Community, the leaders of the Visegrád Group members did not issue any detailed statements on the ESDI concept. They merely expressed their support for the idea when they mentioned the NATO summit in Rome in November 1991 and the WEU declaration appended to the Maastricht Treaty.

The future shape of the European security system was much influenced by the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, particularly the establishment of the second pillar of the EU and the definition of the role of the WEU in the European integration process. The Visegrád Group member states, which a few days later (on December 16, 1991) signed agreements on their association with the European Community, began preparations to join the European Union. Developments within the Union imposed new requirements on countries aspiring to become its members, namely, to adapt to the Common Foreign and Security Policy and to take into account the possibility—created by the Maastricht Treaty

²² „Deklaracja o współpracy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Czeskiej i Słowackiej Republiki Federacyjnej i Republiki Węgierskiej w dążeniu do integracji europejskiej”, Wyszehrad, 15 lutego 1991 r., *Zbiór Dokumentów* 1992, No. 1, p. 235.

²³ „Deklaracja Krakowska ‘państw trójkąta’”, Kraków 6 października 1991 r., *Zbiór Dokumentów* 1992, No. 2, p. 172.

(Article J.4.1)—of a common defence policy of the Union, which could lead to the establishment of a common defence system.

Monitoring the discussions held within the WEU-EU-NATO triangle

During the development of the ESDI concept after the Maastricht Treaty, the foreign and national security policy of Poland had to meet several challenges. The EU partners (*in statu nascendi*) had to work out their position on such issues as: a) the peace-keeping missions; b) the reinforcement of the defensive capability of Western Europe (including the operating capability of the WEU) and c) the Eastern policy of the WEU. Each of these issues was important not only to West European states, but also to their Eastern partners, including Poland.

Faced with ethnic conflicts, and especially with the tragedy of the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Western European Union adopted in June 1992 the so-called Petersburg tasks. The “international community”, including the Central European countries, expected such steps to be taken. In October 1991, Poland used the forum of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to propose the creation of European peace-keeping forces.²⁴ Czechoslovakia and Hungary supported this idea, and during the Cracow summit of the Visegrád Group, the leaders of the three states called for the deployment of international peace-keeping forces in Yugoslavia.²⁵ However, Warsaw’s proposal did not win the support of Western countries and was soon dropped by the Polish foreign policy-makers.

The proposal to reinforce the defences of Western Europe by building up the operating capability of the WEU was another issue that was brought up during the development of the ESDI. All the relevant decisions were closely watched by the authorities of the Central European countries, insofar as they affected the condition of the North Atlantic Alliance. Poland, which wanted to join NATO, the Western European Union and the European Union, regarded the efforts to build the military capability of the WEU as an element of the policy to strengthen and adapt the Alliance to the post-Cold War

²⁴ J. Prystrom, „Problemy bezpieczeństwa w polityce zagranicznej Polski”, *Rocznik Polityki Zagranicznej* 1991, Warsaw 1993, p. 38.

²⁵ R. Zięba, „Nowy regionalizm w Europie a Polska”, *Sprawy Międzynarodowe* 1992, No. 1-2, p. 31.

environment in Europe. Poland saw the ESDI concept as being developed within the framework of NATO. However, disputes between the main supporters of the ESDI on the one hand, that is, France and Germany, and the United States on the other, put the Central European states in a difficult position. These countries, including Poland, perceived the West as a coherent system, in which NATO was the only realistic and effective guarantee of security and defence. In their opinion, any dispute that could undermine this system was senseless and even dangerous to NATO's internal cohesion. Consequently, the Polish government watched the rivalry between the WEU and NATO with growing concern.

Speaking to the Polish Sejm in April 1993, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, the Polish foreign minister, described Poland's aspiration to join NATO and the EU as two fundamental components of the country's security policy. He also expressed his satisfaction that the rivalry between the WEU and NATO was disappearing.²⁶ Poland and the other Central European states watching the transatlantic dispute with growing concern, wanted to join NATO, but it also wished to see the Western European Union strengthened, since it was an element of the European Union, of which Poland hoped to become a member. Warsaw wanted the Western European security system to be compatible with NATO and wished the two organisations would pursue a common strategy.

Many official statements issued by the Central European states expressed their support for the idea of the ESDI as a constitutive element of the efforts to rebuild and strengthen the Western security system. While politicians from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary refrained from making comments on the debate between the European and American allies, Poland behaved differently. One might wonder why.

Minister Skubiszewski's statement may indicate that Poland was apprehensive about the presence of the United States in Europe. It is vitally important to Poland that this presence be maintained, in order to strengthen European security. It was for this reason that the Polish foreign minister spoke of the discomfort caused by the transatlantic disputes over the ESDI. In fact, he

²⁶ "Statement by Mr. Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Republic of Poland, on Poland's foreign policy in 1993, to the Polish Diet of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 29th April, 1993", *Materials and Documents* 1993, No. 5, p. 131-141.

strongly supported the US position and the Atlantic orientation amongst Western European politicians.²⁷

Taking its cue from the modern history of international relations in Europe, Poland believes that the political and economic presence of the United States on the continent is indispensable and absolutely fundamental. To see the justice of this viewpoint, it is sufficient to consider the decisive role played by the United States in the final stages of the first and second World Wars. It was its military involvement that put an end to both conflicts and helped construct the Versailles and the Yalta international orders. The American presence in Europe after the second World War and the leading role of the United States in the Western block was one of the main stabilising agents of the “cold peace” during subsequent decades.²⁸

The basic motivation behind Poland’s support for continued and even increased American involvement in European affairs is the conviction that, after the end of the Cold War, America could keep the ambitions of the united Germany under control and prevent Russia from reconstructing its dominion in Central Europe.²⁹ It is believed in Poland that the United States—the main winner in the cold-war confrontation and the only true superpower—should expand its presence in Central Europe, which once fell under the domination of the Soviet Union due to the division of Europe into spheres of influence.

The evolution of the political situation in Europe after the disintegration of the Eastern block furnished further arguments. The growing destabilisation and ethnic conflicts led to many wars in former Soviet and Yugoslav territories. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular demonstrated the powerlessness of international institutions trying to act as mediators and to restore peace. Neither the UN, nor the European Union, nor yet the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe/Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe proved of much value in this case. Only the military and diplomatic involvement of the United States acting within the framework of NATO could calm down the hostilities in Bosnia in the autumn of 1995. It turned out

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Cf. “Seven statements on Poland’s security by Mr. Andrzej Olechowski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, 14th December 1993”, *Materials and Documents* 1993, No. 11-12, p. 280.

²⁹ Cf. F. S. Larrabee, *East European Security after the Cold War*, Santa Monica 1993, p. 171.

that only the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was able to intervene successfully and to restore peace, and that it was only after Washington had decided to take military action outside the dominion of NATO that this capability could be taken advantage of. While it is true that the intervention was much criticised and that there were disputes first amongst the allies (between NATO and the WEU) and subsequently with Russia, the actions taken were justified by their final goal. In spite of the fact that the situation on the continent was radically different (since there was no threat of aggression from the East), Europe was unable to ensure stability in the Balkans, as forcefully demonstrated by the war in Kosovo. For this reason, Poland and other countries in the zone of greater uncertainty—such as Lithuania, Slovakia, Romania or Bulgaria—have been arguing for a greater military presence of the United States in Europe and further expansion of NATO in the East as the only proven system of security.

Poland is sceptical about the West European system of security if it has to rely on it in the absence of the military and political presence of the United States. Its inter-war experience proved that alliances with France (1921) and Great Britain (1939) were insufficient to guarantee its security. Furthermore, Poland is sceptical about the ability of Western Europe to build an autonomous security system. For this reason, Polish security policy makers did not see the WEU as an alternative to NATO. This view was a natural consequence of their general approach to Western integration, based on the assumption that the Western block is a homogenous system, free from transatlantic rivalry, and that the dominating role of the United States will prevent the resurgence of nationalism in the security policy of the major powers and will engender a cooperative, that is internationalised, security system in Europe, with NATO as its core.

During their meeting in Prague on January 12, 1994, with US President Bill Clinton and the leaders of the four Visegrád Group members discussed mainly their participation in the Partnership for Peace programme. The idea of the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) or, more broadly, the concept of building the European Security and Defence Identity (given initial approval by the NATO summit in Brussels a few days prior to the meeting) were neither the subject of discussions, nor of unilateral statements by Poland and the other Central European states. Apparently, the participants wished to avoid stating their positions in the wake of recent transatlantic disputes over this issue.

Countries aspiring to NATO membership usually supported the decisions of the North Atlantic Council. Their approach to the strengthening of European defences was reflected in their attitude towards the creation of the WEU military capability.

In order to bolster its position, Poland announced it would continue its efforts and join such multinational units, established in Western Europe under the name of Eurocorpus. It also declared its readiness to contribute to the military forces or the WEU while waiting to be admitted as its member.³⁰ Furthermore, Poland actively participated in trilateral military cooperation involving Germany and Denmark, thus implementing an agreement concluded on August 17, 1995. In August 1998, the agreement served as the basis for the creation of the Multinational Corps Northeast as a special unit within NATO, to serve both common defence purposes and to be used in peace-keeping missions. The unit, stationed in Szczecin, became operational on March 16, 1999.³¹

The third problem connected with the development of the ESDI concept, which posed a challenge for Poland, was the Eastern policy of the Western European Union.

In June 1992, two years after the first, initially irregular contacts between the WEU and Central European states (in the spring of 1990), the WEU Ministerial Council decided to establish a Consulting Forum, modelled on the NACC. The body comprised the representatives of the WEU member states and the eight Central European partners. Its purpose was to enable the exchange of information concerning the so-called architecture of European security, to ensure the stability of international relations on the continent, arms control, trust building and peace-keeping missions. The representatives of the consulting partners had the right to take part in the WEU Ministerial Council meetings, but they could not block decisions taken by the full members of the organisation.

During its session in Kirchberg on May 9, 1994, the Ministerial Council suspended the Consulting Forum. The consulting partners were promoted to the higher status of "associate partners". They were also invited to take part in the Petersburg missions. Using the forum of the Weimar Triangle, Poland strongly demanded the new status for

³⁰ Cf. "Statement by Mr. Aleksander Kwaśniewski, President of the Republic of Poland, at the Assembly of the West European Union, Paris, 4th December 1996", *Materials and Documents* No. 12, p. 1313-1316.

³¹ F. Heisbourg et al., "European defence: making it work", *Chaillet Paper* 2000, No. 42, p. 76.

itself and for the other Central European states. In November 1993, during a meeting of the foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland held in Warsaw, both Germany and France pledged to support the request to raise the status of Central European states in the WEU.³² Half a year later, the consulting partners were accorded the status of associate partners. Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary maintained this status until March 23, 1999, when, as new members of NATO, they became WEU associate members.³³

Thus, Poland participated in the work of the WEU, was present at the Council sessions and, since November 1999, has been participating in the work of the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG). One of the better known examples of this involvement is the work on the Common European Security Concept, drafted by 27 states associated with the WEU and adopted in November 1995. The document defined the common position on security in Europe after the end of the Cold War and the common means and resources to strengthen it.³⁴

Poland's demands to be allowed to participate in the CFSP and CESDP

In December 1997, the European Council invited Cyprus and five Central European countries to negotiations over their accession to the European Union. Among the five was Poland, which had been invited to join NATO earlier that year (in July). Poland began its accession negotiations on July 10, 1998.

One of the issues discussed during the negotiations was the readiness of the candidate states to meet the requirements implied by the second integration pillar, that is, the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Poland's position on this, as well as other issues, was presented in a document entitled *Narodowa strategia integracji*, adopted by the government in January 1997.

The document stated that the integration of Poland within the European Union would depend on several external conditions, including reforms within NATO, the development of the European

³² „Wspólna deklaracja ministrów spraw zagranicznych Polski, Francji i Niemiec”, Warszawa, 12 listopada 1993 r., *Zbiór Dokumentów* 1993, No. 4, p. 88-92.

³³ Cf. “Declaration on the New Associate Members of WEU: the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland” [in:] *Bremen Declaration*, Bremen 1999 (10-11 V), URL <http://www.weu.int>.

³⁴ „Bezpieczeństwo europejskie: wspólna koncepcja 27 państw UZE”, (*Studia i Materiały*, No. 36), Warsaw 1996.

defence identity and the establishment of a role for the WEU. However, Poland also held that cooperation between the WEU and the EU would continue in parallel with the cooperation between the WEU and NATO. Next, the document stated that "Poland has already met the conditions of membership in the CFSP. The continuation and development of the current balanced foreign policy (...) will make Poland a desirable partner for the Union."³⁵

The European Council's announcement (made during a meeting in Köln in June 1999) of a new branch of the CFSP called the Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP) became a turning point in the evolution of the concept of European integration.³⁶ The states aspiring to become members of the European Union were unprepared for this idea and had to work out their position. Since the Maastricht Treaty was signed in late 1991, the European Union had not implemented its provisions concerning the common defence policy. Decisions announced in Köln and Helsinki (December 9-10, 1999) were not expected by the Central European states, and they now had to take a position on this issue. The pledge to build an autonomous European defence system created a problem for those countries that were not members of the EU, but either were members of NATO (Norway, Iceland, Turkey, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary) or EU partners (Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia). The European Union did not consult any of them before making its decisions. Under such circumstances, the states in either of the two groups did not know whether they would participate in future military operations carried out by the EU.

Poland was the first to react. On December 6, 1999, before the start of the Helsinki summit, it asked the European Union to agree to its full participation in any decisions by the European Union member countries concerning military interventions and to make such decisions conditional upon NATO approval, which could in fact require the approval of the United States. The Polish government said the Union's initiative could only make sense if it strengthened the US presence in Europe and consolidated the transatlantic relationship between Brussels and Washington. Poland expressed the view that European military planning should

³⁵ *National Security Strategy for Integration*, The Committee for European Integration, Warsaw 1997, part 4, URL <http://www.msz.gov.pl/english/unia/nsi/r4.html>.

³⁶ For more on this topic, see R. Zięba, *Europejska Tożsamość..., op. cit.*, p. 99-100.

be subordinated to the Strategic Concept of the North Atlantic Alliance, and that the creation of military units to carry out EU operations should be in agreement with NATO's system of defence planning. Warsaw also called for the prompt creation of a clear and binding mechanism of cooperation between NATO and the EU. Furthermore, Poland demanded that non-EU members of NATO be given the same rights in the planning and decision-making process connected with EU military interventions as those enjoyed by full EU members. According to Poland, these countries should also have the right to participate in meetings of defence ministers, foreign affairs ministers and even heads of state of the fifteen members of the EU. The Polish statement did not make it clear whether Warsaw also wished to have the right of veto in the decision-making process, but one could certainly get the impression that this was indeed the case.³⁷

The position of the Polish government presented to the foreign ministers of the EU countries in Brussels met with strong disapproval. The French representative called Poland "America's Trojan horse in Europe, while Europe is trying to build its military independence." EU ministers charged Warsaw with giving in to US pressure. The Italian diplomat added that Poland would not be allowed to dictate to the European Union what to do. In the opinion of Western diplomats, the position taken by Poland proved that Warsaw did not consider the European Union to be able to provide sufficient security guarantees for Europe and believed the permanent presence of the United States on the Old Continent to be indispensable.³⁸

The European Council's Helsinki decision to build an autonomous European security system was criticised in Polish press. A *Rzeczpospolita* journalist claimed that many Europeans believed that a common defence policy could be the only—albeit circuitous—route to a common political identity of the European Union. As far as the official position of Poland was concerned, wrote the journalist, it was only to be expected that Warsaw would not receive with enthusiasm a project worked out without its participation. He concluded his article by saying: "The Union should not reinforce the impression that its prospective members have no say in it. The so-called *acquis communautaire*, the legal

³⁷ "Polska krytykuje plany obronne UE", *Rzeczpospolita*, December 7, 1999.

³⁸ Ibid.

achievement of the integration process, is beyond dispute. The countries that will soon participate in the European project should not be excluded from it.”³⁹ The right-wing Polish daily *Życie* asked rhetorically whether Poland was “cannon fodder.”⁴⁰ The influential liberal weekly *Polityka* published an article by Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, who sharply criticised the European Union’s decision concerning the CESDP and argued that Poland was standing in front of a trap and, obviously, should choose NATO and the United States. Nowak-Jeziorański concluded that a compromise between the EU and the European non-EU NATO members would be possible once the EU understood that Poland and the other countries in this group might choose a different option if their interests were ignored.⁴¹ Other papers saw the efforts of the EU to create the CESDP as the beginnings of a rivalry between the Union and the United States (ostensibly NATO).⁴²

The misgivings of the Polish government were presented by Poland’s foreign minister, Bronisław Geremek, at the session of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels on December 15, 1999. He made three claims, which summed up Poland’s position on the European Security and Defence Identity: 1) NATO has been and remains the cornerstone of the European security. 2) ESDP is a critical factor strengthening NATO’s effectiveness. 3) Therefore setting clear mechanisms for NATO-EU cooperation is of vital importance to the process we are pursuing. The Polish politician focused on the third issue and called for the urgent commencement of work within the EU to create appropriate mechanisms for broad consultations, cooperation and transparency in EU-NATO relations. He said further: “We should not accept the situation when by the end of the year 2000, WEU will have its purpose fulfilled and we will not have set new modalities between NATO and EU.” He stressed the need to ensure the “participation of all non-EU European Allies in possible future EU operations as well as in the EU’s Policy in Security and Defence and its institutional dimension, building on

³⁹ J. Reiter, “Na europejski rozkaz”, *Rzeczpospolita*, December 12, 1999.

⁴⁰ *Życie*, March 2, 2000.

⁴¹ “Pułapka z wyboru”, *Polityka*, April 29, 2000, pp. 36-37. Several months later, Jan Nowak-Jeziorański proposed the creation of a block of states led by the US and opposed to the EU concept; these countries were to pull out of NATO. Cf. “Is NATO under threat”, *Rzeczpospolita*, May 14, 2001.

⁴² Cf. A. A. Michta, “Transatlantyk”. Czy plany stworzenia europejskiego systemu obrony mogą zagrozić NATO?”, *Wprost*, November 21, 1999; M. Świerczyński, “Unia nie chce NATO”, *Polska Zbrojna*, 2000, No. 11, p. 47.

arrangements existing within the WEU.” The Polish foreign minister warned against the “the establishment of the circle of ‘insiders’ versus ‘outsiders’ while creating new mechanisms, which will also weaken the process of the European integration,” and called for a “spirit of unity” and a return to the “constructive approach in the name of the future of this [NATO—R.Z.] alliance.”⁴³ It is remarkable that in Minister Geremek’s speech (as well as in Poland’s subsequent official announcements) the phrase “European Security and Defence Policy” is used, without the adjective “Common”. This may indicate that Poland does not perceive this policy as a common venture of the EU. The same is true of official US statements.

The other Visegrád Group members took a similar position on the European Union’s decision concerning the CESDP. The topic was discussed during many official meetings between representatives of the four countries.

During their meeting in Budapest in October 1999, the heads of parliamentary committees for foreign affairs and defence declared their “support the strengthening of European Security and Defence Identity within NATO” and stressed their “firm belief that Transatlantic cooperation plays an indispensable role in maintaining peace on the Continent, and that the collective defence of Europe should continue to rest upon NATO.” The authors of the declaration continue: “We think it is important that, after the merger of EU and WEU, non-EU NATO members play a full role in decisions concerning European security.” Those gathered at the meeting also discussed the proposal to “establish multinational military units by members of the Visegrád Group and other Central European states and to broaden cooperation in the field of defence industry and the procurement of military equipment.”⁴⁴

A month later, the defence ministers of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia met in Przemyśl and demanded that their countries be allowed to participate in the EU decision-making process relating to security and defence matters. They also extended that request to those countries that were not

⁴³ B. Geremek, *On European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI)*, NAC, Brussels, 1999 (December 15). URL http://www.msz.gov.pl/english/nato/nac_esdi.html.

⁴⁴ Joint Statement of the Chairmen of Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of the Parliaments of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, adopted at their 4th meeting, Budapest 1999 (4-5 October), URL <http://www.visegrad.org/events.php?kdy=45october1999>.

NATO members yet, but aspired to join both structures (such as Slovakia).⁴⁵

The European Union's decisions on the CESDP were made without consultations and without the participation of non-member states. The new NATO members from Central Europe were excluded. Therefore, these countries have been looking for ways to ensure that they will participate in any future decisions.

At the beginning of January 2000, three draft reports on the implementation of the Helsinki decisions were published by Portugal, which at that time presided the European Union. The following solutions were proposed regarding the participation in CESDP of non-EU NATO members:

- the cooperation would start immediately after the creation of the new temporary organs of the EU;
- the cooperation would be based on agreements between the EU and the individual states, as stipulated in Article 24 of the Treaty on European Union;
- a distinction would be made between the "6" (members of NATO) and the remaining "7" (partners). It was proposed that meetings of the "15" + "6" would be more frequent than those of the "15" + "13", particularly if any preparations for a military operation were under way. Furthermore, the "6" would take part in the Military Committee.

The two most important assumptions adopted in these documents met with opposition from Poland and other states in the group of "6", since structures involving the "15" + "13" would be built within the European Security and Defence Framework (ESDF) and would constitute a forum separate from and parallel to the CESDP. Such a solution may result in the transformation of the new structures into purely information-oriented bodies, used by the EU members to conduct negotiations with the "6" or the "13", having previously worked out a common position within the group of the "15". The second proposal of the agreement, based on Article 24 of the Treaty on European Union, was likewise criticised by Poland. It was claimed that the solution would result in a multilateral

⁴⁵ PAP news report from November 4, 1999. See also Joint Communiqué from the meeting of the ministers of defence of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Slovak republic and the minister of national defence of the Republic of Poland, Przemyśl, on November 4, 1999, URL <http://www.visegrad.org/4november1999.htm>.

agreement between the European Council and all the states belonging to the “13”, without making any distinction between the “6” and the “7”, which could be interpreted as proof that the special significance of the cooperation between the EU and the European non-EU members of NATO is merely informal. Poland took the position that the second proposal could be implemented only after negotiations with the European Union.⁴⁶

On February 29, 2000, several days after a meeting of defence ministers of the EU member states in Feira, the foreign ministers of Poland (Bronisław Geremek), the Czech Republic (Jan Kavan) and Hungary (János Martonyi) met in London with the foreign minister of the United Kingdom, Robin Cook, in order to discuss the initiative of the European Union regarding the strengthening of European security and crisis management. They reaffirmed their countries' support for this initiative and declared their determination to use it to strengthen NATO and the EU; they agreed that the success of the Union's initiative will require comprehensive consultations between the EU and NATO, as well as good cooperation and transparency in order for the Union to be able to carry out military operations in case of a crisis, even if NATO as a whole is not involved. Robin Cook told his partners about the progress that was made under Portugal's presidency, particularly regarding the solutions to enable consultations with European non-EU NATO members and the procedures for making decisions and conducting EU military operations. The four ministers affirmed their support for the proposals worked out under Portugal's presidency to involve the six non-EU members of NATO in the CESDP. They also expressed hope that the proposals would be adopted at the meeting of the European Council in Feira. They agreed that the six countries' involvement may be crucial to a satisfactory evolution of the relations between the EU and NATO.⁴⁷ The Polish press reported that the creation of the European Rapid Reaction Force and the inter-government conference commenced on February 14 were also discussed during

⁴⁶ Documents of the Department of European Security Policy, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Warsaw, February 2000.

⁴⁷ Joint Press Statement by the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, London 2000 (February 29). URL <http://www.mfa.gov.hu/Szovivoi/2000/02/szov0229ang.htm>.

the London meeting within the context of the main issues of European security.⁴⁸

The three new members of NATO coordinated their positions on CESDP before the Lisbon summit (March 23-24, 2000). During a meeting held in Budapest on March 18, 2000 on the occasion of the first anniversary of their countries' accession to NATO, the foreign ministers of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland issued a joint statement. The document, addressed to the heads of state and governments of EU member countries, stated: "We strongly believe that the future of security on our continent depends directly on maintaining and strengthening the North Atlantic Alliance and preserving our transatlantic links. At the same time we declare our interest in the successful development of the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy, which we regard as a potential contribution to European security. We therefore emphasise the need of the development of cooperation between NATO and the European Union. We wish to stress that the role of those NATO countries which are not members of the EU must be taken fully into account."⁴⁹ This was a clear statement of the position taken by the three Central European states regarding the new security and defence policy of the European Union. During a press conference held after the official meeting, the three foreign ministers did not address this controversial topic; they stressed the importance of their countries' membership in NATO and once again expressed their support for the membership of Slovakia and Lithuania in the Alliance.⁵⁰

The first exchange of views between the EU member states and the European non-EU NATO members, as well as prospective NATO members, took place on May 11, 2000, during a meeting of Political Directors in Brussels. At the time, the Visegrád Group members did not make any public comments on the position they

⁴⁸ „Klamka zapadła. UE przystępuje do tworzenia sił szybkiego reagowania”, *Trybuna*, March 1, 2000.

⁴⁹ Joint Statement of the Budapest meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic on the occasion of the first anniversary of their accession into NATO, Budapest 2000 (March 18), URL <http://www.kum.hu/Szovivoi/2000/03/spok0318.htm>

⁵⁰ Press Conference of Foreign Ministers János Martonyi of Hungary, Bronislaw Geremek of Poland and Jan Kavan of the Czech Republic on the occasion of their meeting on the 1st anniversary of the three countries accession to NATO, Budapest 2000 (March 18). URL <http://www.kum.hu/Szovivoi/2000/03/spok0318.htm>.

took during the meeting. However, it was known that they pressed for the inclusion of their countries in the CESDP process.

On June 9, 2000, before the next EU summit in Feira (June 19-20, 2000), the prime ministers of the Visegrád Group member states met in Prague and issued a declaration, in which they expressed their "support for the greater activity and the assumption of responsibility for security and defence matters by Europe." They stated further that their countries "already contributed to the European security and defence policy within the framework of the EU."⁵¹

The first consultation session was held after the European Union had determined the proposed terms for consultations and/or participation in military crisis-management operations by NATO members and other non-EU countries aspiring to become NATO members. On July 3, 2000, talks were held in Brussels between Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and high-ranking officials of foreign ministries of several NATO members (the Czech Republic, Island, Poland, Hungary, Norway and Turkey).

During their consultations with the EU, the new members of NATO found themselves in a difficult position. They wanted to reconcile their role as US allies and their aspiration to become EU members. Poland, where a right-wing "Solidarity" government came to power in the autumn of 1997, represented the pro-American option and was less than enthusiastic about the CESDP. The Polish stand reflected not only the pro-American attitudes of the majority of the Polish population, but also the misgivings of the right-wing parties about Poland's integration within the "cosmopolitan" European Union.⁵² The Polish foreign ministry proposals concerning the implementation of the decisions reached at Feira, relating to cooperation between the EU and the European non-EU NATO members, confirm this claim. Poland's initial negotiating position reaffirmed the special role to be played by the six non-EU NATO members and assumed that the regular exchange of views with these countries would be the fundamental principle governing future cooperation between the EU and other states regarding the CESDP. Warsaw demanded further that future

⁵¹ *Společné prohlášení premiérů visegrádských zemí*, Praha 2000 (April 9), URL <http://www.mzv.cz/v4praha.html>.

⁵² For more on this topic, see R. Zięba, "Security Aspects of Poland's Integration with the European Union", [in:] P. Kašička, Z. Dubský (eds.), *European Integration as a Way to Security and Prosperity*, Prague 1999, pp. 33-43.

solutions regarding the CESDP should contribute to the EU-NATO cooperation and should become an indispensable element in the practical collaboration of the two organisations. It was proposed that the topics of regular consultations involving the "15 + 6" include:

- political cooperation between the EU and NATO over the CESDP;
- the *acquis* of the WEU concerning cooperation between NATO and the WEU, particularly as regards the Petersburg tasks;
- the definition of the European Headline Goal⁵³

Poland's position regarding the Common European Security and Defence Policy is also defined in general terms in the state security strategy adopted by the government on January 4, 2000. It states that the North Atlantic Alliance is the main factor of political and military stability in Europe, and that it constitutes a real base of the security and defence of Poland. The second pillar of Poland's security will be "a system comprising relations between the European Union/Western European Union and NATO. From the perspective of Poland's long-term interests, participation in that system is just as important as participation in the North Atlantic Alliance itself. Poland is interested in harmonising the security interests of all states of the Euro-Atlantic area and European Union members. (...) Until it becomes an EU member, as a member of NATO and associate member of the WEU, Poland will strive to develop co-operation with other European states within the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as well as the common defence policy and common defence. Poland is vitally interested in creating the European crisis management capabilities; we shall strive to participate therein in accordance with our national potential. Poland fully supports the development of European Security and Defence Identity within the Alliance as a way of strengthening NATO's European pillar."⁵⁴ The last sentence shows that Poland opted for a narrow understanding of the ESDI, namely as an element within NATO, rather than a broad concept of increasing the European Union security and defence capability. In

⁵³ Initial proposals for practical development of Feira decisions concerning the EU cooperation with non-EU European Allies, URL http://www.msz.pl/position_18082k_ang.html

⁵⁴ Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland adopted at the meeting of the Council of Ministers on 4 January 2000, URL <http://www.msz.gov.pl/english/polzagr/security/se3.html>.

his speech to the Sejm in May 2000, Minister B. Geremek again made the same point. Speaking of Poland's acceptance of the new European Union initiative, he said its purpose was "to strengthen the Common Foreign and Defence Policy by way of developing the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)." He stated that by supporting the Union decisions, Poland acted "on the assumption that all the solutions proposed aim at bolstering the harmonisation of EU and NATO operations, as well as strengthening the European security pillar, to firm up the trans-Atlantic bonds and the US commitment to European security."⁵⁵

After the meeting of the European Council in Nice, the heads of foreign affairs, defence and European integration committees of the parliaments of the four Visegrád Group countries met in Warsaw on November 17-18, 2000 and expressed their support for the "development of the Common European Security and Defence Policy and their wish to participate in the efforts to build it, including work on the decision-making procedures."⁵⁶

Closing Remarks

Considering all the declarations, statements and announcements made by Polish politicians and by the government of the Republic of Poland, it is difficult to say whether Poland is really interested in the development of the Common European Security and Defence Policy concept and its practical implementation. Warsaw does not consider the CESDP to be defined with sufficient clarity and wants to make sure it does not harm Poland's vital national interests. Warsaw is looking for solid security guarantees, which it believes can be provided mainly by NATO; however, the government also wants to ensure sustainable growth of the country's economy, which depends on Poland's future membership in the European Union. Any rivalry between Europe and the United States may hinder the attainment of the two objectives. For this reason, Poland wants to see the West as a

⁵⁵ The Government Statement on Directions of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland Presented by his Excellency Prof. Bronisław Geremek the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the 78th Session of the Parliament on May 9th, 2000, URL <http://www.msz.pl/expose2000.html>

⁵⁶ Joint Statement of the Chairmen of the Committees of the Foreign Affairs, of the Defence and of the European Integration of the Parliaments of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland adopted at their 6th meeting, Warsaw 2000 (December 17-18), URL <http://www.visegrad.org>.

coherent system, for which NATO and the EU are equally necessary partners, ready to cooperate closely with each other. However, such a vision of the Western system does not correspond to the reality of post-Cold War Europe. The more the collapse of the Eastern block recedes into the past, the sharper the differences of interests within NATO will become. The logic of European integration has already reached the stage, in which the European Union is ready to support its economic growth and political influence with significant military capability. These developments are carefully watched in Central Europe.

Generally speaking, Poland—like other Central European countries—shares the views of the EU, but is not ready yet to help the EU build an autonomous European defence system. It represents an eclectic approach, trying to maintain a precarious balance between the opposing poles of the Western system and vainly hoping that the EU will agree to subordinate its security and defence policy to the strategic interests of the United States. It is for this reason that Poland has called for an agreement between the EU and NATO to implement the CESDP so as to avoid the duplication of military capabilities.

Misgivings about tight integration within the European Union—which would include security and defence, traditionally considered indispensable to sovereignty—are an important factor influencing Poland’s position on the newly-proclaimed CESDP. Most Central European countries prefer a Europe consisting of nations, rather than a federation.⁵⁷ The views held by the leaders of “Solidarity” confirm this statement. The speech on European federation delivered by Joschka Fischer in May 2000 was sharply criticised in Poland.

It needs to be stated clearly that Poland’s position is quite unique. The reason behind Warsaw’s decision to support a concept of European integration opposite to that promoted by Germany has to do with its difficult history. Like the Baltic countries, it does not trust Russian policy. It welcomed the strong security guarantees provided by NATO. As the national security guarantees provided by Poland’s West European allies (France and Great Britain) before the second World War turned out to be of little value, the country is

⁵⁷ Cf. M. Jopp, “Developing a European Security and Defence Identity: the Specific Input of Present and Future New Members”, [in:] F. Algieri, J. Janning, D. Rumberg (eds.), *Managing Security in Europe: the European Union and the challenge of enlargement*, Gütersloh 1996, p. 76.

suspicious of current defence plans of Western Europe and prefers the more solid guarantees furnished by the American presence in Europe. Therefore, Poland's position seems to be justified.

Poland announced at the Capabilities Commitment Conference held in Brussels in November 2000 that it would participate in the military forces organised by the European Union, but only on the condition that this would not entail any additional costs over and above its NATO commitments. Bronisław Komorowski, the Minister of the National Defence of the Republic of Poland, announced in Brussels that Poland would contribute an "auxiliary brigade", but he did not specify the number of soldiers. He stressed, however, that the proposed brigade is the same one as that already pledged for NATO operations. He also reserved the right for Poland to decide in each case individually whether to take part in an EU military operation or not.⁵⁸ Poland's reluctance to accept the new Union policy was further corroborated by a statement made by the Polish defence minister. He said that since "the milk has already been spilt" and the idea of European military force is gaining momentum, Poland "must secure a proper place for itself in this concept."⁵⁹

Its brusque behaviour notwithstanding, Poland is well aware that its security interests must be reconciled with its economic needs and the aspirations of its population, which depend on the country's membership in the European Union. The EU has many supporters in Poland. This was evident during the parliamentary debate on the orientation of Polish foreign policy, held in May 2000. Many MPs from the opposition SLD party were opposed to the strongly pro-American stance of the right-wing AWS government and called for the choice of the "European option" in foreign policy. The coming parliamentary elections scheduled for the autumn of 2001 will determine the consequences of this. The future holds the answer to the question.

Source: *Stosunki Międzynarodowe*, nr 1-2/2001, p. 75-97.

⁵⁸ "Udział bez entuzjazmu", *Rzeczpospolita*, November 22, 2000.

⁵⁹ Ibid.