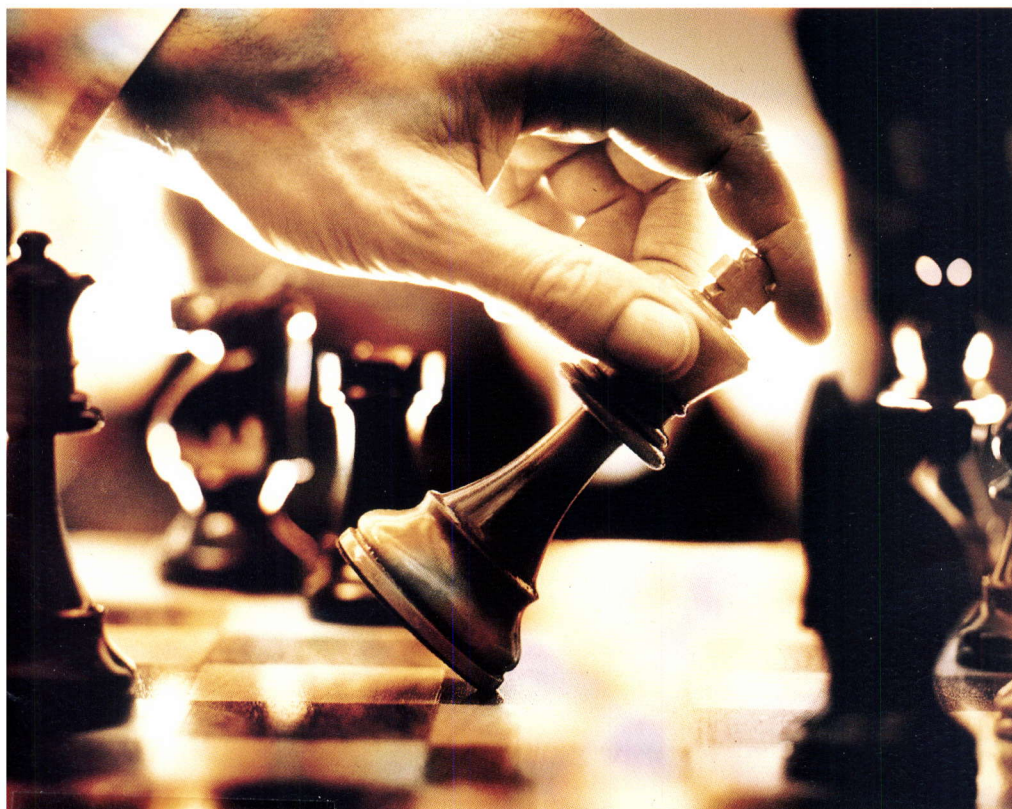
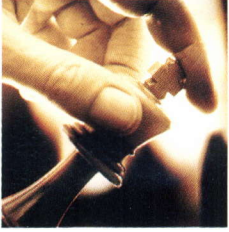


THE EUROPEAN UNION'S COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY



Europe
on the move



The European Union is increasingly being called upon to be a political player on the international scene. The need for a common foreign policy for its 15 Member States is dictated not only by the close international trade relationships which now exist. The end of the Cold War and the emergence of new conflicts in Europe and neighbouring regions make it vital for the European Union to develop a foreign and security policy identity. The political agenda for Europe adopted by the Madrid European Council in December 1995 identifies the foreign policy challenges which the Union will face in the years ahead: enlargement negotiations with Cyprus and Malta and the associated countries of the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe, continuing policy of dialogue, cooperation and partnership with the Union's neighbours, in particular Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and Mediterranean countries, and the establishment of a European-wide security system. Other points on the agenda include transatlantic cooperation, cultivation of the Union's traditional relationship with the African, Caribbean and Pacific States and closer relations with Asia and Latin America.

From political cooperation to a common policy

Cooperation on foreign policy matters and coordination of Member States' national foreign policies was organized on the basis of *European political cooperation (EPC)* in the early 1970s, giving a political dimension to the European Community's growing economic importance. Europe gradually began to assume its international responsibilities in certain areas through mutual information and cooperation. Member States' diplomatic efforts *to speak with one voice* began to bear fruit. Contacts between Member States' foreign ministries and embassies steadily increased. Closer political cooperation fostered tolerance and understanding for different viewpoints. The Euro-

pean Community and its Member States took the lead within the CSCE and were instrumental in promoting East-West rapprochement. The Community expanded and consolidated its relations with Asia, Latin America and the Far East.

EPC did not, however, always run smoothly. Member States' national interests often stood in the way of a common approach. Inadequate procedures, the need for unanimity and the lack of a legal framework also prevented the Union from reacting swiftly to international events.

The Treaty on European Union

The *Treaty on European Union*, which was approved in Maastricht in December 1991 and came into force on 1 November 1993, establishes three pillars for the European Union: the three existing European Communities Treaties (ECSC, EC and Euratom Treaties) with new provisions on common foreign and security policy (Title V, Articles J to J.11) and on cooperation on justice and home affairs. Neither justice and home affairs nor common foreign and security policy (CFSP) fall within the European Communities' jurisdiction. Since they are considered to be key areas of national sovereignty they continue to be organized on the basis of intergovernmental cooperation rather than at Community level.



Reforms were introduced at various stages to correct this political cooperation deficit. A major step forward was the Single European Act amending the Treaties establishing the then European Community, which came into force in 1987 and, for the first time, incorporated foreign and security policy cooperation.

Players and decision-making procedures

The *European Council*, in which the Heads of State and Government of the Member States and the President of the Commission meet, defines the principles of and general guidelines for CFSP. The *Council of Foreign Ministers*, which meets at least once a month, adopts the decisions defining and implementing CFSP on the basis of these principles and guidelines. The Council is assisted by the Political Committee, which comprises the Political Directors, who are senior officials from Member States' foreign ministries, and the Commission, and by working parties. The Presidency of the Council is held by the Member States in turn on a six-month rotating basis. The President-in-office together with the preceding and successive Presidencies forms the so-called *Troika*.

The Treaty on European Union

The objectives of CFSP are laid down in Article J.1(2) of the Maastricht Treaty:

- to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests and independence of the Union;
- to strengthen the security of the Union and its Member States in all ways;
- to preserve peace and strengthen international security;
- to promote international cooperation;
- to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Member States of the EU commit themselves to supporting the Union's external and security policy 'actively and unreservedly in the spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity' and to refrain from any action which is contrary to the interests of the European Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations (Article J.1(4)).

The *European Commission* is fully associated with the work carried out in the field of common foreign and security policy and represents the Union at international level on these matters (Articles J.9 and J.5(1) of the

The Heads of State and Government of the 15 Members of the European Union (shown here with their Foreign Ministers) and the President of the European Commission meeting in Madrid for the European Council in December 1995 adopted the political agenda for Europe which defines foreign and security policy objectives into the 21st century.



In July 1994 the European Union took over administration of the Bosnian city of Mostar (which has some 70 000 inhabitants) under international agreements in order to promote peace, the coexistence of ethnic groups and reconstruction of the city. This is the EU's first attempt of this kind to support efforts to stabilize peace. The EU administration has built bridges, schools, housing and hospitals in the city, 60% of which had been destroyed and where there was no running water or electricity. It has also re-established the city's public transport, telephone and energy supply networks. The European Union has provided over ECU 140 million since 1994.



Treaty on European Union). It shares the right with Member States to put proposals to the Council for decision. This right of participation is an expression of the Council's and Commission's joint responsibility for ensuring consistency in the Union's external policy (Article C, second paragraph, of the Treaty on European Union), i.e. for coordinating common foreign and security policy and the external aspects of the European Communities' economic and development policies. Within the Commission, responsibility for CFSP is shared by the Commission President with another Member of the Commission to whom Directorate-General IA, which is responsible, *inter alia*, for CFSP matters, reports. Responsibility for foreign affairs within the Commission is divided on a geographical basis: Directorate-General I is responsible for North America, the Far East, China, Australia and New Zealand, Directorate-General IA for Europe including Turkey, the Independent States of the former Soviet Union and Mongolia and for CFSP, Directorate-General IB for the Southern Mediterranean, the Middle East, Latin America, South and South-East Asia and Directorate-General VIII for

the African, Caribbean and Pacific States. ECHO (European Community Humanitarian Office) deals with matters relating to humanitarian aid within the Commission.

The *European Parliament* is kept regularly informed by the Council Presidency and the Commission about CFSP developments. The European Parliament may ask questions of the Council or make recommendations to it and holds an annual debate on the CFSP. There is an ongoing dialogue on topical foreign affairs issues between the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy and the Commission. The Committee holds regular discussions with the Council Presidency to ensure that the European Parliament's views are 'duly taken into consideration' by the Council. Members of the European Parliament may also participate in European Union delegations at international conferences. A question time on foreign and security policy is held at each monthly part-session.

Parliament has subcommittees which deal with human rights, security and disarmament. It maintains contacts with many non-Community countries through its interparliamentary delegations. Observer delegations have been sent to monitor elections in Russia and the Palestinian Territories. Parliament regularly raises human rights violations and comments on current international crises in its emergency debates. It has repeatedly called on the Member States to adopt a consistent common position. Parliamentarians have a particular interest in Central and Eastern Europe's accession to the EU, the peace process in the former Yugoslavia and stability and security in the Mediterranean region.



Gamma



South light/Gamma

The European Parliament has helped to promote democracy in countries such as Russia and South Africa by sending observer delegations to monitor elections.

Security policy

It was in Maastricht in 1991 that Member States agreed for the first time to include security and defence matters in the Treaty. CFSP covers all matters which affect the EU's security and, in the longer term, will include the framing of a common defence policy which might eventually lead to

The WEU has provided a 180-strong police force for the EU administration of Mostar to assist Bosnian and Croatian police officers from the Bosnian Federation in protecting freedom of movement and security within the city. The police officers come from 12 of the 15 Member States of the European Union.



EU-Administration Mostar

a common defence (Article J.4(1) of the Treaty on European Union). The present Union, which counts neutral and non-aligned countries among its members, is not, however, a defence alliance and does not have any military structures. Decisions and measures with defence policy implications are prepared and implemented, at the Union's request, by the Western European Union (WEU) in which Member States of the Union are represented either as members or as observers. This Western European alliance, which was established in 1954, evolved from the Brussels Treaty Organization founded in 1948. It now forms an integral part of the EU's development. According to the wishes of its members, which belong to both the EU and NATO, it will form both the European Union's defence component and assume the role of NATO's European pillar. This is in keeping with the EU Treaty, which requires European Union security policy to take account of policy established by NATO. In 1992 the WEU confirmed NATO's responsibility for collective self-defence and formally decided to confine its operations to peacemaking and peacekeeping, crisis management and protection for humanitarian operations (Petersberg tasks). One example of the WEU's role can be seen in the police contingent it provided for the European Union's joint action on the administration of the Bosnian city of Mostar.

Common positions

The Council may define a *common position* (Article J.2(2) of the Treaty on European Union) laying down guidelines for national policies and a basis for a concerted approach. Member States support these common positions at international conferences and within international organizations. A common European voice has become a decisive factor within the UN and the OSCE. Member States are increasingly aligning their voting strategies and non-Community countries often base their positions on that of the European Union.

Joint actions

Another decision-making instrument within the Council is *joint action* (Article J.3 of the Treaty on European Union). This differs from a common position in that it forms a basis for a common Union approach at international level rather than simply setting the ground plan for Member States' national foreign policies. Its scope, objectives, resources and procedures have, therefore, to be very carefully defined. A joint action is binding on the Member States and may only be deviated from under special circumstances. The Presidency is responsible for implementing joint action. The details of joint action for which the Presidency is responsible may be decided by a qualified majority. Joint action has been taken on the former Yugoslavia, to support the Middle East peace process and democratic transition in South Africa, on the control of exports of dual-use (civilian and military) goods, arms control and the Non-Proliferation Treaty.



Commissioner Marín with Yasser Arafat.

Common statements

The European Union also regularly issues *common statements* on international developments. The Union can use its political and economic weight to influence political events through such public declarations. The Union often uses this channel to give its initial reaction to internal political developments in certain countries, human rights issues or current conflicts.

Humanitarian aid is an important component of European foreign policy.

ECHO (European Community Humanitarian Office) provides assistance in crisis flashpoints to reduce tensions and help victims until a political solution can be found to relieve their situation. In most cases ECHO works in close collaboration with diplomats and international organizations. Here it can be seen in Somalia but it also operates in Rwanda, Burundi and other crisis areas in Africa, in the former Yugoslavia, Chechnya and many other countries.



CFSP

Reform of the CFSP

An Intergovernmental Conference has been meeting since March 1996 to discuss reform of the European Union. An important objective of this Conference is to find ways of improving the operational efficiency of common foreign and security policy. The Commission has undertaken an analysis of the CFSP's achievements and has presented its conclusions and proposals for reform to the Intergovernmental Conference.

The Treaty on European Union calls on the Union to assert its identity on the international scene. The greater influence the Member States might bring to bear through concerted action has eluded them as they still, in many cases, continue to act independently.

The Intergovernmental Conference has a simple and clear objective: to enable the European Union to act instead of simply reacting, in order to defend the interests of its citizens better.

Areas in which varying degrees of common uniform foreign policy exist are trade, economic assistance and humanitarian aid. Other areas such as common foreign and security policy are still at a very early stage.

A stronger common foreign and security policy

A common foreign and security policy will not be established unless there is political resolve on the part of the Member States and clear objectives are set.

The Council Presidency and the Commission must work together if this policy is to have a hope of getting off the ground. Procedures from the preparation to the adoption and implementation of decisions need to be refined. The Presidency and the Commission must act in a coordinated and efficient fashion. The Commission is working on its own procedures to meet this challenge. The Conference must therefore consider how the Presidency, which is served by the Council Secretariat, can be strengthened.

Financing the CFSP

The administrative costs arising from CFSP are borne by the European Communities' budget. Operational expenditure is met either from the Community budget or from Member States' contributions at the Council's discretion. In practice it is also being increasingly financed by the Community budget.

Preparation of decisions

Decisions must be undertaken on the basis of more detailed analysis carried out jointly by the Member States of the Union.

A joint analysis unit made up of experts from Member States and the Commission should be set up. This common forum, to which the Western European Union might also contribute, would provide the Presidency and the Council with valuable assistance in the preparation of coordinated proposals.

Adoption of decisions

In the Commission's view, qualified majority voting should become the rule rather than the exception in common foreign and security policy. Special rules will, however, be required for aspects with military implications.

A small group of Member States may act together in certain situations in certain areas. Such initiatives should also come under the mantle of the European Union provided they are appropriate and are compatible with the Union's general interests.

Creation of a European identity on security and defence matters

The Union's foreign policy suffers from its inability to project credible military force. Events in recent years have made this abundantly clear. A genuine European identity in the security and defence field is indispensable. It requires clear political will on the part of Member States.

The European Parliament considers its right to be consulted under the Treaty far from observed in practice. It has called for the procedures for such consultation to be defined by interinstitutional agreement. MEPs believe the intergovernmental character of CFSP is responsible for the European Union's failure to play a coordinated and effective role on the international stage. Abolition of the unanimity rule for CFSP is therefore one of the European Parliament's central demands for the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference.

NATO remains at the centre of Europe's defence arrangements, and a European pillar should be developed in it. In this context, the WEU plays a key role as already set out in the Treaty. As matters stand, Member States do not, however, have the same defence commitments in relation to NATO and the WEU.

The Commission believes that a proper common foreign and security policy has to extend to common defence.

Signing of the Dayton Accord on Bosnia in the Elysée Palace in December 1995.





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A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu.int>).

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