

## **For the Sake of ‘Peace and Security’?**

### **- The Role of Security in the EU Enlargement Eastwards -**

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#### 1 Introduction

In the process of the EU enlargement eastward, security mattered. In particular, security mattered as a discourse in this process. ‘European peace and security’ thesis has been built up and established as one of the most important *overarching rationales* of the EU enlargement eastwards: decisive measures and policy instruments for the eastern enlargement have strongly been called ~~to~~<sup>for</sup> in the name of European peace and security. Security arguments have provided the EU with justifications for their decisions concerning enlargement. Security justifications have often been behind the important breakthroughs in the enlargement process. This paper analyses discourses appeared in the course of EU enlargement and claims that security arguments has been at the core of those discourses.

The Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 declared the finale of the process of the EU enlargement eastwards. It formally agreed to accept eight Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) and two Mediterranean countries as members of the Union by 2004, while setting 2007 as the target year for accession of Romania and Bulgaria. At the press conference after the European Council, Anders Fogh Rasmussen,

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the Danish Prime Minister and the President of the Council, solemnly declared: 'Today we have closed one of the bloodiest and darkest chapters in European history ... Our new Europe is born.'<sup>2</sup> Other EU leaders, as well as those of the candidate countries, equally heralded the agreement at Copenhagen as a most remarkable achievement; the eastern enlargement was about putting an end to the artificial division of the Cold War era in Europe and thus extending the European zone of peace and security to the eastern part of Europe.

Security has been referred to almost consistently and with increasing frequency throughout the period 'from Copenhagen to Copenhagen', from the time that the EU decided to open itself to its neighbours in Eastern Europe in June 1993, to the time when it formally concluded the accession negotiations with 10 candidate countries in December 2002. The EU leaders have justified their decision on enlargement by making reference to uncertainties and insecurities on the European continent and by claiming that enlargement to the East could be the way to achieve and maintain peace and security in Europe. It is indeed rare to see any statement from the EU and its leaders with no reference to peace, stability and security as a rationale for this enlargement. Enlargement is about to 'lend a positive contribution to security and stability on the European continent.'<sup>3</sup> The purpose of enlargement is 'to create a Europe in which all the peoples of this continent can live together in peace, security, freedom, justice and equality.'<sup>4</sup> Without it, 'Western Europe will always be faced with the threat of instability, conflict and mass migration on its borders ... Should that happen, we would all lose.'<sup>5</sup>

However, it is legitimate to doubt whether such statements - enlargement for the sake of European peace and security - can be interpreted as more than diplomatic lip-service. At least two conventional views on enlargement seem to underscore the doubt towards 'EU enlargement for security' thesis. First, technical and economic issues did seem to have dominated the whole process of accession negotiations. The latest example was the round-up negotiations before and at the Copenhagen European Council,

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<sup>2</sup> Speech by Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 16 December 2002. available at <http://www.europa.eu.int>

<sup>3</sup> Conclusions of the Presidency, Helsinki European Council, 10 and 11 December 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Speech by Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission on enlargement European Parliament Brussels, 13 October 1999, SPEECH/99/130. Available at <http://www.europa.eu.int>

<sup>5</sup> Speech by Prime Minister Tony Blair, to the Polish Stock Exchange, 06 October 2000. Available at <http://www.fco.gov.uk>

the hardest issue of which to solve was to agree on how to 'finance' this enlargement; how much money should go to which candidate countries and to which sectors. The Copenhagen meeting was not the only example: economic issues, from the opening up of the EU market to the CEECs to the amount of money to prepare for enlargement, have always been the most contentious problem, thus making enlargement such a lingering process. It is therefore entirely legitimate to doubt whether security concerns had actually any role to play in this highly technical and cost-conscious process.

Second, the EU has long been criticised for its apparent reluctance to enlarge eastwards. In particular in the early 1990s, there was almost a consensus within academia that the policy could only be described as 'a conglomeration of discrete activities than the result of a well-developed strategy'<sup>6</sup>, 'dilatatory, technical and ad hoc'<sup>7</sup>, 'disjointed incrementalism'<sup>8</sup> or, more importantly, having been undertaken with 'no sense of urgency'.<sup>9</sup> Again, it might be fair to argue that, if enlargement had been about security, it should have been undertaken with more sense of urgency.

However, a closer look at the enlargement process provides some significant counterargument for these scepticisms. As for the first point, 'European peace and security' thesis has been built up as one of the most important overarching rationales of this enlargement. Most of the crucial decisions were made in the name of the European peace and security, while economic concerns dominated the arguments about the ways to implement them. In other words, bluntly put, security arguments were largely about the questions of *whether*, *why* and *with whom*. Conversely, economic arguments were mostly about the question of *how*. Security was about the principle, and economy about the details. Needless to say, both aspects were equally important in the enlargement process. However, what needed to be emphasised here is the fact that security and stability in Europe became an overarching rationales for the EU's decision to enlarge.

As for the second point, it is true that the attitude of the EU towards enlargement was a distinctively reluctant one. However, security concerns played a significant role in urging EU leaders to modify their previous reluctance and to renew their strategies for

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<sup>6</sup> Kramer, H., 'The European Community's Response to the "New Eastern Europe"', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31:2 (1993), pp.213-244., esp.p.221.

<sup>7</sup> Lippert, B., 'EU Enlargement: Comparing US and European Approaches, Interests and Roles', in Leech, J (ed.), *Whole and Free: NATO, EU and Transatlantic Relations* (London: Federal Trust, 2002), pp. 27-47. esp. p. 32.

<sup>8</sup> Wallace, W., *Opening the Door: the Enlargement of NATO and the European Union* (London: Centre for European Reform, 1996), p.4.

<sup>9</sup> Grabbe, H., and Hughes, K., *Enlarging the EU Eastwards* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1998), p.2.

enlargement. To a great extent, security concerns played a role to bring 'constructiveness' into this process. The decisions at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 which marked crucial changes in the EU enlargement strategy are the most glaring example of this.

Therefore, the relationship between enlargement and security concerns is indeed a key to understand this highly complex enlargement process. The issue of how security concerns emerged in the debate on enlargement among EU leaders and how these concerns led to each decision on enlargement need to be further explored, in order to follow the logic, rationales and rhetoric of creating a new European order. However, much of the existing literature on the EU enlargement has not fully discussed this linkage of security and enlargement. Literature on EU enlargement shed light on economic aspects of it, and literature on European security has not seriously considered EU enlargement as its objective.<sup>10</sup>

This paper addresses this gap by assessing when, how and why security mattered in the process of EU enlargement. In other words, it traces the origins of the arguments in the EU debate on enlargement and analyses how they became part of the successful strategy to justify decisions on enlargement.

The first section of this paper introduces theoretical debates concerning the concept of security and how it can be applied to EU enlargement. The main argument of this paper is that the 'security' in the context of the EU enlargement does not necessarily come in a military form, but in what I will refer as a 'speech act', drawing on insights by the Copenhagen School of security studies. The second section provides an overview of the enlargement process from 1993 to 2002, namely from the start of the enlargement process to its conclusion with the ten candidate countries, and analyses how the process leading to the eastern enlargement of the EU and European security issues were discursively linked by various EU leaders, and how such discourse has been used to justify radical measures on enlargement. Then this paper concludes by considering what the specific role of the security concerns in the eastern enlargement have been and how security arguments became part of a successful strategy of justifying enlargement.

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<sup>10</sup> There are, however, examples of works which have provided arguments on link between security concerns and EU enlargement. See Lippert, B., et al., *British and German Interests in EU Enlargement: Conflict and Cooperation* (London and New York: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001); Missiroli, A (ed.), *Bigger EU, Wider CFSP, Stronger EDSP?: The View from Central Europe*, Institute for Security Studies, Occasional Papers, No.3, April 2002; Smith, K., *The Making of EU Foreign Policy: The Case of Eastern Europe*, (London: Macmillan, 1999); Wallace, W., *Opening the Door: the Enlargement of NATO and the European Union*.

It should be added that this paper does not deal with the cases of three of the candidate countries, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, since the nature of the security issues concerning those three countries is completely different from those of the CEECs. Also, for the sake of the clarity of arguments, this paper focuses on the security arguments which emerged *within* the EU, not from the CEECs.

## 2 Conceptualising Security and EU Enlargement

What does security mean, in particular in the context of EU enlargement? Before considering this question, it might be worth considering how the following description is to be understood:

‘The idea of EU enlargement has acquired a new impetus over the past year. One of the key lessons of the Kosovo crisis is the need to achieve peace and security, democracy and the rule of law, growth and the foundations of prosperity throughout Europe. Enlargement is the best way to do this. There is now a greater awareness of the strategic dimension to enlargement.’<sup>11</sup>

This type of argument, ‘EU enlargement for the sake of security and peace in Europe’, can be found elsewhere in the discourse of European leaders, in particular from the late 1990s.<sup>12</sup> For those who advocate that the scope of security should remain within ‘the phenomenon of war’,<sup>13</sup> such statements might sound no more than empty rhetoric: for them, anything that does not imply the use of force should not be regarded as ‘security’, and extending the membership of a regional organisation such as the EC/ EU, which has largely been regarded as an economic and political body, is something far from the use of force. Accordingly, they might make an *a priori* judgement that such a phenomenon should not be labelled a ‘security’ issue. Conversely, however, once we accept that the term ‘security’ in such discourses might imply something broader than the ‘threat, use,

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<sup>11</sup> European Commission, *Composite Paper: Reports on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries*, 13 October 1999.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, speech by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to the Romanian Parliament, Bucharest, Romania, Tuesday 4 May 1999. Speech transcript provided by the E-media Unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

<sup>13</sup> Walt, S., ‘The Renaissance of Security Studies’, *International Studies Quarterly* 35 (1991), p.211-239. p.212. For similar views, see Chipman, J., ‘The Future of Strategic Studies’, *Survival*, 34:1 (1990), pp.109-131; Nye, J and Lynn-Jones, S., ‘International Security Studies’, *International Security*, 12:4 (1988), pp.5-27.

and control of military force', and presume that it might be possible for the European leaders to perceive EU enlargement eastwards as a solution of European security problems, then such discourses might gain a significant currency.

Concepts developed by the 'Copenhagen school' (CS) –usually represented by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver – could be a useful analytical tool in this context. Among others, the 'security as a speech act' approach (the 'securitisation' approach), which is at the core of the Copenhagen School, is particularly useful for exploring 'the logic of security'.<sup>14</sup> The following paragraphs will therefore introduce the basic assumptions behind the Copenhagen approach to security studies.

First of all, the CS rejects the objective definition of security. Security is not a concept with a fixed meaning, and therefore it cannot be objectively defined. The CS claims that, 'in any case, it is neither politically nor analytically helpful to try to define "real security" outside of the world of politics and to teach the actors to understand the term correctly'.<sup>15</sup> Rather, 'the sense of threat, vulnerability and (in)security are socially constructed rather than objectively present or absent.'<sup>16</sup>

What, then, is security? According to the CS, security is about 'survival in the face of existential threat'.<sup>17</sup> At a first glance, such a concept seems to be exactly the same as the traditionalists' concept. However, the CS goes one step further to present a perspective that security is a 'speech act'.<sup>18</sup> Something becomes a security issue when it is named as one. In other words, security is the 'move' that takes politics 'beyond the

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<sup>14</sup> Buzan, B., Wæver, O., and de Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998) p.4.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, pp.31-32.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p.57.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p.27.

<sup>18</sup> Wæver, O., 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p.54. According to Fierke and Wiener, there is a long tradition of speech act theory, which has recently begun to seep into IR theory. The ideas at the core of this theory are the following. First, certain categories of speech do not simply describe or convey information, but are acts in and of themselves. Acts of this kind are referred to as 'performatives'. Saying something is doing something. Second, speech acts are dependent on a context for their meaning. Third, speech acts do not necessarily presuppose any face-to-face communications. All that matters is that the content of the speech act is conveyed by one party to another. For further arguments, see Fierke, K.M, and Wiener A., 'Constructing Institutional Interests: EU and NATO enlargement', in Christiansen, T., Jørgensen, K. E., and Wiener, A., *The Social Construction of Europe* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001), pp.127-8. Also see, Kratochwil, F., *Rules, Norms and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

established rules of game' and frames the issue either as 'a special kind of politics' or 'above politics', thus elevating the issue to 'absolute priority'.<sup>19</sup>

Security issues are acknowledged by acts of 'securitisation'.<sup>20</sup> This means that 'the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures (or extraordinary means) and justifying actions outside the normal politics.' This occurs when 'securitising actors'<sup>21</sup> (who are typically 'a state-representatives' or more broadly, the 'political elite'<sup>22</sup>) name something as an 'existential threat', and therefore claim that, since dealing with such threat is urgent, they need 'a special right' to deal with the issues through an 'extraordinary means' to break 'the normal political rules of the game'. This speech act is called a 'securitising move'. If and when the 'audience' does accept it as such, securitisation is regarded to be successful.<sup>23</sup> Here, distinction between 'securitising move' and '(successful) securitisation' is important. 'Securitising move' is about *presentation* or *dramatisation*, whereas securitisation is a *consequence* of such move.

Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde argue that 'security' or 'securitisation' should not be seen as necessarily good. They disagree with a widely shared view such as 'the more security, the better', because, according to them, security can be seen as a failure to deal with issues as 'normal politics'.<sup>24</sup> Security is, at best, 'a kind of stabilisation of conflictual and threatening relations'.<sup>25</sup> It is for this reason that they propose the concept of 'desecuritisation' as the 'long-range optimal option'.<sup>26</sup> 'Desecuritisation' means 'not to have issues phrased as "threats against which we have countermeasures", but to move them out of this threat-defence sequence and into the ordinary public sphere.'<sup>27</sup> To put it simpler, it is 'the shifting of the issues out of the emergency model and into the normal bargaining process of the political sphere'.<sup>28</sup> The CP implies that 'securitising move' can end up either with 'securitisation' or with 'desecuritisation', depending partly on the contexts and partly on the nature of the 'extraordinary means' that the move is calling for.

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<sup>19</sup> Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, p.23, p.176.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, p.204.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*, p.24.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*, p.29.

<sup>23</sup> Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, p.25.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*, p.29.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*, p.4.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*, p.29.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*, p.4.

They suggest that the most outstanding example of desecuritisation is European integration, in particular after the end of the Cold War: a considerable number of speeches that urge to push integration forward were made by various actors, in order to dissuade the publics of the EU from going down a dangerous path towards a fragmented Europe. The initial euphoria after the end of the Cold War faded, and scepticism and distrust towards integration were suddenly observed elsewhere in Western European countries, mainly driven by deep economic recession, the monetary crisis in certain countries and their inability to respond the series of crises in Yugoslavia. In order to remove such pessimism from integration, European elites have invoked threats such as the fragmentation of the EU, the rise of nationalism, or in more extreme cases, a return to Europe's previous balance-of-power system and war. Indeed, '[t]he first and foremost threat articulated in securitisation within the EU is Europe's own past.'<sup>29</sup> In order not to allow Europe's own past to become its future, integration was made an aim in itself, and an explicit link between security and integration has been made.<sup>30</sup> 'By adding the security argument, integration gains urgency because its alternative is a self-propelling process that by definition will destroy "Europe" as a project and reopen the previous insecurity caused by balance of power, nationalism and war. Integration gains a grammatical form closer to security logic.'<sup>31</sup> In sum, according to CS, the whole enterprise of European integration is the most glaring example of desecuritisation.

In spite of some shortcomings,<sup>32</sup> this concept made at least two outstanding contributions to security studies. Above all, by focusing on a 'special rhetorical structure'<sup>33</sup> as a condition for something to become a security issue, it successfully

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<sup>29</sup> Diez, T., 'The Imposition of Governance: Transforming Foreign Policy through EU Enlargement', *COPRI Working Papers*, (2001), p.6

<sup>30</sup> For examples of such speeches by European leaders, Wæver and his colleagues list the following materials: Santer, J., 'Speech to the European Parliament – January 17, 1995, *Debate of the European Parliament*, no.4-456, Luxembourg, Official Publication of the European Community, pp.13-20; Mitterand, F., 'Programme of the French Presidency', speech in the European Parliament, *Debate of the European Parliament*, no.4-456, pp.45-52. A

<sup>31</sup> Buzan, B., Wæver, O., and de Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, p.179-191, esp.p.187. Also see, Wæver, O., 'Securitization and Desecuritization', p.71-75; Wæver, O., 'European Security Identities', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 34:1 (1996), pp.103-132. pp.120-128.

<sup>32</sup> Examples of criticisms of Wæver are; Knudsen, O. F., 'Post-Copenhagen Security Studies: Desecuritizing securitization' *Security Dialogue*, 32:3 (2001), pp.355-368; McSweeney, B., 'Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School', *Review of International Studies*, 22:1 (1999), pp.81-93.

<sup>33</sup> Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, p.26.



presented ‘the solution to the problem involved in broadening the definition of *security* without thereby robbing it of its analytical utility.’<sup>34</sup> As Adrian Hyde-Price states, it ‘can function as a tool to finding security actors and phenomena in sectors other than the military-political one, where it is often hard to define when to include new issues on the security agenda.’<sup>35</sup> Also, by putting more emphasis than any other approach on the policy-makers’ security logic, this approach stimulates the thought that any policy which has security implications is ‘not given by “nature”, but ‘chosen by politicians and decision-makers who have an interest in defining it in just that way.’<sup>36</sup>

As this paper will demonstrate, when one takes a close look at discourses concerning EU enlargement, security arguments stand out both in quality and quantity. In order to scrutinise these arguments which largely went unheeded in the existing literature of enlargement, ‘security as a speech act’ approach (the ‘securitisation’ approach) could serve as an important analytical tool. There are at least three specific reasons why this approach is advantageous for analysing security argument in EU enlargement. First, shifting of the definitions, concepts, objectives and means of security has often been observed at the various stages of EU enlargement. European security was, in one case, associated with the modernisation of the economies of CEECs.<sup>37</sup> In other case, it was associated with the solution to border conflicts and minority problems between the CEECs.<sup>38</sup> For such cases, Wæver’s approach allows us to see how certain problems have been discursively constructed as a security issue.

Second, observing discourses in the EU, from speeches of the individual EU leaders to statements of EU level such as Presidency Conclusions, one would be aware of the existence of a distinctive rhetorical structure that urges the enlargement process to advance. In other words, three analytical elements of ‘securitising moves’ (‘securitising actors’, ‘existential threats’ and ‘extraordinary measures’) are well in place in those discourses. The ‘securitising actors’ in the EU – leaders of the EU member countries and institutions who directly involve in and are responsible for the enlargement policy-making – made ‘securitising moves’ to identify various ‘existential threats’ to European security and to designate EU enlargement as an ‘extraordinary means’ to

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<sup>34</sup> Hyde-Price, A., “Beware the Jabberwock!: Security Studies in the Twenty-First Century”, in Gärtner, H., Hyde-Price, A., and Reiter, E., *Europe’s New Security* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), p. 39. Emphasis in original.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Knudsen, ‘Post-Copenhagen Security Studies’, p.359.

<sup>37</sup> The Conclusion of the Presidency, Copenhagen European Council, 21 and 22 June 1993.

<sup>38</sup> Balladur, E., et Kohl, H., ‘Préparer la paix’, *Le Monde*, 17 Mai 1994.

prevent Europe from falling into catastrophe. Such speeches phrase enlargement as measure for Europe to survive. The ‘enlargement for the sake of peace and security’ thesis has largely been established as a justification for the decisions related to enlargement.

Third, the concept of ‘desecuritisation’ is particularly useful to explain the gap between the way that the eastern enlargement has been *presented* by EU leaders and the historical *nature* of EU enlargement. While securitising moves by EU leaders have presented enlargement as an ‘extraordinary means’ to rescue the European Continent from various threats, enlargement has actually been a ‘regular activity’ of the EU: ‘the issue of enlargement has been on the EU’s agenda almost since its inception’.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, successful securitising moves in the context of EU enlargement have brought ‘desecuritisation’: taking the issue out of ‘emergency model’ and dealing with it within ‘the normal bargaining process of the political sphere’.<sup>40</sup> EU leaders have deliberately used security rhetoric so that enlargement, ‘regular activity’ of the EU, could take place without failure. When such rhetoric was successfully accepted, it meant that ‘desecuritisation’ took place.

This section provided the overview on approaches on how the elusive link between security and EU enlargement is to be understood. On this basis, the next section will analyse how security concerns affected and formed the EU’s policy towards the CEECs. Firstly, it will shed light on rhetorical mechanism of ‘securitising moves’ made by EU leaders at each stage of enlargement process. In other words, it will explore what have been named as ‘existential threats’ and what measures have been called for as ‘extraordinary means’ to deal with such threats. Secondly, it will analyse the enlargement-related decisions which followed such moves. It will then conclude to claim that the series of speeches has successfully led to the ‘desecuritisation’ of Europe.

### 3. From Securitising Moves to Desecuritisation in the Eastern Enlargement: An Empirical Overview

It is worthwhile noting that the rhetorical structure of ‘securitising moves’ or ‘securitising speeches’ made by EU leaders has gone through few changes in the period ‘from Copenhagen to Copenhagen’. Also, those speeches existed almost constantly from the beginning of this process. Of course, the ‘existential threats’ designated in such

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<sup>39</sup> Croft, S., Redmond, J., Rees, W. G. and Webber, M., *The Enlargement of Europe* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), p.56.

<sup>40</sup> Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, p.4.

speeches have varied considerably in the course of enlargement: The existential threat could be addressed specifically such as actual turbulences (conflicts in the ex-Yugoslav republics and uncertainty in Russia)<sup>41</sup> or the potential threat (artificial dividing line<sup>42</sup> or the CEECs loosing their will to reform<sup>43</sup>) surrounding the EU and the candidate countries, or with vaguer term such as 'overall uncertainty in Europe'. Europe's own bitter past, 'a return to the unstable pre-war system', was also articulated as a threat.<sup>44</sup> In general, however, the most common expression has been that the EU would have to enlarge to grasp 'the chance to create a Europe in which all the peoples of this continent can live together in peace, security, freedom, justice and equality'.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, rhetorical structure to call for actions concerning eastern enlargement maintained a strikingly similar pattern: refer to various uncertainties as 'existential threats' and claim that EU enlargement would be an 'extraordinary means' to counter them.

What distinguishes securitising moves in each stage of the enlargement process are the degree of sense of urgency attached to these moves and the concrete objectives of such moves. Securitising moves have called for at least four different objectives in the eastern enlargement of the EU: (a) to persuade the reluctant member governments to accept that enlargement will be happening 'in the future'; (b) to create a implicit 'condition' to join the Union; (c) to select the countries to start the accession negotiations; (d) and finally to persuade the EU and in particular the EU citizens to accept that the enlargement would be an inevitable 'reality' and should happen without any delay. Accordingly, security concerns have exerted different influence and have created different outcomes in each stage of the enlargement process. Also, different sense of urgency produced different outcomes. The following sections will follow such emergence and consolidation of the security discourses in EU enlargement and trace how they affected crucial decisions on enlargement.

(a) *Early warnings for enlargement 'in the future' (1993-5)*

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<sup>41</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Towards a Closer Association with the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe*, SEC(93)648, 18 May 1993, p.3.

<sup>42</sup> John Major, 'Raise Your Eyes, There is a Land Beyond', *The Economist*, 25 September 1993.

<sup>43</sup> Speech by Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, at the European Parliament, Brussels, 13 October 1999, SPEECH/99/130. Available at <http://www/europe.eu.int>

<sup>44</sup> CDU/CSU, *Fraktion des Deutschen Bundestages, Überlegungen zur europäischen Politik*, 1 September 1994.

<sup>45</sup> Prodi, 13 October 1999.

In the earliest stage of the enlargement process, discourses on enlargement were largely about persuading the reluctant EU member states that eastern enlargement would be an inevitable future for the EU.

The earliest and strongest call to provide the CEECs a promise for their future accession came from the Commission. It was repeatedly calling for measures to go beyond the existing EC-CEECs relationship in its communications in December 1992 and May 1993. In particular, the latter, which also came up with a set of conditions to accede the EU that would later serve as a model for 'Copenhagen Criteria', was strongly calling for the EC to 'confirm, in a clear political message, its commitment to membership of the Union for Europe agreements signatories when they are able to satisfy the condition required.'<sup>46</sup> It argued that uncertainties within the CEECs could only be settled by giving them 'a clear perspective of their future participation in the process of the European Union'. It warned that the transformation of CEECs had reached 'a new, more difficult, stage' and 'the initial euphoria has given way to the hard task of making the reforms work.' Providing the prospect of the future accession would have at least three positive effects on the CEECs that were facing huge difficulties: first, it would 'strengthen their peoples' determination to press ahead with the reform'. Second, it would 'provide an element of stability against the background continuing turbulence in the former Soviet Union and the tragedy unfolding in the former Yugoslavia.' Third, it should 'diminish tension in a region where confidence and stability are suffering from the absence of *a viable security structure*. ... A greater sense of belonging to the process of European Integration will reduce feelings of insecurity and consequent tensions in the region, with gains for overall security and cooperation.'<sup>47</sup> Therefore, the communication by the Commission spelled out in a straightforward manner that, since the CEECs were facing various 'existential threats', the EU needed to provide them with the prospect of the future accession as an 'extraordinary measure' so that the CEECs would be able to overcome such threats.

At the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, the member states of the EU did exactly what the Commission suggested them to do without any major disputes. They agreed to refer to the future possibility of eastern enlargement without any substantial argument in the Presidency Conclusions. They also accepted the proposal from the Commission to establish conditions to become member countries of the EU. These

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<sup>46</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Towards a Closer Association with the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe*, p.3.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*, p.1-2. Emphasis added.

conditions, referred as the 'Copenhagen Criteria', which comprised three elements: (1) to achieve the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities (political criteria); (2) to have a functioning market economy, and to be able to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union (economic criteria); and (3) to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union (*aquis communautaire*).

However, such smooth agreements should not be taken as a sign that the EU member states shared the sense of urgency of the Commission. Rather, contrary to its clear articulation of the existential threats facing the CEECs, the extraordinary means which the Commission were calling for were not particularly difficult steps for the EU member states to take: showing their intention that enlargement could happen *some days in the future* and setting conditions for that. Inevitably, such promise did not show any substantial path towards the realisation of enlargement, and therefore seriously lacked credibility.<sup>48</sup>

Partly because of an obvious insufficiency of such promise, security discourses which called for further commitments for future enlargement intensified after the Copenhagen agreements. There were also a number of new developments which proceeded in parallel with such calls. For example, some of EU leaders have perceived uncertainties surrounding the CEECs, not least deteriorating situation in Bosnia and political turbulence in Russia. Also, the governments of the CEECs were rushing for the formal applications to the EU from the spring 1994. This made EU leaders extremely difficult to keep silent on that matter.

The common securitising moves made by the advocates of the eastern enlargement were to urge their reluctant counterparts within the EU to make a clear commitment for serious preparations for enlargement. Visiting Hungary to discuss her application to the EU, Jacques Delors, the President of the Commission, stated that 'post-Communism opened an era of instability whence the question of security ... The best possible solution is the accession to the Community, with Common Foreign and Security Policy'<sup>49</sup>. Leon Brittan, the Commissioner for external policy, warned in an interview to *Le Monde* that, if the countries that had concluded the European Agreements did not get a clear promise for the future enlargement, they would all come

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<sup>48</sup> For this point, see Mayhew, A., *Recreating Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.29.

<sup>49</sup> *Agence Europe*, No.6185, 7/8 March 1994.

under influence of Russia.<sup>50</sup>

Contribution by John Major, the then British Prime Minister, to the *Economist* magazine was another example of securitising move at that time.<sup>51</sup> Articulating the existence of ‘instability inside Europe and beyond’, he claimed: ‘If we fail to bring the democratic countries of Eastern and Central Europe into our Community, we risk recreating division in Europe – between haves and have-nots. Through Community membership we can consolidate democracy and prosperity across our continent. Without it, we risk turmoil among neighbours in Eastern and Central Europe and endanger our own long-term prosperity and stability.’<sup>52</sup>

What was characteristic for these securitising moves was, however, a clear lack of sense of urgency. Even though they made clear security arguments, they contained no specific timetables and modalities of future enlargement. A common message in those speeches was urge EU members to *react positively* for the desire of the CEECs to join the EU.

The only exception came from the German coalition in power, CDU and CSU, in September 1994. It is best known as proposing to create ‘core Europe’ among the 6 leading EU members. As for the EU enlargement eastwards, this paper called for it with the strongest possible wording: ‘The only solution which will prevent a return to the unstable pre-war system, with Germany once again caught in the middle between East and West, is to integrate Germany’s Central and Eastern neighbours into the European post-war system and to establish a wide-ranging partnership between this system and Russia. Never again must there be a destabilising vacuum of power in central Europe. If European integration were not to progress, Germany might be called upon, or tempted by its own security constraints, to try to effect the stabilisation of Eastern Europe on its own and in the traditional way.’ It therefore called for ‘enlargement by 2000’, with Visegrad countries and Slovenia.<sup>53</sup> However, such specific securitising move was

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<sup>50</sup> *Le Monde*, 19 juin, 1994.

<sup>51</sup> In general, the German and British officials were the keenest to associate this enlargement with an exercise to build safe and stable Europe. In April 1994, Douglas Hurd, British Foreign Secretary, and his German counterpart, Klaus Kinkel, contributed together to newspapers to claim that, for their countries, the most important item on the agenda of Europe for the following years was to extend into central and east of European continent the stability and prosperity which had been achieved in the west. *The Times*, 26 April, 1994; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 April, 1994.

<sup>52</sup> Major, J., ‘Raise your eyes, There is a Land Beyond’, *The Economist*, 25 September 1993.

<sup>53</sup> CDU/CSU, *Fraktion des Deutschen Bundestages, Überlegungen zur europäischen Politik*, 1 September 1994.

clearly an exception at that time. As argued, overwhelming majority of securitising speeches was moderate claim that the eastern enlargement had a rationale to happen.

At least chronologically, these arguments were followed by gradual but evident changes in the language of the Presidency Conclusions of each European Council: references to European peace and security have gradually been embedded in enlargement-related official statements of the EU. The Corfu European Council in June 1994 claimed that the EU was facing ‘multiple demands addressed to it to play an ever increasing role in promoting security and prosperity on our continent and beyond’.<sup>54</sup>

By the time of the Essen European Council in December 1994, a discursive practice that linked important enlargement-related decisions and European peace and security had been established in the wordings of the Presidency Conclusions. For example, the Essen European Council officially decided to embark on the programme now known as ‘Pre-Accession Strategy’, claimed that preparing for the future accession of the associated CEECs was to ensure ‘the lasting peace and stability of the European continent and neighbouring regions.’ The EU enlargement was ‘making an essential contribution to overcoming the legacy of past divisions, and promoting peace, security and stability in and around Europe’.<sup>55</sup>

The Conclusion of the Madrid European Council in December 1995 made an even clearer security statement. Under the headline titled ‘A Europe open to the world, enjoying stability, security, freedom and solidarity’, which appeared for the first time in the Conclusion of Presidency, it stated that: ‘Enlargement is both a political necessity and a historic opportunity for Europe. It will ensure the stability and security of the continent and will thus offer both the applicant states and the current members of the Union new prospects for economic growth and general well-being.’<sup>56</sup> It then asked the Commission to expedite preparation of its ‘Opinions’ for the applicant countries and a ‘Composite Paper on Enlargement’. This decision suggested that the process of eastern enlargement entered a new and substantial stage to consider the readiness and eligibility of each applicant countries.

As seen, between 1993-5, rhetoric that highlighted ‘eastern enlargement for security and stability in the whole Europe’ emerged and was successfully implanted into the official language of the EU. However, partly because the original objectives of the securitising actors – to call for a serious and committed preparation for enlargement –

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<sup>54</sup> Conclusions of the Presidency, Corfu European Council, 24 and 25 June 1994.

<sup>55</sup> Conclusions of the Presidency, Essen European Council, 9 and 10 December 1994.

<sup>56</sup> Conclusions of the Presidency, Madrid European Council, 15 and 16 December 1995.

were fulfilled by the agreement at Madrid, and partly because the fact that the preparation of the 'Opinions' was put into the hand of the Commission provided EU leaders an excuse that 'there was little that could be done until the Commission had completed its Opinions',<sup>57</sup> securitising speeches to urge enlargement disappeared from the discourses of EU leaders. With major crises in the economy, on monetary union and the lack of progress in the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), enlargement had slipped out of many governments' view.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, it was not until the completion of the Opinion in July 1997 ('Agenda 2000') that debates on the eastern enlargement came back as the main agenda of the EU. Inevitably, security arguments also disappeared from the speeches by EU leaders until the debate on 'Agenda 2000' dominated the EU agenda.

Before considering these developments, however, it is necessary to analyse a competing 'securitising moves', which used security argument to create 'condition' for enlargement.

*(b) Creating a 'condition' for enlargement (1993-5)*

It should be noted that security arguments made by EU leaders always spoke in favour of the eastern enlargement: they have also produced instruments which were not necessarily welcomed by all the CEECs with open arms. From 1993 to 1995, in particular, concerns about potential ethnic conflicts among the CEECs led the EU to make the complete solutions of such disputes an implicit 'condition' of EU accession.

As mentioned above, necessity to refer to the future enlargement was accepted without any major opposition. However, this was not to suggest that there were no sign of disagreement in the discussion of setting the criteria to join the EU. Just a few days before the Copenhagen European Council, the French government submitted its own criteria for the CEECs to join the EU without any prior consultation with the other members. This proposal insisted that solving minority problems in CEECs *completely* and ensuring domestic unity should become one of the political criteria.<sup>59</sup> It came at the moment when the preparation for the Presidency conclusion on relations to the CEECs had almost been completed. Other members opposed such a proposal on the grounds

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<sup>57</sup> Mayhew, A., *Recreating Europe*, p.36.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Agence Europe*, No.6003, 18 June 1993. According to another source, this French proposal included other criteria as well, such as GNP-per capita level, degree of privatisation, level of social protection, inflation levels and public deficit size. See *European Report*, No.1868, 19 June 1993.



that it would be unfair to demand such criteria from the CEECs but not from the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) applicants. This proposal was thus rejected.

The French government thus failed to alter the Copenhagen criteria, but the basic idea of its proposal survived in the form of the 'Balladur Plan' on stability in Europe, which was submitted by France at the Copenhagen European Council. This plan was to encourage the CEECs to solve their potential disputes and border conflicts between each other. It mainly targeted the countries with a prospect of becoming members of the EU, namely those countries which had concluded or negotiated the European Agreements.

In explaining the significance of such a plan, the French government officials linked the implementation of the Pact by the CEECs with their future EU accessions. Alan Lamassoure, the French Minister of European Affairs, was cited to have claimed that 'admission to the EU is only possible for countries that maintain good relations with their neighbours. No countries with unsettled border or minority conflicts will be allowed to join.'<sup>60</sup> Alan Juppé, French Foreign Minister, also repeatedly mentioned that this Pact was to 'prepare for the European Union's enlargement'.<sup>61</sup> In general, the French government and diplomatic circle appeared to be unified with the idea that eastern enlargement could be considered only if all the disputes among the CEECs were completely settled.<sup>62</sup>

Responses from the CEECs were mixed. The deterioration of the relation between ethnic groups has widely been perceived as threatening, in particular for the countries such as Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. The tension between the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and ethnic Slovak has already reached the point that the disputes between Hungary and Slovakia were regarded to be 'easy to imagine'.<sup>63</sup> Those countries welcomed the overall idea of the French initiative. However, Poland and the Czech Republic, which suffered neither from major minority issues nor border dispute, did not hide their unwillingness to take part in the Conference.<sup>64</sup> For their eyes, the Pact

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<sup>60</sup> For example, see 'Whose stability pact?', *The Economist*, 18 March 1995.

<sup>61</sup> For example, see *Agence Europe*, No.6239, 28 May 1994.

<sup>62</sup> For example, Jean-Marie Le Breton, the ex-ambassador to Bulgaria and Romania, concludes his book by arguing firmly that the CEECs should first conclude agreements between them to solve border conflicts and to respect their minorities before asking for any substantial relationship with the EC. See *Le Breton, J-M., L'Europe centrale and orientale de 1917 à 1990* (Paris: Editions Nathan, 1994).

<sup>63</sup> 'Not So Amicable', *The Economist*, 17 April 1993.

<sup>64</sup> In particular, Polish Foreign Minister Olechowski emphasised that Poland did not need the Pact, and that the Pact must not under any circumstances create to the process of integration of the interested states in the EU. See *Agence Europe*, No.6239, 28 May 1994.

could only be regarded as a French effort to delay the enlargement process.

In the course of the discussion on the details of the Pact, more and more EU members gradually came to share the French view. By the time of the opening conference of the Stability Pact on 26 May 1994 in Paris, Belgium Foreign Minister Willie Claes and British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd reported to state clearly that all 'deep-seated' difference in the countries directly concerned by the Stability Pact must be settled before enlargement.<sup>65</sup>

This was an example that security argument was used in order to heighten hurdle for enlargement, because the Stability Pact won the position of another 'criterion' for the CEECs to become EU members. The French government successfully nurtured a sense within the Union that a potential turbulence in Europe might come from the countries that were now given the future perspective for the EU membership. It was indeed this period during which the Stability Pact had been discussed that the EU member states started to associate security with enlargement. The settlement of any disputes thus became a *de facto* condition for the eastern enlargement.

Also, it should be noted that the security arguments made by French government did not necessarily took the form of proto-type 'securitising moves' anticipated by the CP: they did neither name such possible disputes in the CEECs as 'existential threats' explicitly nor presented the Stability Pact as an 'extraordinary measure' to confront such threats in Europe. However, by taking a strategy to link security and stability with membership requirement, the security concerns by the French government successfully achieved to create a new policy instrument in the enlargement process, which eventually demanded the CEECs an extra endeavour in their preparations for the EU memberships.

It should be added that the 'security as a 'condition' argument gradually lost its relevance, with the most of the CEECs successfully solved potential conflicts among them by implementing the Pact.<sup>66</sup> However, as will be discussed in the next section, the Kosovo crisis which seriously deteriorated in 1999 completely altered 'security as a condition' argument by the EU. Indeed, a drastic change was observed in the EU's security arguments before and after Kosovo. Before Kosovo, the logical sequence of the enlargement was that, as the first step, the CEECs should achieve peace and security by their own hand, and then the EU could enlarge. After Kosovo, however, the EU started to make an absolutely different argument: the perspectives for the future enlargement should be given to the CEECs in the first place, so that the EU could play a role in

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<sup>65</sup> *Agence Europe*, No.6238, 27 May 1994.

<sup>66</sup> For the implications of the Stability Pact, see Duke, S., *The Elusive Quest for European Security; from EPC to CFSP* (New York; Palgrave, 2000), p.149.

achieving peace and security in the CEECs. The following section will therefore explore how the security logic of the enlargement has changed significantly from 1997 to 1999, in the process of selecting the candidate countries to start accession negotiations.

*(c) Selecting the countries to start the accession negotiations (1997-9)*

As argued in the statement below by Jacques Poos, the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg and the President of the Council in the second half of 1997, the EU was making a huge effort to convince the candidate countries that enlargement included various elements of negotiation and preparation and every elements were equally important.

‘Enlargement not only consists of commencing accession negotiations. It is a much wider process. It is a question of ensuring that all applicant countries are capable of joining the Union, and thus the commencement of negotiation is but one factor in the process. The European Conference, the strengthening of the pre-accession strategy, the holding of ministerial level meeting between Member States, the Union and applicant countries, as well as the regular examination of progress accomplished by applicants, are other factors in the process.’<sup>67</sup>

Such statement emerged from a background that the EU needed to defend itself for not choosing to start accession negotiations with all the candidate countries simultaneously. However, the candidate countries attached by far the greater value to the start of negotiations. For them, winning the positive opinion from the Commission and consequently the decision by the EU members to start bilateral intergovernmental negotiations have been, after all, the strongest assurance for the future entry into the EU. On the other hand, the EU tends to emphasis on preparatory instruments, not least to ensure that it could welcome fully prepared new members so that it could minimise any indigestion caused by its expansion. This difference between the CEECs and the EU reflects that, while the most CEECs tended to stick to the issue of the status of membership, the EU pointed to the level of political and economic integration already achieved prior to accession.<sup>68</sup> Still, one might not need to consider the example of

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<sup>67</sup> *Debate of the European Parliament*, No.4-510/6, 3 December 1997.

<sup>68</sup> For this difference, see Lippert, B., ‘EU Enlargement: Comparing US and European Approaches, Interests and Roles’, in Leech, J (ed.), *Whole and Free: NATO, EU and Transatlantic Relations* (London: Federal Trust, 2002), pp. 27-47. esp. p. 31.

Turkish accession in order to highlight how cautious the EU has been to start accession negotiations with troublesome candidate countries. The history of enlargement shows us that, once accessions negotiation started, a membership would sooner or later be almost an inevitable outcome. As insiders of the Commission confirm, opening the accession implies ‘a willingness to conclude them.’<sup>69</sup> In retrospect, therefore, decisions to start accession negotiations have been much trickier and more controversial than those to conclude them.

Disagreement between the EU members concerning the selection of ‘first-wave’ countries to start the accession negotiations was already evident at Madrid. While the Chancellor Kohl demanded early entries of three CEECs, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary,<sup>70</sup> Hervé de Charette, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, made it clear that the partial start of accession negotiations would only risk to create a dangerous ‘dividing line’ between the CEECs. He claimed that the French position was that the EU should follow the ‘principle of equality’ in the enlargement process, which allowed all the candidates to start negotiations simultaneously after six month of the conclusion of the IGC, namely early 1998.<sup>71</sup>

Debates on the selection of the ‘first-wavers’ were further complicated by ambiguous link between NATO and the EU enlargement. The two institutions had repeatedly emphasised that two enlargements were ‘mutually supportive’ but ‘autonomous’ process. However, the language in NATO has been clearly emphasising the aspect of ‘compatible and mutually supportive’ nature of the two enlargements. For example, as early as in September 1995, the NATO document titled ‘the Study on NATO Enlargement’ was quite explicit about the link: ‘the Alliance should be at an appropriate time give particular consideration to countries with a perspective of EU membership, and which have shown an interest in joining NATO, in order to consider ... how they can contribute to transatlantic security within the Washington Treaty and to determine whether to invite them to join NATO.’<sup>72</sup> Such wordings were initial sign of ‘open pressure from the US government for the EU to “compensate” the Baltic States for being ruled out of early NATO membership’, which became more and more evident

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<sup>69</sup> Avery, G., and Cameron, F., *The Enlargement of the European Union* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), p.27.

<sup>70</sup> *Financial Times*, 14 December 1994: Mayhew, A., *Recreating Europe*, p.36. Also see ‘Just do it’, *The Economist*, 15 July 1995.

<sup>71</sup> Conseil européen de Madrid, Conference de Presse du ministre des Affaires étrangères, M. Hervé de Charette, Madrid, 16 décembre 1995.

<sup>72</sup> *Study on NATO enlargement*, issued by the head of state and government in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council (Brussels: 3 September, 1995), para 20.

in the eve of the publication of 'Agenda 2000'.<sup>73</sup>

The EU, on the other hand, was more ambiguous about the relationship with NATO enlargement. It was only in March 1997 that the EU confirmed that the two processes are 'complementary but autonomous'.<sup>74</sup> However, even after that confirmation, the debate within the EU was under a serious confusion. Officially, the officials in the Commission were repeatedly stating that 'there is no question of the EU offering membership as compensation to countries initially snubbed by as NATO members.'<sup>75</sup> At the same time, the EU had a serious intention to ease the 'dual rejection shock' for CEECs that were not included in the first wave of either EU or NATO enlargement.<sup>76</sup> Another argument was that, whether the EU enlargement linked to that of NATO or not, inviting Estonia and Slovenia to the accession process have a clear merit of sending a political message that the EU would eventually welcome countries in Baltic regions and ex-republics of Yugoslavia.<sup>77</sup>

While NATO enlargement was evidently shadowing the argument on EU enlargement, the 'Agenda 2000' chose Estonia and Slovenia to be included as the 'first-wavers' together with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland plus Cyprus ('5 plus 1' formula), by making allegedly 'an objective assessment of their economic performance',<sup>78</sup> thus avoiding to make any explicit security related justification.

Once the 'Agenda 2000' was published, the most of the EU member countries did not show grave disagreements to the option to go for the '5 plus 1' formula. The only serious opponents were the Swedish and Danish governments. They made a stark securitising move against the proposal of the Commission, claiming that such formula would create a 'dividing line' or 'split' between the candidate countries and it would have a dangerous effect in the whole European Continent.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, those two governments did not drop their claim to start negotiations with all the candidate countries until the eve of the Luxembourg European Council.

It is worthwhile noting that the French administration silently dropped its support for 'simultaneous start' with the publication of 'Agenda 2000', as it admitted the '5 plus 1' formula as the most realistic choice. It emphasised, however, the need to avoid giving

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<sup>73</sup> Sedelmeier and Wallace, p.450.

<sup>74</sup> *Agence Europe*, No.6936, 17 March 1997.

<sup>75</sup> *Financial Times*, 8 July 1997.

<sup>76</sup> For this point, see Baun, M., 'Enlargement', in Cram, Dinan and Nugent (eds.), *Development in the European Union* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), p. 277.

<sup>77</sup> Mayhew, A., *Recreating Europe*, p.176.

<sup>78</sup> *Financial Times*, 11 July 1997.

<sup>79</sup> For example, see *Agence Europe*, No.7106, 24 November 1997.

any impression that those countries that could not manage to be in the '5 plus 1' being 'rejected'.<sup>80</sup>

At a glance, the argument made by two Scandinavian governments and the French government seemed to have many things in common. However, while the former was the start of formal accession negotiations, the latter preached the need for creating 'substitute' for the formal negotiation. It stressed that the 'inclusiveness' of the enlargement process can be ensured by convening the 'European Conference' which was allegedly a 'French proposal'. The idea was to provide a forum that *all* the candidate countries and the EU countries meet together to exchange their views on common concerns, such as issues on common foreign and security policy, home and justice affairs and regional cooperation. The French government claimed that convening this Conference would be the most effective way to avoid creating a potential 'dividing line' between the candidate countries.

Since a possible backlash for the selective accession negotiations became a widely shared concern within the EU, the issue of providing 'alternatives' for the accession negotiations dominated the debate within the EU by the time of the Luxembourg European Council in December 1997. The result was that the Presidency Conclusions of the Luxembourg European Council gave an enhanced status for the European Conference, which was claimed to be open to all the candidate countries which shared 'the Union's commitment to building a Europe free of the divisions and difficulties of the past.' Another result was a creation of a well-elaborated distinction between 'accession process' which comprised the ten CEECs and Cyprus, and 'accession negotiations' with '5 plus 1' countries. By doing so, the Conclusion fully stressed the 'inclusive' and 'open' character of the enlargement process. It hence heralded that 'with the launch of the enlargement process we see the dawn of a new era, finally putting an end to the divisions of the past.'<sup>81</sup>

After the decision at Luxembourg, the issue at stake in the enlargement process was whether to include more countries to the accession negotiations. However, until the very end of 1998, there was no sense of urgency to start negotiations with 'second-wavers'. In particular, including Bulgaria and Romania, the least prepared candidate countries, to the formal accession negotiations was not considered as a

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<sup>80</sup> For the position of French government, see Conférence de presse du ministre des Affaires étrangères, M. Hubert Védrine, Mondorf, 25 October 1997. Reprinted in *Politique étrangère de la France, textes et documents* (La Documentation Française, October 1997), pp.317-322.

<sup>81</sup> Conclusions of the Presidency, Luxembourg European Council, 12 and 13 December 1997.

realistic option in 1998. The choice after Luxembourg was therefore whether to include the most prepared countries of the 'second-wavers', namely two Baltic countries and Slovakia, to the formal negotiation, or let the 'second-wavers' all wait.

Before the Vienna European Council in December 1998, the overwhelming majority of the EU members preferred the latter choice. Such choice were justified by securitising moves made by France, Italy and Greece: their logic was that, if the EU picked up some countries from the 'second-wavers', it would create a 'division within the second-wavers', which might have a serious implication for stability in the region.<sup>82</sup> The last straw was the joint letter by the German Chancellor Gerhald Schröder, and the French President Jacques Chirac to the Austrian Presidency: 'the enlargement of the European Union in the direction of Central and East Europe is a historical task which we must accomplish to secure lasting peace and stability in Europe. ... The accession must be continued decisively and realistically. We hold the view that decisions on starting negotiations with further accession countries should not be taken at the Vienna European Council.'<sup>83</sup> Therefore, in the name of peace and stability, the most of the EU countries chose not to take further step for enlargement. As a result, the Vienna European Council agreed not to start negotiations with any of the second-wavers.

Curiously, however, a security argument which bore a totally opposite logic emerged immediately after the Vienna European Council, following a clear deterioration of the situation in Kosovo from mid-December 1998. The first sign of the change in the EU's attitude to 'the most weakly supported among the current membership',<sup>84</sup> Bulgaria and Romania, came in a form of rather unusual two declarations from the Council of Ministers. First, on 22 January, the EU issued the 'Statement on Romania' referred to the country as 'the most affected' in the Kosovo crisis and reaffirmed that 'the EU remains fully committed to Romania's accession to the European Union'.<sup>85</sup> The second one, the 'Statement on Romania and Bulgaria' on 26 April, reaffirmed even more explicitly that the crisis in the western Balkans 'highlights the contributions of Romania and Bulgaria, two associate States, to stability in the wider region', and that the EU 'underlines the special relations it enjoys' with those two countries 'by virtue of

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<sup>82</sup> *Agence Europe*, No.7339, 10 November 1998.

<sup>83</sup> Letter from the Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Gerhald Schröder, and the President of the French Republic, Jacques Chirac, to the Chairman in office of the European Council and Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria, Viktor Klima.

<sup>84</sup> Wallace, W., *Opening the Door*, p.27.

<sup>85</sup> *Bulletin of the European Union*, 1/2-1999, point 1.4.17.

their participation in the EU accession process.’<sup>86</sup>

The earliest discourse which called for the explicit and immediate action towards those two countries came from Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, at the occasion of his visit to Romania in early May 1999:

‘Britain wants the European Union to enlarge, and to do so soon. I want Romania to be part of that process. Let me emphasise that the British Government is committed to the earliest possible accession for Romania. We have already made clear in public that the level of EU assistance to Romania will take account of the burden created by the Kosovo crisis. We will resist any attempt to slow down the enlargement process because of Kosovo. Today I want to make a further commitment. At the Helsinki European Council in December, Britain will support an invitation to Romania to begin negotiations to accede to the European Union.’<sup>87</sup>

This statement marked a moment that an extremely significant political leader of one of the member countries of the EU declared that, when candidate countries faced evident threat, the full compliance of the Copenhagen Criteria was less significant. This also marked a clear change of position of British government on enlargement, which used to emphasis the danger of ‘opening talks with those who still are not yet ready’.<sup>88</sup>

Following the NATO campaign to Kosovo in March 1999, the rhetorical link between the Kosovo crisis and EU enlargement became clearer than ever. The expression that ‘our experience during the Kosovo conflict must lend the enlargement process a new dynamism’ came to be increasingly common.<sup>89</sup> By the early September 1999, almost all the member countries were already favourable to start accession

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<sup>86</sup> *Bulletin of the European Union*, 4-1999, point 1.4.14.

<sup>87</sup> Speech by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to the Romanian Parliament, Bucharest, Romania, 4 May 1999. On his visit to Bulgaria one month later, Blair made the same commitment to Bulgaria again. See speech by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to the Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria, 17 May 1999.

<sup>88</sup> For example, see speech by the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, to the Institute for European Affairs, Dublin, 3 November 1997. For a study which emphasises the change of British attitude towards enlargement after the Kosovo crisis, see Lippert, et al., *British and German Interests in EU Enlargement*, pp.10-11.

<sup>89</sup> Speech by the President of the Council of the European Union, Joschka Fischer, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament, in Strasbourg, 21 July 1999.



negotiations with all the second-wavers.<sup>90</sup> This marked a clear change in the attitude of the EU, which had used to see achieving security was a ‘condition’ assigned to the CEEC to join the EU. Rather, achieving security became one of the ‘reasons’ for the EU to enlarge. Giving clearer perspectives for the future accessions was considered to have a huge security implication. Starting accession negotiations with those candidate countries which were seriously affected by the crisis was regarded as the most powerful tool to provide such perspectives and thus to create security and stability in the region.

However, including Bulgaria and Romania to the accession negotiations were extremely hard to be justified, not least because this precisely meant that the EU was altering its own principle that it had defended so passionately in the course of the eastern enlargement: the fulfilment of *all* three criteria as a prerequisite for starting EU accession negotiations. It was the Composite Paper by the Commission in October 1999 that came up with a solution for this dilemma by security justification. Arguing that ‘one of the key lessons of the Kosovo crisis is the need to achieve peace and security, democracy and the rule of law, growth and the foundations of prosperity throughout Europe. Enlargement is the best way to do this’, the Paper argued that the option to open negotiations with all candidates that have fulfilled the *political* Copenhagen criteria would best suit the spirit of the Conclusions of Luxembourg European Council which stated that ‘with the launch of the enlargement process we see the dawn of a new era, finally putting an end to the divisions of the past. Extending the European integration model to encompass the whole of the continent is a pledge of future stability and prosperity.’<sup>91</sup> In defending this approach, the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, warned that continuing the previous ‘hard line’ method, which is to recommend the opening of negotiations only with countries which have fulfilled all the three conditions could have a disastrous outcome: ‘the countries concerned, having already made great efforts and sacrifices, will become disillusioned and turn their backs on us. Their economic policies will begin to diverge, and an historic opportunity will have been lost - perhaps forever.’<sup>92</sup>

Such arguments successfully provided justification for the EU to decide at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 to begin negotiations with all the second-wavers. The development which took place in 1999 was the most outstanding

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<sup>90</sup> *European Report*, No.2432, 8 September 1999.

<sup>91</sup> European Commission, *Composite Paper: Reports on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries*, 13 October 1999.

<sup>92</sup> Speech by Mr Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission on enlargement European Parliament Brussels, 13 October 1999.

example that the policy instruments of enlargement were called for with a stark sense of urgency and were adopted with a clear security justification. It should be reiterated that such decision came only one year after the Vienna European Council which decided not to negotiate with any second-wavers. Arguably, as for the level of the fulfilment of the Copenhagen Criteria, nothing has changed substantially from 1998 to 1999. Malta had few problems in implementing the requirement from beginning. The two Baltic countries and Slovakia were already judged as having made considerable progresses by the end of the 1998. Progress in reforms in Bulgaria and Romania remained totally unsatisfactory. What had been changed from 1998 to 1999 was the perception of the EU members on necessity to reflect the security aspects to the enlargement.

*(d) Accepting enlargement as a 'reality' (1999 - 2002)*

Once the EU reached the agreement at Helsinki, the security logic was firmly consolidated in the discourse of the EU on enlargement.

The enlargement process after 1999 was been strikingly smooth. It concluded just three years after the Helsinki agreement.<sup>93</sup> It is true that difficulties of negotiations on economic issues – agriculture, competition and financial frameworks for the preparation of enlargement – have widely been reported. It should be emphasised, however, that such painful negotiations were undertaken with a clear understanding that the enlargement would definitely take place within a few years. As mentioned above, agreeing to start accession negotiation implied a commitment to conclude them. Once this commitment was made, both the EU and the candidate countries acted constructively to find a way to conclude the negotiations. Although not without a tension between the EU and the candidate countries, the target date to accept the new entrant countries was set as 2004 at the Göteborg European Council in June 2001 – only one and half year after the Helsinki European Council.<sup>94</sup> By that time, not only the 'first-wavers' which started negotiations in 1998, but also the 'second-wavers' which started negotiations in 2000, got a clear perspective that their accessions were just about to happen in the very near future. This was of course not the case with Romania and

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<sup>93</sup> It should be added that negotiations on Chapter 26 (External Relations) and Chapter 27 (Common Foreign and Security Policy) were particularly swift and uncontroversial for all the candidate countries. See Missiroli, A (ed.), *Bigger EU, Wider CFSP, Stronger EDSP?*

<sup>94</sup> Presidency Conclusions, Göteborg European Council, 15 and 16 June 2001.

Bulgaria, two countries which were included to the accession negotiations with highly strategic reasons, but were far from fulfilling the requirement for the formal accession.

Paradoxically, the clearer the perspectives for the conclusion of the negotiations became, securitising moves did not cease to exist. At this stage, securitising moves put greater emphasis on the cost of non-enlargement, and called for the eastern enlargement should happen without delay. Blair, for example, demonstrated such an argument in the following way: 'Let me be frank. Without enlargement, Western Europe will always be faced with the threat of instability, conflict and mass migration on its borders. Without enlargement, the political consensus behind economic and political reform in the weaker transition countries may splinter. Should that happen, we would all lose. That is why supporting enlargement in principle but delaying in practice is no longer good enough.'<sup>95</sup>

Clearly, the target of securitising speeches was not to convince the reluctant members of the EU any more, but to eliminate fear and anxiety in the EU citizens, particularly against the growing reluctance among the EU citizens towards enlargement: 'Are their jobs at risk? Will enlargement make Europe even less transparent and comprehensible for its citizens? As seriously as we must tackle these questions, we must never lose sight of the historic dimension of eastern enlargement. For this is a unique opportunity to unite our continent, wracked by war for centuries, in peace, security, democracy and prosperity.'<sup>96</sup>

Tough negotiations in the contentious chapters and scepticism from the EU citizens did not delay the enlargement process at all. Precisely as planned, the accession negotiations with ten candidate countries were concluded at the Copenhagen European Council in December 2002. Enlargement, which has started by the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993 as 'an ambitious process to overcome the legacy of conflict and division in Europe'<sup>97</sup>, agreed to welcome ten new member countries from 1 May 2004, concluded by carving a now familiar phrase in its Presidency Conclusion: 'This achievement testifies to the common determination of the peoples of Europe to come together in a Union that has become the driving force for peace, democracy, stability and prosperity on our continent.'<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Blair, 06 October 2000

<sup>96</sup> Speech by Joschka Fischer at the Humboldt University in Berlin, 12 May 2000.

<sup>97</sup> Presidency Conclusions, Copenhagen European Council, 12 and 13 December 2002.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

## 4 Conclusions

In this paper, I have explored whether, when and how the security concerns have played role in the EU enlargement eastwards, by using the concept of the ‘securitising move’. Security concerns, as well as economic and social ones, have been emerging as a rationale to enlarge the EU. The nature of the link between EU enlargement and security has largely been a discursive one. From time to time, security argument in enlargement mattered so seriously that it causes the EU to alter its existing policies and principles on enlargement.

Main findings of this paper are threefolds. First, the rhetorical structure of the EU leaders’ justification of enlargement very often took the form of ‘securitising move’. Naming various ‘existential’ threats for the EU, such as ‘instability, conflict and mass migration on its borders’,<sup>99</sup> ‘the old system of balance with ... the permanent danger of nationalist ideologies and confrontations in Eastern Europe’,<sup>100</sup> ‘traditional lines of conflict’ which ‘shift from Eastern Europe into the EU again’,<sup>101</sup> or even ‘a return to the unstable pre-war system’,<sup>102</sup> EU leaders have phrased enlargement as the ‘extraordinary means’ to avoid these catastrophic outcomes. Delaying enlargement is equal to ‘allow a zone of instability to emerge beyond the current EU border’, which is, ‘given our experience in the Balkans, irresponsible politically.’<sup>103</sup>

It is true that much of the discourse on enlargement simply refer to the necessity of enlargement as a matter of ‘peace and stability’, without mentioning existential threats or even the word ‘security’. Still, the fact that the ‘peace and stability’ rhetoric appears in the arguments on enlargement does show EU leaders’ implicit concerns that Europe as it could neither be considered as peaceful nor stable. As Günter Verheugen, the Commissioner in charge of enlargement, mentioned in 1999, ‘peace and stability across Europe is not a matter of fact: they must be maintained in some areas and achieved in others’.<sup>104</sup> These speeches could therefore be considered as ‘implicit’

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<sup>99</sup> Blair, 06 October 2000

<sup>100</sup> Fischer, 12 May 2000.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> CDU/CSU, *Fraktion des Deutschen Bundestages, Überlegungen zur europäischen Politik*.

<sup>103</sup> Speech by the President of the Council of the European Union, Joschka Fischer, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament, in Strasbourg, 12 January 1999.

<sup>104</sup> Speech by Gunter Verheugen, Member of the European Commission ‘Enlargement: Speed and Quality’ at the conference ‘The Second Decade towards a New and

securitising moves. One of the findings of this paper is that an evident existence and significant role of such ‘implicit’ securitising moves in the process of the EU enlargement. This finding slightly widens the theoretical framework of the securitisation and desecuritisation which has been initially envisaged by the CS.

Second, security concerns have delivered various outcomes at each stage of the enlargement process. Above all, it created an overarching rationale for the EU to enlarge, by bringing the security logic into the discourses of the EU. Another outstanding contribution of the security concerns is that it provided EU leaders with the significant justification for the trickiest issue of the enlargement, such as bringing contentious candidate countries into accession negotiations, to a lesser extent in 1997 and to a larger extent in 1999. It also served as a rationale to overcome the initial reluctance that existed within the EU in early stage of the enlargement process and to added an extra will and momentum to face preparations and negotiations for enlargement, which have often been painful not only for the candidate countries, but also for the current EU member states. Once it was agreed that enlargement would be an inevitable future for the reasons of peace and security in Europe, it drew the EU members to the direction to find significant compromises for the enlargement process to conclude. In sum, invoking security became part of the successful strategy to justify EU enlargement.

Third, the eastern enlargement of the EU can be considered as an example that ‘securitising moves’ successfully led to bring ‘desecuritisation’. EU Enlargement, while deliberately *presented* by EU leaders as an ‘extraordinary means’ to rescue the European Continent from various threats, has been a way to deal with such threats within the ‘normal bargaining process’ of the EU. Put differently, the ‘enlargement for the sake of peace and security’ argument led to establish a practice to deal with uncertainties and potential threats in the eastern part of Europe within the framework of the ‘normal business’ or ‘regular activity’. Such practice has provided the EU with certain role to create more stable and peaceful Europe than ever by its own hands, without necessarily creating hostile relationship in Europe.

These findings call for further research questions: does the example ‘desecuritisation via securitising moves’ of EU enlargement imply that ‘securitising moves’ made in the context of European integration most likely to intend ‘desecuritisation’? Could the movements of ‘desecuritisation via securitising moves’ be considered as peculiar to the EU as a ‘civilian power’? Has the ‘militarisation’ of the EU, which became increasingly evident after the Helsinki European Council in 1999,

affected the security argument of the eastern enlargement in any way? Have the issues of 'non-traditional sector' of security, such as environment, drug trafficking and organised crimes been 'securitised' in the discourse of the EU enlargement? Securitisation approach has a high potential to enriches analyses of the process of the EU enlargement eastwards.