

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION: A FOLLOW-ON TO THE GLOBAL STRATEGY?

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I. INTRODUCTION

As of mid 2016, the European Union (EU) finally has a new Global Strategy for its foreign and security policy, which is a follow-on to its 2003 Security Strategy.¹ In 2003, in the midst of a heated debate about suspected Iraqi weapon of mass destruction (WMD) capabilities, the issue of non-proliferation easily made it to the top of the list of priorities. It even led EU leaders to adopt a specific WMD strategy at the same time: the EU's 2003 Strategy on the Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (EU WMD Strategy). In 2016, the situation was different. Many other issues dominated the agenda, and non-proliferation—and for that matter arms control—was not given a prominent place among the priorities of the Global Strategy.

So does the EU need to undertake a new dedicated effort to deal with WMD-related problems?² This paper presents a number of arguments for and against. The reasons for singling out the WMD track will need to be compelling—the burden of proof is heavy on those who argue that it should be a priority for the EU—and

¹ European Union, Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe, A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy, Brussels, June 2016, <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/regions/files/eugs_review_web.pdf>; and European Council, 'A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy', Brussels, 12 Dec. 2003, <<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>>.

² This paper expands on and updates WMD proliferation-related aspects of the book by the author Lundin, L.-E., *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (Santérus: Stockholm, 2015), in particular section 4.2. It also builds on the logic of focusing on the need for a comprehensive approach by the EU to non-proliferation work initially outlined in the paper by Lundin, L.-E., 'The European Union, the IAEA and WMD non-proliferation: unity of approach and continuity of action', Non-proliferation Paper no. 9, EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, Feb. 2012, <<https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/Nonproliferation9.pdf>>. The collection of material for this paper has to a large extent been carried out using the website <www.lerlundin.org> as a basis, including subpages relating to arms control.

SUMMARY

The European Union (EU) should undertake a new and dedicated effort to deal with the problems related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD). More specifically, one or more new strategy documents are required and, in this context, the EU should also pursue WMD-related contingency planning to increase preparedness and prevent or counter crises. If the EU does not undertake these efforts, something much more will be at stake than the effectiveness of EU programmes in the areas of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. The overarching risk is that EU leaders will become reactive and even confused to a greater and even more dangerous extent than occurred after the terrorist attacks on the United States of 11 September 2001.

The differentiation of WMD-related threats over the past decade, however, has risked making crisis response too slow and uncoordinated at all levels, from the local to the global. In parallel, there is the constant risk that the lessons learned from the more or less successful application of deterrence and other types of influencing methods are being forgotten. In addition, differences in the level of awareness between the large and small countries in Europe and across thematic sectors risk further delaying action, not least in support of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime as a whole. If a multi-sector crisis were to occur in some way linked to WMD, the lack of a level playing field in this regard could cause existential problems for certain EU member states.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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the attention span is likely to be extremely short unless there is a crisis. In addition, when all the arguments are put together, it is important to take account of those factors linked to awareness, knowledge and cognitive frameworks that will make it more or less clear to decision makers at different levels that something must be done.

As a bottom line, the paper argues that the EU should pursue WMD-related contingency planning to increase preparedness in order to prevent and counter crises.

II. EXISTING STRATEGIES AND THEIR LINKS TO WMD

The EU Global Strategy

Do the provisions related to arms control and non-proliferation in the EU Global Strategy need to be complemented by a new or updated WMD strategy that spells out the links in a more explicit and systematic way?³ The Global Strategy contains several key paragraphs on the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the need to manage various dangerous ‘flows’ in the international system in a more comprehensive way. However, even this extensive document, which is almost four times longer than the 2003 Security Strategy, could not be expected to spell out all the links between WMD and other policy areas. There are only a few explicit references to WMD, but closer study finds some implicit links that need to be made more explicit. The paragraph on non-proliferation and arms control can be found under the fifth main priority, global governance:

The EU will strongly support the expanding membership, universalisation, full implementation and enforcement of multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control treaties and regimes. We will use every means at our disposal to assist in resolving proliferation crises, as we successfully did on the Iranian nuclear programme.

A small number of additional explicit references to these concepts can be found under the fourth main priority, to promote regional governance, with reference to Asia and Latin America, but that is all. This means that there are far fewer explicit references

to WMD risks than there were in the 2003 Security Strategy.⁴

It is easy to understand that this issue also affects other priority headings in the Global Strategy, even though the text does not make explicit references. Nonetheless, the Global Strategy does not sufficiently fuel the imagination when it comes to linking some areas of activity of major importance from a WMD perspective. The most striking example is the important section on the need to monitor flows in Chapter 4 on ‘moving from vision to action’. Here the Global Strategy prescribes a highly ambitious and differentiated set of measures to enhance the monitoring of these flows in and out of the EU, using intelligence, research, training exercises and so on. It does not, however, spell out that such flows must involve WMD-related risks, including those linked to non-state actors. Negative flows linked to terrorism and organized crime—including financial flows—are obvious cases in point, beyond energy flows.

When it comes to the first priority of the Global Strategy’s external action, ‘the Security of our Union’, the headlines are security and defence, counterterrorism, cybersecurity, energy security and strategic communications. Under all these headings, there are of course extremely important links ranging from nuclear security and non-state actors to critical infrastructure and the management of negative flows.

Under the second priority, ‘State and societal resilience to our East and South’, the neighbourhood perspective dominates the paradigm. Again, however, some issues relating to non-proliferation and arms control, including the management of WMD risks, are more or less obvious. In this context, the important role of EU delegations is a reminder of the general need to upgrade expertise on security issues in the delegations, including those multilateral delegations working directly with the United Nations and regional organizations on WMD-related issues.

The third priority sets out the need for an integrated approach to conflicts and crises. Here, notably, the call for a comprehensive approach is reiterated with links to conflict prevention, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), multilateralism, governance and the need to work on all geographic levels at the same time. This priority primarily addresses areas outside the immediate neighbourhood of the EU, which makes the links to WMD less easy to find, but they are there

³ European Union (note 1).

⁴ European Council (note 1).

for instance in the link to organized crime, human trafficking and dual-use items.

The EU Internal Security Strategy

The EU Internal Security Strategy was first promulgated in 2010, on the basis of a developing internal security policy after the terrorist attacks on the United States of 11 September 2001.⁵ The first period of implementation was 2010–14, during which there were five main priorities. These were then reviewed and given additional political impetus through the so-called European Agenda on Security after 2015.⁶ Parallel work defined the priorities for the second period of implementation, from 2015–20.

The Council Conclusions on priorities for 2015–20 highlight terrorism, organized crime, and cybercrime and cybersecurity as the three central areas of relevance to EU internal security. Some horizontal efforts illustrate the links to WMD, such as references to border security and interoperability among law enforcements agencies, industrial policy and research, but the text stays clear of explicit links to WMD.⁷

The European Agenda on Security is more explicit. One reference is included in the section on joint EU training systems:

The Commission has also established a European Security Training Centre that enables Member States to improve their capabilities in detecting and identifying illicit nuclear or radioactive materials for threat prevention.

Even more significant is the reference to chemical, biological radiological and nuclear threats and the links to terrorism:

One way to disrupt the activities of terrorist networks is to make it more difficult to attack targets and to access and deploy dangerous

⁵ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, The EU Internal Security Strategy in Action: Five steps towards a more secure Europe, COM(2010) 673 final, 22 Nov. 2010.

⁶ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, The European Agenda on Security, COM(2015) 185 final, 28 Apr. 2015.

⁷ Council of the European Union, Draft Council Conclusions on the Renewed European Union Internal Security Strategy 2015–2020, 9798/15, 10 June 2015.

substances, such as Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear materials and explosives precursors. Protecting critical infrastructures . . .

The European Agenda also contains an important paragraph on crisis coordination, linking it to the need for contingency planning:

Coordination hubs can facilitate a coherent European response during crises and emergencies, avoiding unnecessary and expensive duplication of efforts . . . the Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangement (IPCR) . . . relies on inputs from the Commission, EU agencies and Member States. With increasing and new disaster risks, Member States and the Commission need to work together . . . [towards] a more efficient and coherent EU response to crises sparked by criminal acts, impacting on borders, public security and critical systems. . .

III. A NEW DEDICATED WMD NON-PROLIFERATION EFFORT?

The strategies adopted by the EU in 2003 led to an ambitious effort to develop implementation plans and regular reviews that spanned more than a decade. There are arguments for and against making a renewed effort in this direction.

Arguments against

First and foremost, the argument against another dedicated effort on WMD non-proliferation in the EU is that there are many other challenges facing EU leaders. In addition to the very large, ongoing effort to counter the 2008 financial crisis there have been overwhelming problems relating to populism, migration and terrorism, not to mention conflicts to the east and south of the EU. The decision by the United Kingdom to leave the EU and the election of US President Donald J. Trump have added to the list of uncertainties and challenges requiring the attention of the European Council. For some years, the problem of a limited capacity to multitask has been part of the EU security policy discourse. The accumulation of security-related problems in recent years has arguably

further shortened the attention span not only of the public and the media, but also of EU leaders. Thinking ahead, while at the same time identifying fundamental lessons learned, is often seen as a luxury—particularly in sensitive domains where there may be a larger political premium on action than on reflection.

Second, there is a natural reluctance by non-specialists to engage with this topic, which is quite technically sophisticated. This in itself can deter engagement by generalists. To obtain a clear view on how the EU can add further substantial value beyond general political declarations requires a lot of work and knowledge. The non-proliferation of WMD is a highly specialized field, as is the management of WMD risks, which is vital for those actors that possess nuclear capabilities, including in the EU. In addition, the linkages from an arms control perspective between conventional weapons and platforms, dual-use items and WMD are complex. In some sensitive areas, work needs to be pursued in highly classified settings involving very few experts. A case in point is nuclear security.⁸ Another is the implementation of the Iran nuclear deal, a process that engages many politically but continues to be managed by very few.⁹

Third, EU member states not infrequently argue in favour of keeping non-proliferation cooperation in the EU squarely confined to the intergovernmental arena, and thus subject to consensus decision making.¹⁰ The intergovernmental context has also been the primary frame of reference for the implementation of WMD-related work beyond Euratom safeguards.¹¹ The budgetary and staff resources available for these EU efforts are extremely limited and competition for funds is fierce. Many no doubt consider that the EU is already doing what it reasonably can.

Fourth, there is the issue of the EU's role. Instinctively, many might question whether the EU will ever be entrusted with a similar role to the one it played regarding Iran. Given the negative posture of the new US Administration on the Iran deal, such a role might be unlikely for the foreseeable future. It remains an open question whether the political conditions for

WMD talks and negotiations beyond bilateral formats could be found in the current international setting. The same might be true for multilateral processes. The EU could not arrive at a common position on the UN resolution proposing negotiations on a ban on WMD. The majority of EU member states voted against the resolution in the General Assembly, and the nuclear powers either voted against or abstained.¹²

Arguments in favour

There is also a strong case for a renewed priority engagement on WMD-related issues in the EU setting. First, with regard to overall priorities, there could at any time be a crisis that puts WMD-related risks at the top of the European Council agenda.¹³ It is important to note that this will be the case regardless of whether the EU is expected to have a role in dealing with the crisis. This argument underpins the need for EU contingency planning (see below). It is not only an issue of horizontal WMD proliferation. This could also relate to a more general crisis that requires escalation prevention. Incoming senior officials in the USA, including the Secretary of State, have indicated the need for forceful US deterrent action against possible adversaries.¹⁴ The language used with regard to China and North Korea has been particularly strong. Whether this renewed discussion about red lines and so on will lead to more stability or less remains to be seen—and there is also the issue of whether more tension between the main players will spill over into the possibility of safeguarding the NPT regime as a whole in the process leading up to the next review in 2020.¹⁵

One important positive but highly hypothetical side note is that it cannot be excluded that more tension in the relationship between the USA and China, despite

⁸ See Levi, M. A., *On Nuclear Terrorism* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 2007).

⁹ For background to the implementation plan see US State Department, 'Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action', <<https://www.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/iran/jcpoa/>>.

¹⁰ See Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), section 4.1.

¹¹ See Lundin, 'The European Union, the IAEA and WMD non-proliferation: unity of approach and continuity of action' (note 2).

¹² On 27 Oct. 2016, the First Committee of the UN General Assembly adopted resolution L.41 to convene negotiations in 2017 on a 'legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination'. The voting result was 123 nations in favour and 38 against, with 16 abstentions. ICAN, 'Full voting result on UN resolution L.41', <<http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/results/>>.

¹³ See Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), section 3.4.

¹⁴ C-SPAN, 'Secretary of State Confirmation Hearing, Part 1', <<https://www.c-span.org/video/?421335-1/secretary-state-nominee-rex-tillerson-testifies-confirmation-hearing>>.

¹⁵ United Nations, 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), 'Text of the Treaty', <<http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/text.shtml>>; and Reaching Critical Will, '2017 NPT Preparatory Committee', <<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora/npt/2017>>.

Syria, might be coupled with less tension and more cooperation at the strategic level between the USA and Russia. Such a development could theoretically form the basis for more WMD-related progress in the US–Russian relationship, from which the EU and the European area may benefit and where the EU or individual European countries could theoretically play a role.

Second, in response to the argument about the need to continue to confine the discussion to intergovernmental and highly classified settings, many issues of relevance to non-proliferation have links to other policy areas that it has not yet been possible to explore in the intergovernmental context. There is always the possibility that further important loopholes in the NPT regime could be identified, which are not currently under serious discussion in the intergovernmental EU context. There is a limit to what non-proliferation specialists can achieve without outreach to other experts. Leaders may decide that a broader, more dedicated effort is needed to close such loopholes.

Third, only since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty has the potential for the coordination of EU work in different legal, budgetary and structural contexts been properly established.¹⁶ Much work remains to be done in this regard, as illustrated by the continued existence of the Euratom Treaty.¹⁷ Under Euratom, the European Commission has a legal responsibility to work with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on nuclear safeguards in Europe, to direct and fund the bulk of EU research efforts of relevance to WMD, and to manage the links to trade negotiations, industrial policy and so on. Cross-pillar coordination did not have a sufficient legal or political basis at the time of the promulgation of the EU Strategy against the proliferation of WMD in 2003.¹⁸ There was an initial effort by the Office of the High Representative and the Commission to create what was called a WMD Monitoring Centre to join up work

across institutions.¹⁹ Gradually, there was also an effort to create a unified format for working with the IAEA, but these efforts required a lot of time to gain traction. Joint senior consultations with the IAEA took place only after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty.

Fourth, these legal developments correspond with a convergence of views on the need for a more differentiated and comprehensive security policy, both internal and external to the EU. The basis for efforts in this direction was weak in the late 1990s, when the EU established the CSDP within the framework of the overall Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It is notable that the term security policy was seldom if ever used in European Commission documents before September 2001.²⁰ There was a reference to the need to protect the security of the citizen at the micro level, for instance through action on landmines or environmental protection, but it was not deemed appropriate to develop a more coherent security policy at the macro level. This was despite the fact that the EU enlargement and neighbourhood policies, including trade negotiations, had deep and wide-ranging security policy implications. The fact that Article 21 of the Lisbon Treaty summarizes many of the community policies under the heading of EU external action is an interesting illustration of this point.²¹ Initially, however, coordination with the CSDP was mainly an issue of civilian and military missions in the intergovernmental sphere. It was only later that development and humanitarian actors in the Commission were asked to coordinate more closely with the CSDP, and it was much later still that issues such as the energy crisis, cybersecurity, health security, irregular migration, radicalization, terrorism, piracy and trafficking were the subject of comprehensive approaches. Gradually, the need to link up different alert mechanisms across services with the EU member states to create the basis for a generic response in a multi-sector crisis was identified as increasingly important. This followed crises such as the Asian tsunami in 2004 and the Fukushima nuclear reactor flooding in 2011, not to mention the financial crisis of 2008.

¹⁶ See Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), section 5.

¹⁷ 1957 Treaty Establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom Treaty), <<http://ec.europa.eu/euratom/>>. See also Lundin, 'The European Union, the IAEA and WMD non-proliferation: unity of approach and continuity of action' (note 2).

¹⁸ Council of the European Union, Fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: EU strategy against proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, 15708/03, 10 Dec. 2003.

¹⁹ Council of the European Union, EU Strategy against the proliferation of WMD: Monitoring and enhancing consistent implementation, 16694/06, 12 Dec. 2006.

²⁰ See Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2).

²¹ See Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), Introduction.

Fifth, there is a link to globalization and the increasing interconnectedness, complexity and contested nature of the international system, which in turn requires enhanced management of all the different types of flow. As just one example, it is useful to review the extensive development and differentiation of cyberspace since 2000. The 2016 Global Strategy and the EU Strategic Review from the year before highlight these arguments.²² Cooperation on many different levels and in many different types of cluster is deemed increasingly necessary. This is illustrated by the way the current Commission is organized together with the European External Action Service (EEAS).²³ The High Representative in her capacity as Vice-President of the Commission performs an important role in leading one of the clusters of Commissioners in an effort to create more coordination in external action. This is probably only the beginning of a more complex and overlapping network of coordination efforts relevant to security policy in the EU and Europe. It is based on a realization that the necessary and sufficient conditions for success require strong awareness and active engagement on the part of services to promote related policy objectives. Using nuclear security as one of many possible examples there is a clear link to counterterrorism, but also more generally to the rule of law, effective multilateralism, energy policy, research and development (R&D), and regional and global cooperation, among other things. Like terrorism, it is not just a matter of external policy but also of internal. No particular minister in the EU member states owns the entire dossier and the High Representative needs considerable support in her efforts from those active in other thematic areas, both internal and external. Failure in areas where she is not in the lead might significantly affect the capacity of safeguarding non-proliferation.

In an effort to seek to deny access to capabilities linked to WMD, even seemingly unrelated measures might be useful, such as working to improve generic border management systems and export controls, tracking financial transactions and other cross-border data flows, the management of technical research

cooperation, including the problems of dual use, and so on. It follows from the above examples that a large number of EU policies pursued with the ministers of member states, with EU Commissioners in the policy lead, can often play a significant role in support of non-proliferation. A case in point is energy policy, where it is quite natural that if there is a problem related to nuclear safeguards, the Energy Commissioner will be in the lead at the EU level together with the rotating Presidency on the basis of the provisions of the still valid Euratom Treaty.²⁴

IV. CONDITIONS FOR ENHANCED EFFECTIVENESS

Against this background, this paper continues to promote an argument put forward in some previous papers in the Non-Proliferation Consortium series: the need to pursue more comprehensive awareness-raising approaches directed at non-specialists.²⁵ In so doing it is important to be realistic. Non-specialists are not likely to direct their attention to WMD-related issues if they are unaware of the relevant links to their own tasks and objectives. To resolve this problem, a genuine learning effort needs to be made on both sides. WMD specialists need to train themselves to understand how others work; and those responsible for other vectors of action, be it counterterrorism, financial crime, R&D cooperation or export controls, need to better understand how WMD might enter their frame of reference.

In the first place, this may involve attaching proper importance to the role of seemingly trivial actors, such as people working in everyday roles in the financial sector, in universities, exporting technical components, managing computer systems and so on. It may also, as in the case of defence but also conventional arms control, involve addressing taboos in security policy, where possible escalation to WMD may be deliberately kept out of scenarios or verification parameters in order not to complicate planning.

From this learning perspective, there is significant potential added value in the Global Strategy and the Internal Security Strategy that is not often discussed.

²² European Union, 'The European Union in a changing global environment: a more connected, contested and complex world', Executive Summary, Brussels, June 2015, <http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/docs/strategic_review/eu-strategic-review_executive_summary_en.pdf>.

²³ European Commission, 'Political leadership', <https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-union/organisational-structure/political-leadership_en>.

²⁴ See Lundin, 'The European Union, the IAEA and WMD non-proliferation: unity of approach and continuity of action' (note 2).

²⁵ See e.g. Anthony, I., 'The role of the European Union in strengthening nuclear security', Non-proliferation Paper no. 32, Non-Proliferation Consortium, Nov. 2013, which also proposes a role for the European Parliament to this end; and Lundin, 'The European Union, the IAEA and WMD non-proliferation: unity of approach and continuity of action' (note 2).

They create a frame of reference for a further inventory of possible links between WMD-related and other issues, and set the overall priorities for EU security policy work. What needs to happen now is to make these links more explicit.

V. INFLUENCE AND THE EU'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

A 2013 SIPRI Policy Paper on the implementation of the EU WMD Strategy, produced in the strategy's tenth year, noted that the approach taken in the internal security discourse might have been more effective in responding to the EU's comparative advantage than the more traditional approach adopted in the external strategy during the same period.²⁶ In particular, the paper noted the link to the security of the citizen in the internal strategy, which can be readily associated with a significant number of EU assets.

From this perspective, more networking between the services dealing with internal security and those preparing the EU Global Strategy would have been desirable, something that was even publicly highlighted by the EEAS. The fact that the UK Commissioner responsible for counterterrorism is still not officially part of the external relations coordination cluster led by the High Representative/Vice-President is a case in point. A more systematic analysis and review of different ways to internally and externally influence might be useful in seeking to identify the EU's areas of comparative advantage.

When considering the opportunities for the EU to have an influence, such an analysis will also require a frame of reference and an overview. The links to the role of the EU and the perceptions of the EU as an international actor with influence and even power, as a forum for coordination and as a catalyst, are key to the opportunities to enhance the EU's inventory of possible influencing mechanisms.

It can be argued that the Global Strategy adopts a distinctive perspective from that of the Internal Security Strategy. As might be expected, the internal security context focuses more on how the EU can catalyse more actor capacity at the level of member states in coordination with others. The Global Strategy,

²⁶ Anthony, I. and Grip, L., *Strengthening the European Union's Future Approach to WMD Non-proliferation*, SIPRI Policy paper no. 37 (SIPRI: Stockholm, June 2013).

in contrast, is focused on supporting international governance at the global and regional levels. The Euratom Treaty complements the two by adopting a focus on safeguards within the EU, but in cooperation with external partners.

In all these contexts the focus is much more on capacity building and the reinforcement of norms and commitments than on coercion. This illustrates a point made in an analysis of EU policy in recent decades by the Non-Proliferation Consortium. Policy recommendations have become greater in number and harder to enforce even in the most cooperative relationships between the EU and its external partners. Moreover, the conditions for effective implementation of WMD-related sanctions are extremely difficult to create—even if many consider Iran to be a successful case.²⁷ However, both the Global Strategy and the Internal Security Strategy exercises lead to another conclusion: that to enhance its influence the EU must begin at home, first and foremost inside its own structures.

For this reason, it is useful that the EEAS has chosen to put out material that seeks to raise general awareness of issues related to nuclear security, stressing the links between safeguards, security and safety.²⁸

Yet clearly one-off efforts are not enough; and it is not sufficient to mention one need among many in strategic documents. Furthermore, it is not enough to continue to preach to the converted. Something more is needed beyond regular, routine follow-up through progress reports. Staff involved in WMD-related work need to be inducted and trained to know more about what others are doing in the EU security policy context. It has been noted in the scientific literature on effectiveness in large organizations that it is vital to pursue inter-service coordination by first listening to the concerns of others before setting out your own priorities.

²⁷ Macaluso, A., *The Apparent Success of Iran Sanctions: Iran, Rouhani, and the Nuclear Deal*, The Hague Institute for Global Justice Working Paper no. 2 (2014), <http://www.thehagueinstituteforglobaljustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Working-Paper-2-Iran-Sanctions_1409326879.pdf>.

²⁸ European Commission and European External Action Service, 'EU efforts to strengthen nuclear security', Joint Staff Working Document, SWD(2016)98 final, 16 Mar. 2016, <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/eu-efforts-to-strengthen-nuclear-security_en.pdf>.

VI. COMPLEXITY AND THE CASE FOR WMD-RELATED CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Taking into account the proper integration of WMD-related work into the overall formats for crisis coordination gradually established in the EU after September 2001, it does seem vital to further pursue this work at least partly in the mode of contingency planning. As the Fukushima catastrophe in 2011 illustrated, a multi-sector crisis in Europe or the world would of necessity affect a number of key EU and European sectors. It is almost always the case that the issue is likely to be raised seriously only during a crisis. The EU has struggled for several decades with the problem of foresight and intelligence. Conflict prevention was not a priority EU policy before the wars in the Western Balkans. Counterterrorism was not a priority issue before September 2001. Problems related to irregular migration were not taken too seriously before 2015. The need to develop generic EU crisis management systems was not fully realized before a series of potential multi-sector crises affecting Europe had taken place.

All in all, it is probable that a call for a comprehensive approach is no longer sufficient to gain the attention of leaders. Hardly a month goes by without a call for a comprehensive approach to one area of concern or another, be it irregular migration, piracy or cybersecurity. In reality, it seems that an additional necessary condition for priority is crisis. The result of the referendum on whether the UK should leave the EU, in combination with a number of other threats and challenges currently facing the European community, has drawn increased attention to security policy.

The current situation is, of course, different from the situation at the end of the cold war. Systems might not be crumbling, but there have certainly been some paradigmatic shifts. What may be crumbling is large-scale international cooperation. Multilateralism is in crisis and so are the systems for regional and global governance. The management of various flows is increasingly seen as an overwhelming challenge.

International relations seem to be being governed by domestic sources of foreign policy to an extent not seen for a very long time. In addition, the mood in the West seems to be much less optimistic than in the early days of the post-cold war period. The notion of populism troubles leaders across the world and threatens to derail democratic processes in upcoming elections,

such as in Germany and France, just as it did in the USA in November 2016.

Just reacting to what is happening is therefore a posture that enjoys less support than was the case during the intensive work preceding and immediately following the promulgation of the EU Global strategy in mid 2016. The Global Strategy was a long overdue effort following the negotiation and ratification of Lisbon Treaty, which endowed the EU with new powers to coordinate across the pillars. At that same time, there were new perceived threats and challenges in the south, as illustrated by the Arab Spring of 2011 turning into the Arab uprisings, and in the east, from the war in Georgia in 2008 to the crisis in Ukraine in 2013–14. Given the uncertainty of the international situation, EU member states hesitated for a long time before entering into the final stages of preparation of the Global Strategy. They did not put all their eggs in one basket but in 2015 asked the European institutions to prepare action across three parallel lines: (a) the Global Strategy itself, (b) internal security, and (c) Europe's security and defence. As it turned out, the internal security vector received primary political attention in 2015 at the level of the European Council, in the light of a crisis that combined irregular migration and terrorism.²⁹

For the first six months of the implementation of the Global Strategy, the primary focus of EU security policy was on developing an implementation plan for EU security and defence in response to the challenges from the east and the south.³⁰ There is a widespread perception that the EU, and in particular the member states, are not doing enough to respond to current security and defence challenges. There may soon be reason for them to also turn their attention to arms control and non-proliferation.

²⁹ European Council, 'European Council meeting (25 and 26 June 2015)—Conclusions', EUCO 22/15, Brussels, 26 June 2015, <<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/06/26-euco-conclusions/>>.

³⁰ Council of the European Union, Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, 14392/16, 14 Dec. 2016, <https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs_implementation_plan_st14392.en16_0.pdf>.

VII. LESSONS LEARNED FROM PREVIOUS STRATEGIC ENDEAVOURS

Looking back to 2003

The need for an updated frame of reference for the European Council as a new institution for deliberations among member states

As is indicated above, there are other reasons for a more dedicated effort by the EU and other international and national actors to review progress on non-proliferation. Some of these are related to the need to adjust future work on the non-proliferation of WMD to the updated frame of reference established by the strategies as outlined briefly above.

The European Security Strategy of 2003—with all of its essential elements contributing to a more explicit EU security policy—has been widely criticized in one important respect. At a time when an internal EU security strategy did not yet exist, it portrayed the general international situation in a more optimistic way than most people would now perceive it in 2017.³¹ This meant that while highlighting the importance of non-proliferation and the risks of WMD, the focus was on specific problematic actors rather than general systemic problems and mitigating the WMD risks addressed in the NPT through the international system.

In the USA, the focus on so-called rogue states and terrorist organizations for a while degraded the importance of the NPT regime as a whole. Discord between EU member states and in the UN Security Council was an important catalyst for the efforts in 2003 to produce an EU Security Strategy and the accompanying EU WMD Strategy. Both strategies sought to refocus attention back on effective multilateralism and the importance of international legal instruments. In parallel, EU member states participated in international operations led by the USA to counter alleged WMD risks on the part of rogue states, most notably in Iraq. Some years later, the USA increased the support it gave to multilateralism. There was also progress on bilateral nuclear negotiations, most notably agreement between the USA and Russia on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in 2010 and in multilateral formats such as the Iran nuclear deal. The USA, the EU and like-minded

states worked together in the IAEA on issues such as managing the WMD-related resolutions in the IAEA General Conference.³² At the same time, WMD proliferation risks were increasingly seen as bilateral rather than in a multilateral context, such as in the discussion about the role of India as a non-party to the NPT seeking to develop civil nuclear cooperation with the USA and other Western countries.

The question now arises: does the international situation with all its uncertainties at the beginning of 2017 require a new look at the link between conflict prevention or management and WMD risks? The Global Strategy implicitly makes this argument, singling out conflict and crisis prevention as one of the top five priorities.

In addition, should the developing role of the European Council as a generic forum for deliberations be taken into account in this context? It is noteworthy that this institution, including the EU Heads of State and Government, not only deliberates on issues for implementation by the EU, but also increasingly serves as an arena for discussion among leaders preparing to make national decisions on their posture in various multilateral and bilateral settings. When discussing the EU, surely it is important that all EU member states have a similar sense of ownership of the conceptual frame of reference? Surely this is increasingly important as the call for independent scrutiny of vital European interests becomes stronger?

Looking back to the end of the cold war

Lessons learned on the need for contingency planning ahead of crises

Any future crisis linked to WMD or to nuclear, chemical and biological risks will immediately be elevated to the highest level of concern in the EU and questions will almost certainly be asked about why more was not done to prepare leaders through contingency planning. Contingency planning in security policy is an effort undertaken when there is a perceived need, usually a threat perception or an overwhelming sense of a requirement to meet a significant set of challenges. It is an even more proactive posture than one of developing strategies, but requires a frame of reference at the strategic level.

³¹ See e.g. Biscop, S., *EU Grand Strategy: Optimism is Mandatory*, Egmont Security Policy Brief no. 36 (Egmont: Brussels, July 2012).

³² See Lundin, 'The European Union, the IAEA and WMD non-proliferation: unity of approach and continuity of action' (note 2).

It is a more goal-oriented posture than just running programmes and projects or mainstreaming conflict and crisis prevention, and an effort closely linked to implementation where ‘the devil is in the detail’, including with regard to budgets and people. It is a demanding effort that requires highly skilled planning and programming staff, a scarce resource in most states and organizations. From time to time, this perceived need for contingency planning is upgraded due to a paradigmatic shift in the international situation.

A new level of multilateralism

Promoting arms control and disarmament efforts

When the cold war ended in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the international system was in a state of flux, but in a positive way—at least as perceived in the West. New opportunities were seen for a better future. At the same time, large-scale systems were crumbling, most notably the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, and there was the question of how to manage the unification of Germany, which also required a series of associated large-scale measures in the short term. It cannot be said that the optimistic outlook at the beginning of the 1990s was either global or generalized. There was hope for freedom and democracy but, from the start, there was also a strong preoccupation with the state of affairs with regard to the rule of law. There was a new opportunity for multilateralism at the global and regional levels. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was developed into the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) was negotiated in parallel with extensive military confidence- and security-building measures, the Council of Europe was enlarged and so after some years were the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It became possible to address questions related to international security and stability at both the global and the regional levels. This was a remarkable change from the situation a decade before, when almost all dialogue formats between East and West, including nuclear negotiations, had been frozen. New opportunities emerged to address the challenges linked to WMD, facilitating the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention.³³

³³ New opportunities to control WMD were seen as demonstrated by the new US position on verification of chemical weapons from Sep. 1989

The cooperation between the IAEA and the Euratom system of safeguards gradually improved and indirectly facilitated an upgrade of the capability of the IAEA to assist in protecting and promoting the NPT regime; and the door was opened for Euratom to accede to the Additional Protocol to the NPT.³⁴

In the early 2000s, the greater focus on international operations to address WMD-related risks made arms control and non-proliferation multilaterally negotiated processes much less prominent. The end of the cold war had exposed a number of unresolved conflicts with roots going back to the period before World War I, from the regional down to the national and even local levels. The system of international and regional response was deficient. Following difficulties in mobilizing sufficient resources in support of peacekeeping in the Western Balkans, and even to prevent genocide, there was a new effort to develop such capabilities at the global and regional levels.³⁵ An intensive discussion took place in the UN, the OSCE and NATO.³⁶ In the EU, steps were taken to create an EU security and defence policy at the end of the 1990s.³⁷ More and more robust alternatives for intervention were developed, starting with the first US-led intervention in Iraq in the early 1990s. The development of capabilities for international operations sometimes even replaced the focus on territorial defence, including in a number of EU member states.

The notion that conflicts could to a large extent be seen as intrastate, however, was gradually complemented by the perception that conflicts could be spread by non-state actors using terrorism as a tool. This threat perception became a reality in the USA in September 2001. Very soon concerns about a link between terrorism and WMD began to dominate the discourse. In a sense, it all came together during the crisis in and around Iraq in 2003. What was defined by the USA, together with its several coalition partners, as a problem of WMD in combination with non-compliance with a number of UN Security Council resolutions started to be linked with terrorism. The

including a total verifiability. See the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), ‘Genesis and historical development’, <<https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/genesis-and-historical-development/>>.

³⁴ Lundin, ‘The European Union, the IAEA and WMD non-proliferation: unity of approach and continuity of action’ (note 2).

³⁵ Also related to the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

³⁶ Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), section 1.2.

³⁷ Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), section 1.1.

solution was defined on the basis of the planning for international operations rather than the traditional safeguards related to the non-proliferation regime. The problem of resolving proliferation risks was increasingly linked to a number of rogue states, and the issue of regime change became more prominent as the possible solution to proliferation problems. In a few cases cooperative solutions were found, enabling a reduction in tensions with countries such as Libya and even North Korea. As it turned, however, this was only a temporary state of affairs.

It can therefore be argued that there was a second period in 2001–2003 that required not just strategies and conflict/crisis prevention efforts or generic capacity building, but also a strong focus on contingency planning. The most vivid expression of this was perhaps the cooperation between the USA and Europe following the terrorist attacks on the USA of 11 September 2001. The EU was forced not only to sort out its external security, but also to start building a system for internal security beyond that which had existed, for instance, in the context of Euratom. As a first step, strategy documents were developed at different levels, from the European Security Strategy and the WMD Strategy mentioned above, to the Counterterrorism Strategy of 2005 and later the Internal Security Strategy. Starting with terrorism in 2001, there was also a major inventory of actions that could be promulgated in different areas across the EU pillars. The implementation of the WMD Strategy led to six-monthly progress reports that continued until 2015. Soon this effort was complemented by the creation of the Non-Proliferation Consortium of think tanks, which created a framework for brainstorming and dialogue on WMD-related issues with global participation and some fairly goal-oriented events, most notably related to dialogue on WMD in the Middle East.³⁸

Against this background, there were several intellectual components of the non-proliferation discourse. One was clearly related to the issue of non-state actors and the link to internal security or, in the USA, homeland security. The threat of terrorism led to the creation of a number of dedicated instruments for international cooperation, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative.³⁹ This WMD-related security effort

was based on denying those who aspired to acquire WMD the necessary and sufficient conditions for obtaining such a capability in terms of both weapons and delivery systems. In a sense, it is possible to argue that this intellectual tradition is closely linked to the issue of 'flow security', where it has been demonstrated that associated flows such as financing have been important to take into account with regard to both terrorism and proliferation.

A second strand was the notion that states should be influenced to respect the non-proliferation regime—if not through accession, then at least in their behaviour. This led to the development of clauses and sanctions linked to implicit or explicit threats and coercion.

A third strand was clearly related to capacity building, enabling states such as Russia and the former members of the Warsaw Pact to implement arms control and disarmament measures, most notably through the Global Partnership managed by the Group of Eight (G8) and later instrumentalized in the effort to assist countries around the world in managing borders.

A fourth strand was the effort to find cooperative negotiated solutions to proliferation problems, most notably in North Korea, Libya and Iran, which also had clear links to capacity building—including in areas not related to WMD, such as more generic development assistance in the case of North Korea.

Then there was, of course, the continued effort to build an international system of safeguards, norms and so on at the level of the UN, with the IAEA at the centre. This work included links to nuclear safety, a need demonstrated by the catastrophe in Fukushima in 2011. Until 2011 this had been linked to hopes for a nuclear renaissance, which would lead to new investment in civil nuclear power plants not least in Asia, China and possibly India, but also in Europe—with France as a leading proponent.⁴⁰ In the EU, Euratom also engaged with the purpose of demonstrating a more holistic perspective on the management of nuclear risks through cooperation with intergovernmental actors in the European Council.

However, Fukushima highlighted the link with crises, another paradigm or discourse since September 2001, in which different kinds of crises such as the Asian tsunami of 2004 led to a more generic discussion about crisis response systems inside and outside the

³⁸ See the website of the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, <<https://www.nonproliferation.eu/>>.

³⁹ US State Department, 'Proliferation Security Initiative', <<https://www.state.gov/t/isn/c10390.htm>>.

⁴⁰ World Nuclear Association, 'The Nuclear Renaissance', <<http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/current-and-future-generation/the-nuclear-renaissance.aspx>>.

EU, including coordination of different types of alert mechanisms on radiation.⁴¹

Looking at the period 2000–17, with a few exceptions, such as the START agreement and the Arms Trade Treaty, there has been a remarkable reduction in the attention paid to multilateral negotiated processes, beyond individual cases such as Iran. In addition, whenever there has been a call for more arms control, such as recently on conventional weapons in Europe by the German Chair of the OSCE, the response from the USA and Russia has been sceptical.

To say the least, the period 2001–2003, with all its different challenges following on from the paradigmatic shifts after the cold war, provided much food for thought for decision makers in the EU in the years that followed. The predominant perception in the years leading up to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty was of a need to be able to respond in a more coherent way to the challenges posed by the international system, affecting the EU itself and the relationship of the EU to the international community. Once the Lisbon Treaty had entered into force and the EEAS had been set up, the focus was very much on developing comprehensive approaches that could demonstrate the added value of the new combined capacity of the European Council and the European Commission. Showcase efforts were selected, such as the Iran file, in parallel with large-scale implementation of cooperative programmes in the EU neighbourhood and beyond. There were also attempts to link the CSDP with Commission programmes in order to make operations such as countering piracy around Somalia more successful.

However, the Arab Spring, the new challenges in relation to Russia in Georgia and Ukraine, and the challenges facing the EU internally, linked to populism, migration and terrorism, put the need for contingency planning back on the table. A first step in this direction was the need to revisit the strategic level, and member states prioritized internal security in 2015 followed by external/global security in 2016. An even stronger impetus for contingency planning was then required towards the end of 2016, after the surprise results of the referendum in the UK and the elections in the USA.

At this time, the discourse in the USA and Europe became increasingly critical of what had really been

achieved in the past decade.⁴² One strand of criticism was about the way international operations had been pursued in Afghanistan, Syria and Libya. Another strand was the issue of terrorism, and the extent to which there was a link between the way international operations had been pursued and radicalization and the proliferation of terrorism to the West. A third strand was linked to an appreciation that regional and subregional processes were moving from an initially positive assessment of the Arab Spring to an increasingly negative view. This in turn was related to the issue of democratization and the link to regime change, which had played a vital role in the discourse over the past decade. In general, international norms relating to human rights, democracy and the rule of law were put under severe pressure, not least by Russia, and there was increased concern about hybrid warfare, linked to cybersecurity and disinformation campaigns. It is therefore possible to argue that the perceived links between internal and external security, and indeed between the domestic sources of foreign policy and foreign policy, have become much stronger in recent years, and require a holistic analysis of security policy and the way the EU itself functions at the level of its member states.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

If the EU does not make a combined effort to update its WMD Strategy and conduct crisis contingency planning that integrates WMD-related risks, something much more will be at stake than the effectiveness of EU programmes on non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. The overwhelming risk is that European leaders will remain reactive and even confused to a greater and more dangerous extent than in September 2001.

The continual differentiation of WMD-related threats over the past decade has risked making responses to crises too slow and uncoordinated at all levels, from the local to the global. At the same time, there is a constant risk that the lessons learned from the more or less successful application of deterrence and other types of influencing methods in the past will be forgotten. In addition, the differences in the levels of awareness between large and small countries in the EU and across thematic sectors risk further delaying

⁴¹ Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), section 3.4.

⁴² Lundin, *The EU and Security: A Handbook for Practitioners* (note 2), section 6.

action, including in support of the NPT regime as a whole. If a multi-sector crisis occurs in some way linked to WMD, the lack of a level playing field in this regard could cause existential problems for European countries.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|---|
| CFSP | Common Foreign and Security Policy |
| CSDP | Common Security and Defence Policy |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EU | European Union |
| IAEA | International Atomic Energy Agency |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NPT | Non-Proliferation Treaty |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| R&D | Research and development |
| START | Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty |
| WMD | Weapon(s) of mass destruction |



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A EUROPEAN NETWORK

In July 2010 the Council of the European Union decided to create a network bringing together foreign policy institutions and research centres from across the EU to encourage political and security-related dialogue and the long-term discussion of measures to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems.

STRUCTURE

The EU Non-Proliferation Consortium is managed jointly by four institutes entrusted with the project, in close cooperation with the representative of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The four institutes are the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique (FRS) in Paris, the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt (PRIF), the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London, and Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The Consortium began its work in January 2011 and forms the core of a wider network of European non-proliferation think tanks and research centres which will be closely associated with the activities of the Consortium.

MISSION

The main aim of the network of independent non-proliferation think tanks is to encourage discussion of measures to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems within civil society, particularly among experts, researchers and academics. The scope of activities shall also cover issues related to conventional weapons. The fruits of the network discussions can be submitted in the form of reports and recommendations to the responsible officials within the European Union.

It is expected that this network will support EU action to counter proliferation. To that end, the network can also establish cooperation with specialized institutions and research centres in third countries, in particular in those with which the EU is conducting specific non-proliferation dialogues.

<http://www.nonproliferation.eu>

EU NON-PROLIFERATION CONSORTIUM

The European network of independent non-proliferation think tanks

FONDATION
pour la RECHERCHE
STRATÉGIQUE

FOUNDATION FOR STRATEGIC RESEARCH

FRS is an independent research centre and the leading French think tank on defence and security issues. Its team of experts in a variety of fields contributes to the strategic debate in France and abroad, and provides unique expertise across the board of defence and security studies.

<http://www.frstrategie.org>



PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN FRANKFURT

PRIF is the largest as well as the oldest peace research institute in Germany. PRIF's work is directed towards carrying out research on peace and conflict, with a special emphasis on issues of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

<http://www.hsfk.de>



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

IISS is an independent centre for research, information and debate on the problems of conflict, however caused, that have, or potentially have, an important military content. It aims to provide the best possible analysis on strategic trends and to facilitate contacts.

<http://www.iiss.org/>



STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

<http://www.sipri.org/>