

CFSP WATCH 2003

NATIONAL REPORT CYPRUS

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1. Basic Views on CFSP/ESDP

As a new member-state, Cyprus is in the process of aligning its foreign and security policy with that of the European Union. Cyprus, as one of the ardent supporters of deeper integration, favours the endowment of the Union with a strong, effective and coherent foreign and security policy embracing defence policy. Cyprus realizes that, both for wider European and narrower national reasons, the Union should acquire the political, institutional and military means to play a more active role in handling regional and international crises. Cyprus favours an evolution of the Union along community lines, which will safeguard at the same time the equality of member-states and avoid the establishment of a hierarchical structure, detrimental to the interests of smaller countries¹. For these reasons Cyprus endorses deeper cooperation in CFSP/ESDP issues². Cyprus feels that an autonomous EU presence in the field of foreign and security policy is beneficial to the Union's credibility and perception. Both the government and all parliamentary parties hold these views³. Of course Cypriot perceptions of CFSP/ESDP are necessarily seen through the prism of the unlawful occupation of 37% of the Republic's sovereign territory and the menacing presence of a sizeable occupation force.

2. National perceptions

2a. Perceived success/failure of CFSP/ESDP

In the medium to long run, the CFSP/ESDP framework will provide an effective tool for conflict prevention and crisis management extending a sphere of security around the EU's borders, but for now the whole edifice seems to be going through a prolonged childhood illness phase. Symptoms of this manifest themselves in the preference for national policy-making over the formulation of common positions in matters of international importance (Iraq, reaction to 9/11). The undertaking of missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are steps in the right direction. On the other hand,

¹ Memorandum on Reforming the Institutions: Principles and Premises submitted to the European Convention by Mr. Michael Attalides representative of the Cyprus Government to the Convention on the future of Europe 28/03/2003

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus, Cyprus and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP/ESDP) online edition

³ Preliminary positions of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on the issues to be discussed in the Convention on the future of Europe

they seem to enhance the view that the EU is formulating its options on the basis of the lowest common denominator.

2b. Position towards NATO

Cyprus along with Malta is in a rather peculiar position within the EU framework being the only two new member-states not to participate in NATO or Pf P. In accordance with EU Summit decisions, it looks forward to contributing the fullest possible in the field of CFSP/ESDP. Furthermore, it considers that in order for the EU to enhance its credibility, it must be in a position to apply effectively a coherent security/defence policy.

It is within this scope that Cyprus has decided to contribute to the efforts of the EU at acquiring the capabilities for undertaking autonomous peace operations.

Cyprus has committed a logistics company, a UAV company and its infrastructure in ports, airports and surveillance equipment⁴. It should be stressed that in harmony with the government proposal for demilitarization of Cyprus in its efforts for a peaceful solution to the Cyprus Problem and in the run-up to the Annan Plan, its military contribution is limited to the provision of logistical support.

Under the provisions of Annex II of the Copenhagen Presidency Conclusions, Cyprus and Malta are excluded from participating in the military aspects of ESDP where NATO assets are concerned⁵.

Since the well-known failure of the Annan Plan and the breakdown of inter-communal negotiations in Cyprus, the need for demilitarization is no longer apparent. Therefore there should be a reconsideration of such provisions.

In the civilian leg of ESDP, Cyprus contributes to the European Police Force with 30 police officers and logistical support. Furthermore, Cyprus participates in the EU Police mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina with 4 police officers⁶.

2c. EU crisis management

Cyprus welcomes the increased role of the European Union in crisis management. This type of operation is indeed of great political significance for the visibility and credibility of the Union. The EU has already considerable experience and some successes in the field of conflict prevention. The EU's preventive diplomacy has a great scope for extending its action on the basis of international legitimacy and UN Resolutions. This action would be more effective if the EU coordinates its voice in international organizations further. The EU as the biggest donor of aid can further coordinate all its external actions to serve the aims of preserving and extending democratic practices, good governance and respect for Human Rights. Cyprus supports wholeheartedly the ambitious Euro-Mediterranean project that has the potential if allowed to come to full fruition of resolving tensions in a volatile region of the world where the EU attaches great importance. At the level of crisis management, the main aim of the Cypriot government is

⁴ Andreas Kintis, The European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Rapid Deployment force: The first steps, ELIAMEP Yearbook 2001 (in Greek)

⁵ Copenhagen European Council: Presidency Conclusions p.12

⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus, Cyprus and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP/ESDP), online edition

to support a comprehensive approach integrating the capabilities and operational framework in all four areas (police, rule of law, civil protection, public administration). The military and civil aspects of ESDP should be developed on a parallel and equal basis given that they are integrated in a unified action plan. Special emphasis should be given to politico-military coordination, financing participation of third countries and cooperation with international and regional organizations and NGOs. This comprehensive approach is the fundamental difference between EU and NATO crisis management and sets the basis for the autonomy of these two organizations.

2d. Impact of EU enlargement on CFSP/ESDP

The enlargement process can be seen as the most powerful exercise of EU external action, so far conducted, and with the potential to extend the area of peace, security, stability and prosperity to Central and Eastern Europe and possibly to the Eastern Mediterranean.

On the other hand, it is the prevailing view in Cypriot academia that the parallel processes of EU and NATO enlargement, although conducive to increasing stability, security and democracy particularly in southeastern Europe, increase difficulties in decision-making and policy coordination.

At the same time, enlargement is heightening tensions in transatlantic relations since it is becoming apparent that the EU and the United States have divergent world views and do not see eye to eye on issues of international importance such as Iran or the Middle East Peace Process. Moreover, some of the new member-states of the EU have over the past decade formed a close working relationship with the United States as well as an affinity with American goals and aspirations, which they seem unwilling to give up. So the stage is set for more friction between “Old” and “New” Europe especially in the light of the emerging security threats. The US wants a NATO with global reach while the European allies have a more regional approach.

3. European Convention: reform of EU external relations, CFSP/ESDP

With regard to CFSP/ESDP, the Cypriot delegation in the European Convention has put forward a number of proposals that aim at the strengthening of CFSP/ESDP arrangements, cooperation on cross-border crime and humanitarian crises and dealing with forced migration.⁷

3a. External representation

Cyprus is in favour of the appointment of a European foreign minister, taking over the posts of High Representative for CFSP and commissioner for External Affairs (Double-hatting). Such a move would enhance the coherence and rapidity of reaction of the Union's external representation.

On the question of the appointment by the Council of a President of the European Council, it is the position of the government of Cyprus that the existing system of rotating

⁷ Preliminary positions of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on the issues to be discussed in the Convention on the future of Europe

presidency in the European Council, the General Affairs Council and COREPER safeguards the rights of smaller nations and therefore should continue⁸.

3b. Decision-making

Cyprus declares itself in favour of extending qualified majority voting in the sphere of CFSP⁹. Cyprus is not opposed to forms of enhanced cooperation in matters of CFSP/ESDP given that they don't disrupt the unity or the coherence of the Union, as this is the only practical way the new enlarged Union can maintain its positive momentum with regards to the deepening of integration

3c. Crisis management

The Cypriot government has not declared itself either for or against the updating of the Petersberg tasks to include references to military contingencies and resources.

3d. Defence

Cyprus feels that the inclusion of a solidarity clause in the new European Constitutional Treaty will prove most useful, since it will cultivate a new sense of belonging. Under current arrangements member-states are obliged to provide political support to each other. This should be amended to include military assistance as well as the emergence of the new asymmetrical threats to international security prove that responses to security questions should be collective since no single nation can deal effectively with these threats¹⁰.

So far the government of the Republic of Cyprus has not commented officially on the proposal of France, Germany, Belgium and Luxemburg for deeper cooperation in defence policy.

4. Activities in CFSP-related research

Experts, universities and research institutes

The following can be regarded as actors working in the CFSP field in Cyprus:

Professor Joseph S. Joseph, Dept. of Social and Political Studies, University of Cyprus

⁸ Intervention by the representative of the Cyprus Government to the Convention on the future of Europe Ambassador Michael Attalides during the 14th session of the convention on the functioning of the EU Institutions-20/1/2003

⁹ Intervention by the representative of the Cyprus Government to the Convention on the future of Europe Ambassador Michael Attalides during the 13th session of the convention on the final report of the working group on external action-20/12/2002

¹⁰ Speech by the (then) foreign minister of Foreign Affairs of the republic of Cyprus, H.E Mr. Ioannis Kasoulidis at the Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels on "Cyprus in the new Europe", 04/06/2002

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