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Agnostic Bystander or Active Participant?

Poland's Role in the European Security and Defence Policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Poland is the largest of the new EU member states with the biggest military in Central and Eastern Europe. However, the country's pro-American attitude combined with its original agnostic approach to the ESDP project have questioned the extent to which Poland can play a significant role in the development of it. This paper will assess how far Poland has been able to contribute to the development of ESDP. In order to evaluate this, it is necessary to look at how Poland views its security and defence policy and what factors have influenced its evolution. It is argued that Poland's security and defence policy has been shaped by how its history as a defeated nation has been interpreted. Key themes to emerge from this include Poland's instinctive Atlanticism, a pro-active view on the use of force and having a central and vocal role in areas that affects Poland's interests. It is clear that the former has in part hindered Poland's participation in ESDP. Whilst Poland is keen to engage in all areas of EU activity and sees no contradiction between being a good Atlanticist and being a good European, Poland fears that ESDP could undermine NATO's and the US's role in Europe, which combined, form the linchpin of Poland's

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security. Additionally, Poland's desire to play a pro-active role in areas affecting its interests, including ESDP, is being contradicted by Poland's continued Cold War territorial defensive thinking, highlighted for instance through its fixation on NATO's article five guarantee. Due to Poland's inability to make the full transition to today's security environment and to reform its armed forces, which is partly due to material constraints, it has been unable to fully occupy its rightful role in ESDP. However, taking part in ESDP's decision-making mechanisms and missions has led to a more pragmatic view of ESDP, leading to a more realistic assessment of the tasks that the policy is designed to perform.

2. HISTORY AS CONTEXT: POLISH STRATEGIC CULTURE

Is it possible for Poland to have a strategic culture considering that it has only been independent for a short amount of time between 1795 and today? It is argued here that it is exactly this lack of independence and sovereignty that has served to form the core of Polish strategic culture, which in turn shapes Poland's security and defence interests. Strategic culture relates to those beliefs, attitudes and norms concerning the use of force, held by a security community, which has 'had a necessarily unique historical experience'.¹ It is the way in which this historical experience and memory is then interpreted, which is crucial to development of such cultures and as this differs between countries, strategic culture is distinctive to the society that holds it.² The development of a 'strategic culture' takes place over a period of time and is highly stable as values, beliefs and the way they are interpreted become embedded and reinforced in society.³ It can however be subject to change, through either a 'critical juncture', which serves to challenge a country's beliefs and forces it to re-examine or reject its strategic culture in favour of another, or a realignment, when central parts of a country's strategic culture conflict with each other, often due to a change in the external environment.⁴ Considering this, which points in history are relevant to the development of Polish strategic culture and how in turn have they been interpreted into a guide for Poland's security policy?

The end of the first Republic (Polish, Ukrainian and Lithuanian Commonwealth) in 1795 represented the first stage of the acquirement of today's Polish strategic culture. Sandwiched between the great powers, Polish territory was used as a 'prize' for the

victors, which highlighted Poland's unfortunate geographical situation. Although internal factors were undoubtedly partly to blame for Poland's downfall, it was this partitioning of Poland between Austria, Prussia and Russia that was to take on prime significance amongst Polish elites. Whilst this went largely unnoticed by the general population, as they had little concept of the Polish nation, 1939 was a different matter. The brief period of independence in the inter-war years had created a collective national identity between the Polish elites and the Polish people which was centred upon retaining the country's independence.⁵ The invasion of Hitler's Germany and the subsequent division of Poland between the USSR and Germany, heralding the end of the Second Republic had a greater impact as well as serving to reinforce the elites' historical memory of 1795. Despite Poland fighting on the side of the allies and the Poles strong domestic resistance to Nazi rule, it became increasingly evident that the Western Allies had little interest in opposing the Soviet expansion in Central Eastern Europe. Therefore, the country failed to regain its independence at the end of the Second World War, when Poland was placed in the Russian sphere of influence and its eastern part annexed, although it did acquire additional territory in the west.⁶ This ultimate betrayal by Poland's allies at Yalta was to have a lasting impact upon Polish strategic culture.

To try and legitimise their rule, the communists tried to manipulate Polish nationalism by explaining that they had freed Poland from German aggression and the West's betrayal. Therefore, USSR hegemony should be accepted as the only way to permit Poland's continued existence.⁷ However the Communists failed in their attempt to justify their occupation because they could not give the Poles, the one thing they held sacrosanct – their independence. The failure of the Soviets to occupy Polish strategic culture left it in the hands of the Polish dissidents, the émigré community and the Catholic Church. In particular the *Kultura* movement played an important role as they sought to identify how a free Poland could avoid the mistakes of the Second republic, including the idea that Poland should serve as a bridge between East and West. The Catholic element, likewise gave the Polish an alternative source of reference for their identity because it was a completely separate entity to communism. Pope John Paul II was particularly instrumental in supporting the struggle for Polish independence in addition to the US,

under Ronald Reagan. Towards the end of the Cold War the Poles were brought together 'as the intelligentsia, the church and the working class shared a common vision and purpose, including marginalizing the regime and forcing it on the defensive'.⁸ The Catholic Church under John Paul II and the Polish dissidents also championed the right of Poland's eastern neighbours to self-determination, learning the lessons of the Second World War.

Poland finally regained her independence after the Cold War. However the country's traumatic history of defeat and victim-hood over the past two centuries had not been forgotten. It was these historical events, primarily from World War Two that were to form some integral elements of Poland's strategic culture, which ultimately influenced her security and defence policy. At the core of Poland's strategic culture was the sacrosanctity of the country's independence, brought about by its' unfortunate geopolitical situation. Thus Poland's policy perspectives were formulated on re-establishing and then protecting this.

The failure of Poland's West European allies to support and protect her against invasion shaped a number of security and defence perspectives. First Poland turned to the US as the only country able and willing to protect her independence. Whilst the US could too be charged with deserting Poland at Yalta, the country's support for the Solidarity movement and Polish independence accumulated in gratitude among the Polish elites. This led to Poland's instinctive Atlanticism, encompassing a strong interest in keeping the US in Europe and the desire to join a security organisation with a concrete collective security guarantee: NATO, which emphasised equality among its members and prevented Poland from being sandwiched between Germany and Russia with no prospect of assistance should Poland be attacked. This policy was further reinforced with the Balkan wars as Western Europe once again failed to deal with conflict on its borders, having to rely on the US instead.

Second, Poland's experience as the victim of the allies' appeasement policy meant that the country was prepared to use force pro-actively, including the use of pre-emptive military action to support its allies. In addition Poland was sceptical of multilateral organisations, with the exception of NATO, especially the UN. As the then Polish foreign minister,

Krzysztof Skubiszewski commented in April 1993, 'the fact that wars are going on in a number of the member states of those two organisations (CSCE and UN) is a source of widespread scepticism and scepticism and doubt cannot prevail.'⁹ Whilst there was a certain amount of realistic assessment regarding the UN, Poland has previously been a victim of the failings of multilateral organisations and thus will still proceed with caution.

Third, some fundamental lessons were drawn from the betrayal of Poland at Yalta, including the right for Poland to be included in decisions affecting her interests. This meant that Poland would be fully involved in shaping the country's own destiny, which involves the country having a central and vocal role in European decision-making. Poland must also be a dependable ally. Due to Poland's experience of being deserted by her allies before and after the Second World War, it was of utmost importance to Poland that she demonstrated her reliability to her allies, in particular the US.¹⁰

Whilst World War Two certainly influenced the mainstay of Poland's strategic culture, other factors were also at play, which centred upon or manifested themselves during the Cold War Era. The right of other nations to self-determination was an idea originally articulated by Polish elites and the Catholic Church during the Cold War and was connected to the assertion that Poland's freedom would only come about through the freedom of the whole Central and Eastern European region. This included normalising relations with Germany. The Poles had always felt a common civilisation with Western Europe and therefore Poland's attitude to German reunification was more realistic than some of the Western European powers such as the UK and France. The accommodation with Russia was more difficult as the psychological wounds inflicted by the country were much deeper. In addition, at the end of the Cold War, Russia still had a huge military arsenal, which created distrust. However the right to self-determination was applied to all nations irrespective of where they were in the world.¹¹ Freedom is still central to Poland's foreign policy aims and objectives. As Jan Rokita, chairman of the Civic Platform's parliamentary caucus pointed out 'the mission of supporting freedom in the world is extremely crucial in terms of the way we perceive our identity. Please remember that this point of view enormously influenced Polish decisions regarding participation in the peace

mission in Iraq. It also influenced our engagement in backing the Orange Revolution in Ukraine (...) and our attitude towards Belarus'.¹²

The 'return to Europe' highlighted Poland's western orientation and credentials, which had been reinforced during the Cold war era when Józef Piłsudski's¹³ assertion that Russia constituted the greatest threat to the Polish nation accurately reflected the geopolitical situation at the time. This has been cemented in Poland's desire to join the EU, which is seen as a stabilizing factor through EU enlargement to the East rather than as an international security power. Connected to this is Poland's eastern dimension. Not only did Poland's emphasis on extending the right to self-determination to Eastern Europe mean that her interests lay in this region, but her security situation dictated that the country could not forget about her eastern border. To avoid becoming a buffer state, Poland needed to establish itself as a bridge between East and West. The emergence of Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus¹⁴ as independent states meant Poland became more politically and militarily secure. In fact Poland's previous serious geopolitical disadvantage has been transformed into an asset. This is one area in which Poland can make a unique contribution, to both the EU and NATO,¹⁵ which has already been demonstrated in Ukraine.

The Polish policy perspectives listed above provide Poland with an overarching set of priorities for its security and defence policy in the international arena. On the one hand these produce benefits in terms of an actively engaged reliable country ready to take action if necessary and to punch above its weight in a number of situations, such as in Iraq or Ukraine. On the other hand it highlights some constraints, particularly in traditional defensive thinking. Whilst Poland took part in the war on terror and backed its American ally, new international terrorist threats were not seen as being especially threatening for the Polish state itself.¹⁶ In addition there appears to be a defence thinking gap forming in the security community concerning which direction Polish security and defence should develop in. This is focused on whether Poland's armed forces should constitute a wholly expeditionary type force, trained to NATO and EU standards or should take the form of a more defensive force with an expeditionary trained element. It is to these issues that I now turn.

3. POLISH SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY: A DIVISION IN STRATEGIC THINKING?

Whilst recognising today's new security threats of organised international terrorism, the proliferation of WMD, the phenomenon of 'failed states' and international crime, Poland still hangs onto more traditional concepts of security, which places emphasis on NATO's security guarantee. This can clearly be seen in Poland's 2003 Security Strategy where 'the armed forces serve to assure Poland's security and to offer allied assistance under Article Five of the North Atlantic Treaty. Their purpose too is to protect Polish interests and to build Poland's position in NATO and the EU. At the same time the armed forces share in the implementation of allied commitments and assuring the collective security in Europe'.¹⁷ Hence, Poland is still in-between the type of security protection that was needed during the cold war and that which is required in today's security environment. However, as previously mentioned, Poland does not see these new types of risks to be as threatening to Poland as they are for the US or the UK for example, instead seeing them as coexisting with the old security threats. Thus, Poland looks east to Russia as a potential destabiliser in the region, although in the short term this is in regards to problems regarding Russia's energy policy rather than any 'hard' security fears. In addition there is a feeling that the EU does not take the potential threat from Russia as seriously as Poland, although the latter could be accused of paranoia on this issue. There is also recognition that whilst today, Poland suffers no immediate challenge to its independence, this might not always be the case and therefore a territorial defence capacity should be retained.

This contradicts Poland's wish to play a more pro-active role in the international security environment, as seen in Iraq when Poland took over one of the sectors there. Poland wanted to be seen to be a reliable, valuable ally and to act as a force for good, freeing the Iraqi people from a dictator who had little concern for human rights. However it has been interpreted from a different perspective. This holds that Poland became embroiled in a traditional imperial war and became part of a foreign, unjust invasion, in the same way that Poland was itself invaded by enemy forces in 1939.¹⁸ At the same time, instead of making Poland safer, the country's participation in Iraq has now opened up the possibility of a terrorist attack on Polish soil.¹⁹ Thus Poland's history produces contradictory results,

depending upon how it is interpreted, highlighting the existence of strategic sub-cultures. The difference in security thinking therefore revolves around those who think that Poland should stay away from foreign adventures and focus on its own defence interests but within a NATO and EU context, so taking part in areas such as Eastern Europe and the Balkans but not necessarily in Iraq or Africa and others who see the armed forces as an instrument of Poland's foreign policy. They wish to see the army developing as an expeditionary force, ready to implement Poland's wider security interests.²⁰ This also reveals the beginning of the formation of a generation gap in security thinking between those who remember the formative events in Polish history, in particular 1939, the Yalta agreement and the Cold war, many of whom were also involved in the Solidarity movement and the younger Poles who grew up with the second or third hand historical knowledge but who have re-interpreted it.

However in order to fulfil the expeditionary type forces that one section of the security community wants and Poland will have to develop in order to have a say over its interests, the armed forces need more investment. Presently Poland has two armies: a conscription based army whose main task is the conventional territorial protection of Poland and a smaller more specialised army who are interoperable with NATO and EU. This also causes problems within the Polish army as a whole because whilst the expeditionary forces are required to have equipment which is interoperable with the US, they cannot use it back home to communicate or train with the other half of the army.²¹ The ever increasing complexity of new military technology also points to the need to professionalise the armed forces.

Financially Poland's military expenditure is just below 2% of GDP at 1.95%, as specified in a Parliamentary resolution. Although this is not legally binding, no government has seen fit to downsize the budget and it is taken for granted that this will continue. However whether this is really enough, is another question. Whilst on the one hand this gives the Polish armed forces a constant input of investment, on the other if Poland needs to acquire additional equipment, then it has to re-organise the budget. Simply, Poland cannot acquire the rapid reaction forces and the investment in equipment that these types of forces require, without an increase in the budget or a greater willingness to pool

capabilities with its European partners. Another problem is that of conscription, particularly as today's security tasks require expeditionary rather than cold war conventional type forces. It is possible that conscription will be abandoned within the next ten to twelve years, which will help with the downsizing of the army and a reallocation of resources to expeditionary forces. However this does not mean that Poland will altogether abandon its traditional defensive force component and thus there will still be two armies. In addition if Poland wants to play an active role in the international security environment, then more money is needed as these types of activities drain the budget. The Polish mission in Iraq for example has put the Polish defence budget under considerable pressure.

Although Poland's security strategy was updated, the military missions and tasks have not been updated with it. Instead these remain the same as the pre-9/11 security strategy as alluded to in the 2001 white paper, specifying Poland's 'Programme for the Reconstruction and Technical Modernisation of the Polish Armed Forces 2001-2006', which aims to make the Polish armed forces more interoperable with NATO, decrease the size of the armed forces to 150,000, modernise equipment as well as dividing the army into operational forces and national support forces, creating two armies in one.²² However these changes are taking place in light of Poland's admission to NATO and thus only include the extension of the peacekeeping tasks that Poland is likely to engage in within a pre-9/11 context. Therefore, despite the political rhetoric, the reality on the ground has not dramatically shifted, although there is now more focus on crisis management activities than previously. However currently a strategic defence review, started by the previous government is being carried out. Whilst those conducting the review have remained the same and in that sense there is continuity, the government has changed and the question remains as to the impact the Administration will have in influencing the outcome of the review and whether it will implement the changes that are suggested. It is likely that a homeland type defensive force will still be kept, which makes conscription necessary, although there will be a general move in the direction of a more professional army.²³

Thus taken together, Poland suffers from the policy of retaining two armies with different rationales, both of which put the budget under pressure. However it must be remembered that Poland started out with a cold war conventional force and pressure has to be maintained not only to change the force structure but also the defence and security thinking on the roles these forces are to play. It is now necessary to turn to Poland's role in ESDP, to see how the opportunities and constraints on Poland's security and defence policy are affecting its ability to participate.

4. THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY: FROM SCEPTICISM TO REALISM

Poland initially reacted sceptically to the creation of ESDP, not understanding the rationale behind the policy. First, Poland was concerned that ESDP would challenge NATO's and in turn the US' supremacy in the area, weakening NATO, alienating the US and in turn letting Russia have more of an influence. Poland knew that keeping the US fully engaged in the European continent was essential to her security interests. Second, Poland was worried that ESDP would exclude non-EU European NATO members in an area that was essential to the continent as a whole, which contrasted with NATO's more inclusive stance. Third Warsaw thought that institutional ambiguity might be created as to who would be responsible for a crisis in the Baltics, Kaliningrad or over Belarus or Ukraine.²⁴

Poland's scepticism has since been replaced with a more realistic assessment of the policy and a desire to be included in an area that affects her interests. To this end, Poland suggested the 15+6 framework, which brought together the 15 EU member states and the 6 Non-EU European NATO states so that they could discuss European security and defence issues. Therefore, Poland looked to be a constructive ally as opposed to another Turkey. As Poland neared entry into the EU and Poland's 'outsider' status began to disappear, the country's perception of the policy changed as Poland realised that it could play a central role in the development of it. This was highlighted when Poland announced that it would be interested in taking part in structured cooperation. Moreover, ESDP had become active in 2003, highlighting that the policy was about more than the creation of new structures with no capabilities to match. Poland took up the opportunity to participate in ESDP missions, albeit only contributing a small number of their armed

forces, giving Polish troops peacekeeping experience in an EU context. This demonstrates that 'Warsaw is ready to take its responsibilities seriously to contribute to the development of ESDP'.²⁵ However how far Poland will become a major player in ESDP will ultimately depend upon whether it is able to rectify its' equipment shortfall in areas such as strategic air lift which is essential if Poland is to become a framework nation and whether Poland can overcome its remaining doubts concerning the ESDP project.

5. THE EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY (ESS): POLAND'S INDIFFERENT STANCE

At an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers held between 2nd and 3rd May 2003, at Kastellorizo on the island of Rhodes, Javier Solana was asked to produce a European security strategy. The draft was presented at the Thessaloniki European Council in June and three subsequent conferences were held to discuss the draft before the final version was agreed in December 2003 at the European Council Meeting in Brussels.²⁶ Whilst large sections of the European Security Strategy remain the same between the draft and the final there are some significant differences.

The first major difference is the language used when speaking of threats to the EU's security. It has been noticeably toned down in the final, although the general gist has been kept. The most well known example of this is the downgrading of pre-emptive engagement to preventative engagement. The European Security Strategy was in danger of becoming almost identical to the US Security Strategy in this respect and many member states were uncomfortable with the emphasis being placed on pre-emptive engagement especially coming at the same time as the Iraqi war, which had caused divisions upon how European countries, viewed and used force.

Secondly, softer security measures are enhanced in the final version, in particular in the section on effective multilateralism, the final is more confident and definite when discussing this. Thus, the final states that 'the development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule based international order is our objective'.²⁷ In the draft it had stated that the issues above 'should be our objective'.²⁸ Likewise, the 'working with partners' section is more positive too, showing a shift from stressing hard security issues to soft security issues.

Third, a number of issues have either been included or excluded in the final. By far the most prominent of these is the section on regional conflicts, which was added in the section on key threats and was enhanced in the 'more coherent' part of the ESS. In line with this, preventative engagement, crisis management and conflict prevention appear under the heading 'more active'. Whilst, Russia is mentioned far more in the final, primarily in a positive light although the ESS does point out that 'we should continue to work for closer relations with Russia, a major factor in our security and prosperity',²⁹ Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova have been taken out altogether. Finally the Berlin-Plus agreement makes an appearance in the final version, perhaps due to the fact that this is an important aspect in the EU's ability to perform military operations. Taken together, the ESS sounds more 'European' than 'American', with its emphasis on international law, effective multilateralism and a comprehensive view of security.

However, the ESS does not fully reflect Poland's security stance: in particular it fails to fully emphasise more traditional defence tasks and highlights new security tasks and a greater role for the EU in international security tasks. Thus it addresses the security concerns of the western Europeans more than the eastern Europeans. This can be seen in the changes that Poland proposed to the draft ESS. First Poland wanted Russia to be seen as a potential producer of instability as well as a possible international partner. Whilst as mentioned above, the ESS highlighted the importance of Russia as a factor in the EU's security, the country was still seen in a positive light and no mention was made directly of the potential for Russia to destabilise the region.³⁰ Second Poland wanted the ESS to place more emphasis on traditional security threats. As stated above, the section on 'regional conflicts' was added from the draft to the final versions, which corresponds more with Poland's vision of its' security threats, although Poland was not the only country to raise this concern.³¹ Third Poland objected to Ukraine being placed besides Belarus as a country, which threatened instability.³² Indeed the discussion paper produced before the Paris seminar on the ESS states that 'those actors are different and pose different problems. Should the EU engage more deeply with Ukraine? Can we promote good governance in Belarus? Should the document mention that different kinds of policies are required towards different kinds of states on its border?'³³ Whilst these

countries were debated, no clear conclusions or recommendations came out of the meeting on this particular topic.³⁴ As previously stated Ukraine, along with Belarus and Moldova do not appear in the final version of the ESS and instead it refers simply to the EU's neighbourhood. This is fortunate considering that the Orange revolution took place in Ukraine less than a year after the ESS had been officially agreed, which would have made the document outdated.³⁵ Although the ESS does point to a need to get more involved in the Southern Caucasus and for the EU to avoid creating yet another European division, there is no mention of how this is to be achieved. Thus as far as the East of Europe is concerned the ESS shows a lack of an eastern strategic dimension.

In the wider setting, the ESS elicited little reaction among the public and most foreign policy elites alike. Whilst there was nothing particularly controversial contained within the ESS, likewise there was little that really corresponded with Poland's particular perceptions of its security situation. Poland does not have a global vision for its security primarily because it has never had an overseas empire and therefore its interests in Africa, South America and Asia are limited and the country is still keen on the EU geographically limiting its ambitions. Meanwhile the ESS gives the EU a more global role in the security arena and does not rule out action in any part of the world. Moreover other more pressing international concerns overshadowed the adoption of the ESS, in particular the controversy over the Council voting weights in the European Constitution, which was being discussed at the time.³⁶ However considering that Poland had not yet joined the EU, it did make its opinions clear, although it should be remembered that Javier Solana's team prepared the draft and then the changes made to it were a consensus among 25 different countries. Thus it is difficult to ascertain each country's exact contribution to the document.

At the same time and despite Poland's general indifference to the document, it has clearly had an influence on Poland's own security strategy which was approved on 22nd July 2003 by the Council of Ministers and by the Polish President on 8th September 2003. This is of no great surprise considering that the authors of the National Security Strategy were the same as those who submitted Poland's input into the draft of the European Security Strategy.³⁷ Whilst Poland's security strategy was implemented first, it should be

remembered that Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials had already seen the draft of the European security strategy. In this way, Poland's security strategy has been to a certain extent 'europeanised'³⁸, as the authors of it had taken inspiration from the strategy at the European level. However, whilst aspects of the ESS have certainly been incorporated at the same time, Poland still highlights older security threats and thus it stresses that the international situation should be monitored for a resurgence of these. Despite Poland's wish for Russia to be dealt with more severely in the ESS, the country is not specifically mentioned in the context of a regional destabiliser in Poland's security strategy either. However, the question, as Podolski points out, is whether the sentence referring to 'the lingering bastions of authoritarianism in the Euro-Atlantic area'³⁹ concerns Russia or not.⁴⁰ Finally, Poland highlights its 'Ukraine-first' approach. The national security strategy states that 'in recognising Ukraine's importance for European security and supporting its European aspirations, Poland will make its best to fill with real substance the formula of strategic partnership with that country'.⁴¹ However whether Poland actionalises its 'europeanised' security strategy is another question.⁴² Considering Poland's instance on keeping a territorial defence force based on conscription, which is not in keeping with the EU's stance on new security threats, it is clear that despite the rhetoric the country has not made the complete move towards a europeanised mode of security thinking.

6. POLAND'S MINIMAL PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN RAPID REACTION FORCE: A CASE OF OVERSTRETCH?

Although Poland wishes to play a pro-active role in the international arena, it has only taken on a small, symbolic role where the ERRF is concerned; deploying troops primarily in the Balkans, in line with Polish more regional security interests. Whilst Poland has been sceptical over ESDP, this is not in itself the only reason for a lack of Polish involvement in ESDP missions. Rather with Polish troops engaged in UN peacekeeping missions and in Iraq there are simply not enough expeditionary troops to go around. The problem is therefore as much a resource issue as a willingness issue, especially where the EU is engaged in civil and military missions on the European continent. However whilst

Poland has little interest in places such as Africa, it is still willing to contribute troops to operations there in line with its desire to play a pro-active role in ESDP.⁴³

There is also little knowledge among the general population and some policy makers as to Polish participation in ESDP and there is still scepticism in certain quarters regarding the usefulness of the policy. Hence, there is no overall consensus upon whether participating in the ERF, really benefits Poland. Whilst there are few direct material advantages outside of training in an EU context, participation is important in order for Poland to show 'European solidarity' and to be seen as an active contributor. In this way, Poland might be taken more seriously inside Europe, perhaps leading to more influence in European ESDP and CFSP initiatives if Poland can prove that it can 'add value'. Consequently, the country is particularly keen to participate in the battlegroup concept and has agreed to lead a battlegroup with Germany backing Poland up. Thus, whilst Poland will be the framework nation for the first standby period which lasts from 1st January 2010 to 30 June 2010, 'the German participant will act as a Lead Nation for logistic support and will co-ordinate logistic support for the BG and for the (F)HQ'.⁴⁴ However, whilst the battlegroups are to be used wherever in the world they are needed their likely although not exclusive use is in Africa, which as previously stated is an area where Poland has no security interests, outside of being 'a good European' and showing solidarity to other European countries who do have interests in the region in the hope that this will be reciprocated in eastern Europe, an area which has direct consequences to Polish security. The question is whether the EU would further engage in the East. As this would involve Russian interests, the Poles are sceptical that the EU would want to increase its involvement.⁴⁵ In part this is due to a lack of media coverage on the role Javier Solana has played in the East, particularly regarding Ukraine and thus there are no expectations that ESDP will become engaged. However in the long term, the EU might be the only practical solution in the East in terms of peacekeeping, in such places as Moldova, considering NATO is perceived negatively in Russia.⁴⁶

7. EU-NATO BURDEN SHARING: POLAND'S NATO FIRST APPROACH

Whilst Poland is willing to play a constructive role in ESDP, NATO still comes first, where the country's security is concerned. As Cimoszewicz points out 'the common

European defence policy is a new important factor, yet it is NATO that gives us tested and full guarantees'.⁴⁷ Thus, inter-institutional links between the two organisations are important for Poland, particularly as the country is adamant that there should be no unnecessary duplication or competition between the two. This stance was highlighted when Poland objected to an EU military planning cell outside of SHAPE, which had been proposed by France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg at the 'chocolate summit' held in Tervuren in April 2003. Hence, Poland's main objective is in bringing 'the relevant European solutions closer to the mechanisms in NATO' and in regard to the EU's military capacity pushing 'for harmonisation and maximum convergence with the work conducted in NATO – by becoming involved in the activity of the two organisations in the corresponding fields'.⁴⁸ Overall, Poland has no major criticisms in regards to these, although it would like to see them become more formalised as currently they take the shape of informal dialogue at ministerial level. Thus whilst it adds to the understanding between the two organisations, little in the way of decisions have materialised. Poland would also like to see the delineation of tasks between the two organisations become clearer. Considering this, Poland fully supported the outcome of the Berlin-Plus agreement, which was agreed on 13th December 2002 and which gives the EU recourse to NATO's assets.⁴⁹

In terms of burden sharing, generally the approach is that if NATO does not want to get involved then the EU should have the ability to deal with security issues in its own neighbourhood. Thus Poland would like the EU to concentrate on the lower end of the Petersberg tasks to include crisis management and peacekeeping such as those being conducted in the Balkans at present, whilst the main defensive tasks should be the sole preserve of NATO. As Polish MEP Jacek Saryusz-Wolski states 'Warsaw is in favor of equipping the EU with a military capability, if the EU wishes to play a decisive role in world affairs. It should entail a European capacity to act if NATO does not want to and to act in regions close to the EU (for instance, in the Balkans)'.⁵⁰ However, at the same time, Poland has some concerns regarding the type of organisation that NATO is becoming and the downgrading of NATO in American eyes, following the US' decision to fight the war on terror with a select group of allies, rather than through NATO. This

is again due to the division in security thinking among the Polish security and defence elites regarding the development of expeditionary forces. There is obvious concern among many that if NATO focuses on this, then it will forget its traditional article five defence component, which is central to Polish security. Others meanwhile believe that Poland should adopt an assertive role in helping NATO to realise its global security ambitions.

In part this is another reason for Poland supporting the US so steadfastly in the war on terror because it was felt that a stronger bi-lateral relationship with the US would compensate for the weakening of NATO. However participation in Iraq led to disappointment as Poland did not get the benefits it had presumed. As Melamed highlights 'expectations – many of them overly optimistic – ranged from loosened visa restrictions on Polish citizens, economic investment opportunities for Polish companies in Iraq and international recognition of Poland as a regional power enjoying a "special relationship" with the US'.⁵¹ Contrary to what Melamed has suggested regarding Poland as a regional power, this is rejected among some Polish security and defence elites.⁵² Although these were only secondary aspects in Poland's decision to support and actively engage in the Iraq war, they have nonetheless had some impact. Whilst the Iraq experience is not going to make Poland turn away from its pro-Atlanticist path, given that the US and NATO are central to the country's security thinking, it has been given a dose of realism concerning US-Polish relations. This might make Poland a slightly more enthusiastic European where security policy is concerned. However, within the EU Poland has simply added its voice to the pro-Atlanticist camp, which already existed prior to Poland joining the organisation.

8. CONCLUSION

Whilst Poland has taken an increasingly more active role in ESDP, the country still entertains doubts that it can be used as an effective tool in the international security environment. Although Poland wishes to be seen as a pro-active, responsible ally, who makes a full contribution to both NATO and the EU, its history acts as a constraint, tying the country to NATO's article five as a prerequisite for its security interests, leading to a 'NATO-first' policy. This implies that the Polish armed forces are not being modernised to the extent necessary due to an inability to completely update its security

thinking, which entails Poland retaining two armies, with all the costs that this involves. This has affected Poland's military contribution to ESDP missions due to the country's expeditionary troops being involved in other multinational or ad hoc groupings, leading to the possibility that Poland would be unable to take up its share of the burden in ESDP. This would downgrade Poland's participation in the policy to the status of a bystander. Likewise the ESS was met with an unenthusiastic response, which revealed Poland's agnostic approach to the ESDP project. Despite this, Poland politically backed the initiative and incorporated much of it into the nation's own security strategy. The country's security thinking also manifested itself in the changes that Poland proposed to the ESS, which focus on regional threats especially Russia and a desire to retain the old threats at the same time as highlighting the new threats to international security. However, Poland did show that it is being constructive, especially with its suggestion regarding the Ukraine. Since Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, the country has continued to show a more realistic attitude to the ESDP project as highlighted by Poland's willingness to contribute troops to the upcoming Congo mission in June, despite a lack of Polish security interest in the hope of influencing ESDP in its preferred direction. More importantly, Poland has stepped up to the mark by agreeing to become a battlegroup lead nation although it has a late operational start date of 2010. Nevertheless Poland still has to be convinced by the ESDP project leading to its agnostic but realistic stance, which impacts upon its ability to play a more decisive role in the development of the policy. If Poland is to be seen as a 'good European' and to take an active role in decisions affecting her interests then a more positive outlook on ESDP combined with a shift in security thinking is needed.

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¹ Gray, Colin. S, 'Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back', International Affairs, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1999, pp51-52

² See Zaborowski, Marcin and Longhurst, Kerry, 'America's Protégé in the east? The emergence of Poland as a regional leader', International Affairs, vol. 79, No. 5, October 2003, Duffield, John, 'World Power Forsaken', 1998, Stanford University Press: Stanford, Berger, Thomas, 'Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan', 1998, The John Hopkins University Press: London

³ See Duffield, John, 'World Power Forsaken', 1998, Stanford University Press: Stanford

⁴ See Duffield, John, 'World Power Forsaken', 1998, Stanford University Press: Stanford, Longhurst, Kerry, 'Germany and the Use of Force', 2004, Manchester University Press: Manchester, Hyde-Price, Adrian, 'European Security, Strategic Culture and the Use of Force', European Security, Vol. 13, No. 4, 2004

⁵ See Prizel, Ilya, 'National Identity and Foreign Policy, Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia and Ukraine', 1998, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

⁶ Poland lost 40% of territory in the East and was offered 22% of territory in the West

⁷ See Zaborowski, Marcin and Longhurst, Kerry, op cit

⁸ Prizel, op cit, p93

⁹ Skubiszewski, Krzysztof, 'Poland's Foreign Policy in 1993 – Sejm Expose by the Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski', April 29, 1993, Warsaw, <http://www.zbiordokumentow.pl/1993/2/1.html>, p7

¹⁰ See Osica, Olaf, 'Poland: A New European Atlanticist at a Crossroads?', European Security, Vol. 13, No. 3, 2004, pp301-322

¹¹ See Prizel, Ilya, op cit.

¹² Rokita, Jan, 'Polish Foreign Policy – How Much Continuation, How Much Change', Center for International Relations lecture, 14th April 2005, http://www.csm.org.pl/en/files/conferences/2005/konf_i_sem_0105a.pdf, Accessed 30 March 2006, p6

¹³ Józef Piłsudski was the leader of the Polish Socialist Party who assumed leadership of Poland after the First World War. In 1926 he staged a military coup and Poland became a military junta. Piłsudski espoused political idealism and believed that Russia was the primary threat to an independent Poland. His obsession with potential Russian aggression meant that he underestimated Nazi Germany, believing that Poland would be attacked from the East rather than the West. The other half of the debate was centred on Roman Dmowski, the leader of the National Democrats, who advocated political realism and thought that Poland should ally with Russia against Germany. He also believed in an ethnically unified state believing all other cultures should be assimilated. For a detailed analysis see Bromke, Adam, 'Poland's Politics: Idealism vs. Realism', 1967, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts

¹⁴ Although it should be recognised that Belarus is a dictatorship and Polish-Belarusian relations are strained particularly due to the oppression of the Polish minority groups in Belarus and the expulsion of

Marek Bucko, first secretary of the Polish Embassy in Minsk on 17th May 2005. Warsaw responded by expelling a counsellor to the Belarusian embassy, although the Belarusians countered that the expelling of Marek Bucko was in direct response to the expelling of their counsellor, which they claimed had taken place a couple of weeks earlier. More recently an ex Polish Ambassador, Mariusz Maszkiewicz was jailed for participating in the peaceful demonstrations in Minsk following the Presidential elections in Belarus in 2006, which were seen as neither free nor fair by the OSCE.

¹⁵ See Skubiszewski, op cit

¹⁶ Interview conducted by the author. Interestingly the Polish Security Strategy also points out that in regards to the new international security risks, 'organised international terrorism is the most serious, although the extent of this threat to individual states is different'. See Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 'The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland', July 2003, Warsaw, p2

¹⁷ 'The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland', ibid, p8

¹⁸ For both sides of the argument on Poland's participation in Iraq see: Domosławski, Artur, 'We are not invaders – interview given by Adam D. Rotfeld', Yearbook of Polish Foreign Affairs 2003, Kuźniar, Roman, 'A Shift or a Continuation? Polish Foreign Policy after the Elections', The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest, Vol. 5, No. 4 (17), 2005, pp27-40 and Kuźniar, Roman 'European Security Strategy', Poland in Europe, Vol. 2, 2004, p19

¹⁹ See Melamed, Mark, 'Polish-American Relations in the Aftermath of the War in Iraq', The Polish foreign Affairs Digest, Vol. 5, no.2, 2005, pp11-12

²⁰ Interviews conducted by the author, Warsaw

²¹ Interview conducted by the author, Warsaw

²² See, The Ministry of National Defence, 'White Paper', 2001, Bellona Publishing House: Warsaw

²³ Interview conducted by the author

²⁴ See Dunn, David 'Poland: America's New Model Ally' in Zaborowski, Marcin and Dunn, David, 'Poland – A New Power in Transatlantic Security', 2003, Frank Cass Publishers: London

²⁵ Trzaskowski, Rafal, 'Poland' in Missiroli, Antonio, 'Bigger EU, Wider CFSP, Stronger ESDP?' April 2002, Occasional Paper 34, The European Union Institute for Security Studies: Paris, www.iss-eu.org/occasion/occ34.pdf, p24

²⁶ The three conferences were held in Rome on 19th September 2003, Paris from 6th to 7th October 2003 and Stockholm on 20th October 2003. See Bailes Alyson J. K. 'The European Security Strategy: an Evolutionary History', Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Policy paper No. 10, February 2005, http://www.sipri.org/contents/editors/publications/ESS_PPrapport.pdf, Accessed 23rd March 2006

²⁷ Ibid, p9

²⁸ Solana, Javier, 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', European Council Thessaloniki, 20 June 2003, op cit, p9

²⁹ Solana, Javier, 'A Secure Europe in a Better World – European Security Strategy', Brussels 12 December 2003, op cit, p15

³⁰ The tensions concerning this are highlighted in the report of the Paris seminar on the EU's Strategic Objectives: Effective Multilateralism and Extended Security. See Gnesotto, Nicole, 'Strategie De Sécurité de l'Union Européenne, Compte rendu du séminaire sur les objectifs stratégiques, Paris, 6-7 octobre 2003 «Les objectifs stratégiques de l'UE : Multilatéralisme efficace, Sécurité élargie», European Union Institute for Security Studies, 13 October 2003, <http://www.iss-eu.org/solana/reppar.pdf>, Accessed 9 July 2006, p9

³¹ See Gnesotto, Nicole, 'Note Pour Le Haut Representant Strategie De Sécurité de l'Union Européenne, Compte rendu du séminaire sur les menaces, Rome, 19 septembre 2003 Identifying and understanding threats', European Union Institute for Security Studies, 23rd September 2003, <http://www.iss-eu.org/solana/repprom.pdf>, Accessed 9th July 2006, p1

³² See Osica, Olaf, 'A Secure Poland in a Better Union? The ESS as Seen from Warsaw's Perspective', in Overhaus, Marco, Maull, Hanns W, Harnisch, Sebastian, 'The European Security Strategy Paper Tiger or Catalyst for Joint Action? – Part II Perspectives from Italy, Poland, Austria and Finland' German Foreign Policy in Dialogue, Newsletter – Volume 5, Issue 14, October 14 2004, <http://www.deutsche-aussenpolitik.de/newsletter/issue14.pdf>, Accessed 21 March 2006.

³³ Ortega Martin, with contributions from Batt, Judy and Lynch, Dov, 'Discussing Solana's Strategy Document. The EU's Strategic Objectives: Effective Multilateralism and Extended Security. Discussion Paper', European Union Institute for Security Studies, 24 September 2003, Paris, <http://www.iss-eu.org/solana/docpar.pdf>, Accessed 9 July 2006, p16-17

³⁴ See Gnesotto Nicole, 'Strategie De Sécurité de l'Union Européenne, Compte rendu du séminaire sur les objectifs stratégiques, Paris, 6-7 octobre 2003 «Les objectifs stratégiques de l'UE : Multilatéralisme efficace, Sécurité élargie», op cit, p9

³⁵ Interview conducted by author

³⁶ See Osica, Olaf, op cit, p9

³⁷ See Podolski, Antoni, 'Polska Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego jako praktyczna implementacja Europejskiej Strategii Bezpieczeństwa – między teorią a praktyką', Raporty i Analizy, 01/2005, Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych, http://www.csm.org.pl/pl/files/raporty/2005/rap_i_an_0105.pdf, p3

³⁸ Europeanisation looks to connect the different levels involved in the European integration process (White 2004) and can be defined as 'a complex interactive 'top-down and 'bottom up' process in which domestic politics, politics and public policies are shaped by European integration and in which domestic actors use European integration to shape the domestic arena. It may produce either continuity or change and potentially variable and contingent outcomes'. (Dyson and Goetz 2003: 20).

³⁹ The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, op cit, p1

⁴⁰ See Podolski, Antoni, op cit, p4

⁴¹ The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, op cit, p8

⁴² See Podolski, Antoni, op cit

⁴³ Poland has recently announced that it will send 150 troops to the upcoming mission to the Congo in June, showing that Poland is using its armed forces as an extension of its foreign policy rather than only deploying them in places which directly affect Polish security. This is in line with what one section of the security community wants, although whether this is the exception or the norm remains to be seen.

⁴⁴ Memorandum of Understanding between the Federal Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania and the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Poland and the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic Concerning the Framework Regulations for the European Union Battlegroup (EU BG 2010), 2005, http://www.mk.gov.lv/doc/2005/AIMss_170306.doc, Accessed 10 July 2006, p15

⁴⁵ There have been two missions conducted by the EU in this region. The first is an EU border assistance mission to Moldova and Ukraine, which includes the contested region of Transnistria and is still ongoing. The second was a rule of law mission (EUJUST THEMIS) to Georgia, which has been completed.

⁴⁶ For a short overview on the possibility of EU involvement see Polikanov, Dmitry, 'Transdnestria, Abkhazia, Chechnya: Pros and Cons of the EU Intervention', Connections – The Quarterly Journal, Vol. 3, No. 2, June 2004, pp33-38

⁴⁷ Cimoszewicz, Włodzimierz, 'Landscape beyond the Horizon: Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland after Accession to the European Union', The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs, Spring 2004, Vol. 14, No. 2, p15

⁴⁸ Kupiecki, Robert, 'Polish Security Policy at the Time of Crisis in Transatlantic Relations', Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2004, p45. It should be noted that Dr Robert Kupiecki is the director of the Security Policy Department in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁴⁹ However it only gives assured access to NATO's planning capabilities. In regards to NATO's assets and capabilities 'NATO has established a first list of its assets and capabilities that, in strong likelihood, NATO would decide to make available to the EU should the EU need them. In addition, NATO has defined a number of principles as well as financial and legal considerations applicable to the release of its assets and capabilities to the EU. On this basis, a specific EU-NATO agreement setting out the conditions for use of NATO assets and capabilities is drawn up for a given operation. Such agreement provides in particular for a possible recall of assets due to unforeseen circumstances, for example due to the emergence of a NATO Article 5 contingency.' See Council of Ministers, 'Background – EU-NATO: The Framework For Permanent Relations and Berlin Plus', <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/03-11-11%20Berlin%20Plus%20press%20note%20BL.pdf>, p2

⁵⁰ Foreign Policy Review, 'The key to a successful European cooperation is a common social, political, economic, and cultural identity.' An interview with József Szájer, European Parliament, Member EPP-ED Group, Vice-President', Foreign Policy Review, Vol. 3, No 1-2, 2005, p25

⁵¹ Melamed, Mark K, op cit, p10

⁵² See Dębski, Sławomir, 'Knowledge of history occupies an important place in the thinking of policy makers of any country. An Interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Adam Daniel Rotfeld' Foreign Policy Review, Vol. 3, No. 1-2, 2005, p6