
11. Starting to ‘think big’: the Nordic countries and EU peace-building

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I. Introduction

It would be a hard case to argue that there is any one distinguishable ‘Nordic’ identity in international politics. In their relations with the rest of the world, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden probably exhibit more differences than similarities. Furthermore, and despite their close cooperation on other matters within, for instance, the Nordic Council, today the five Nordic countries rarely coordinate their policies on international security management with a view to presenting specifically Nordic initiatives, whether in the European Union or elsewhere. Nonetheless, this chapter focuses primarily on the commonalities rather than the differences between the Nordic countries by looking at how they have adapted to the EU’s increasingly active participation in peace-building efforts in war- or conflict-torn areas and how Nordic contributions have influenced this process.

During the cold war the Nordic countries’ foreign policies were often seen collectively—correctly or not—as leaning towards an unselfish, moral, multilateralist and internationalist orientation. The five Nordic governments had a high profile on many North–South issues and were generally recognized as generous and concerned donors of development assistance. They also had a reputation as unusually active supporters of the United Nations system because of their relatively large financial contributions to various UN bodies and their relatively large troop contributions to UN peacekeeping missions, and because of their relatively loud rhetorical support of the UN.¹ To varying degrees, and with Sweden as the most outspoken state, the Nordic countries were also occasionally perceived as daring small countries that did not shy away from criticizing the leading states of either the Eastern or Western bloc when they saw injustices against individual countries or people.²

This image was also, to a large extent, cemented in the domestic contexts and has continued to affect the internal foreign policy debates in the Nordic countries. As discussed below, this image may help to explain why they have found it so ‘painless’ to adapt to—and embrace—the framework of the Common

¹ Laatikainen, K. V., ‘Norden’s eclipse: the impact of the European Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy on the Nordic group in the United Nations’, *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 38, no. 4 (Dec. 2003), pp. 409–41.

² Jerneck, M., ‘Sweden and the Vietnam War’, eds D. A. Hellema, N. G. Pas and R. van der Maar, *Western Europe and the Vietnam War* (Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, forthcoming).

Foreign and Security Policy. It may also help to explain why the Nordic EU members have gradually reconsidered their capacity to wield influence in other parts of the world. As EU membership has given them more clout in international security management—similar to that a great power—their self-confidence has increased and they have, in short, gradually started to ‘think big’.

II. The EU’s growing role in peace-building

Over the past three and a half decades the EU member states have increasingly attempted to pursue common and distinctly ‘European’ policies on issues of peace and security in other parts of the world. Among the early examples of activities under the European Political Cooperation, the precursor of the CFSP, were the attempts of the (then) nine members of the European Community (EC) to forge an alternative to US policy on the conflict in the Middle East following the 1973 October War and in their common approach to the setting up and functioning of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in the mid-1970s. In the same period, the EC members initiated cooperation in the UN General Assembly with a view to presenting common views. In the mid-1980s they stepped up their foreign policy cooperation. One among a number of notable initiatives was the EC’s involvement in the peace processes in Central America, which, again, aimed at offering a somewhat different solution from the US policy for that region.

During the first half of the 1990s there was no lack of attempts by the EU to contribute to peace in the former Yugoslavia, even if these efforts ultimately failed. Through negotiations with the warring parties, the EU first tried ‘carrots’ (e.g., in the form of promises of increased development aid and beneficial trade agreements) and then ‘sticks’ (e.g., in the form of threats of various types of sanctions). The EC members also used previously untried common instruments, such as despatching mediators and uniformed personnel to the region in the European Community Monitoring Mission.³ While part of the failure to end the conflict may be attributed to the EU’s lack of other coercive means at the time—such as a military capability—and the problems of coordinating 12 national views on which strategies to pursue, other actors, such as the UN and the USA, would arguably not have found it any easier to prevent a full-scale war.

The lessons from the failure in the Balkans did, however, translate into intensified foreign policy cooperation within the EU framework throughout the rest of the 1990s. By the end of the decade, the EU members regularly discussed all major issues of international peace and security. In 1999 alone the EU directly

³ The European Community Monitoring Mission operated in the Western Balkans in 1991–2000, financed by the EU member states and Norway and Slovakia. On 1 Jan. 2001 the mission was replaced by the European Union Monitoring Mission, an instrument of the CFSP financed from the Community budget.

addressed, in various ways, issues of peace and security in more than 60 countries throughout the world.⁴ Taking into account the more indirect and long-term EU measures, such as the adaptation of development aid and trade relations to encourage democratization, respect for human rights and the rule of law, as well as active support for a number of international organizations working to promote peace and security, it may be said that the EU has gradually begun to use most of the foreign policy instruments normally associated with a great power.

The latest addition to this toolbox of instruments is the creation of an EU capacity to carry out civilian and military crisis management missions. The ESDP has thereby filled one of the few remaining gaps in the EU's potential to execute most of the foreign and security policy functions normally associated with state actors. One of the very few functions for which the EU still has no capacity or any active plans to develop one is that of territorial defence. So far, the CFSP and the European Security and Defence Policy deal only with issues of peace and security in areas outside the borders of the Union.

In addition to the gradual acquisition of instruments, the EU has successively developed a diplomatic system to convey its policies to the outside world. The 'troika'—consisting of the member state holding the rotating EU Presidency, the High Representative for the CFSP and the EU Commissioner for External Relations—meets regularly with representatives of third states. The member states' embassies cooperate in third countries, the European Commission has 130 delegations around the world, and the Council of the European Union has two additional representations, in Geneva and New York. Furthermore, the EU has over the past decade appointed a number of Special Representatives in war-torn countries or regions.

This has created a new, unique actor in international security management, different from both state actors and international organizations. For instance, the EU enjoys an unusual degree of legitimacy because of: (a) its multilateral character; (b) the requirements it imposes on its members regarding democracy and other norms, such as respect for human rights and the rule of law; and (c) its power of example in having established a stable peace between former adversaries. The EU has also acquired something of a 'nice cop' image in international politics, owing to its tendency to choose carrots over sticks to influence other states. Taken together, this image may often be of benefit for the EU in its peace-building role, in particular when it tries to use long-term strategies for conflict prevention.

However, some of these features are probably a result more of the intrinsic problems of reaching agreement among 25 member states than of conscious EU strategies. It is simply easier to agree on issues such as the virtues of democracy and human rights, peaceful conflict resolution, respect for international law and multilateral solutions than to agree on serious punitive measures, ultimately

⁴ Strömviik, M., *To Act as a Union: Explaining the Development of the EU's Collective Foreign Policy* (Lund University, Department of Political Science: Lund, 2005), p. 59.

underpinned by the threat or use of military force. Nonetheless, this development and these special characteristics of the EU are in themselves important for understanding the way in which the Nordic countries have adapted to, and recently also fully embraced, this new international actor.

III. Adapting to the EU framework

It is often argued that the states that joined the EU after the first enlargement, in 1973, have held a weak and superficial view of the political logic surrounding the EU process, and it appears that no state has joined the Union primarily because of its role in international security management. Applicant states have typically discussed EU membership essentially in terms of economic rewards. This was certainly true for Denmark in the early 1970s and for Finland and Sweden in the early 1990s. While these small, trade-dependent states saw various economic benefits from joining the EU, they saw few explicit benefits from foreign policy cooperation. Rather, their perceptions of their role in international peace-building activities were characterized, as some have put it, by a ‘small-power syndrome’.⁵ Ole Wæver’s analysis in the early 1990s—that ‘Danes tend to think more as *critics of power* and assume that power is something others have’—would certainly also hold for Finland and Sweden at that time.⁶ The possibility of becoming a member of a larger, and potentially very powerful, political actor was difficult for Denmark to consider, impossible for Sweden to consider and at most rarely discussed in Finland. The strong traditions and perceived value of ‘independent’ and active small-power strategies to affect the international debate during the cold war made it particularly difficult for these three states to see themselves as components of a larger collective.

However, all three governments’ perceptions of the benefits of the EU’s external peace-building role, as well as their own roles within this policy area, have changed dramatically over the past decade or so. Denmark, Finland and Sweden have all adapted and ‘internalized’ the EU’s global role in their own foreign and security policies, and all three countries are now strong and active supporters of the CFSP and the ESDP. This trend is highly visible, for instance, in the three governments’ statements about the importance of this policy area. For example, speaking about the ESDP, the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Per Stig Møller, has argued that a ‘close and committing cooperation in Europe is, for a smaller country like Denmark, a truly vital interest’.⁷ His Finnish counterpart, Erkki Tuomioja, similarly argues that ‘Finland’s membership

⁵ On Denmark see Due-Nielsen, C. and Petersen, N., ‘Denmark’s foreign policy since 1967: an introduction’, eds C. Due-Nielsen and N. Petersen, *Adaptation & Activism: The Foreign Policy of Denmark 1967–1993* (Dansk Udenrigspolitisk Institut: Copenhagen, 1995), p. 25.

⁶ Wæver, O., ‘Danish dilemmas: foreign policy choices for the 21st century’, eds Due-Nielsen and Petersen (note 5), p. 279.

⁷ Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, ‘Udenrigsminister Per Stig Møllers tale ved DIIS-seminar i Eigtveds Pakhus torsdag den 16. September’ [Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller’s speech at DIIS seminar in Eigtveds Pakhus Thursday 16 September], 16 Sep. 2004, URL <<http://www.um.dk/da/menu/OmOs/Udenrigsministeren/Taler/>> (author’s translation).

of the European Union is today the crucial departure point underpinning our position on security policy',⁸ and their Swedish counterpart, Laila Freivalds, has repeatedly pointed out that 'the European Union is, alongside the UN, our most important foreign and security policy forum'.⁹

Furthermore, the three Nordic EU member states—Denmark, Finland and Sweden—are no longer satisfied with the status of the EU's capacity to contribute to international security management. They wish to see a further strengthening and widening of the EU's role in terms of both the instruments used by the EU and the geographical reach of its peace-building activities. Having traditionally heavily emphasized 'soft-power means', today these three countries call for the increased use of hard-power strategies and instruments as a last resort. They all argue in favour of a comprehensive EU arsenal of peace-building instruments, ranging from conflict-prevention strategies and soft-power instruments to a better capacity to carry out peacekeeping and peace-enforcement missions.

The Danish Government, for instance, wants to ensure that the 'EU adopts a more consistent policy and confronts regimes that violate fundamental international norms'.¹⁰ Despite Denmark's formal opt-out from the ESDP, the government argues that: 'The EU must be able to act also in a more robust way to create stability and prosperity in regions stricken by armed conflict.'¹¹ Similarly, the Finnish and Swedish foreign ministers argue that 'the EU must have the capacity to carry out all types of tasks . . . including the very complex and demanding ones'.¹² Furthermore, all three governments believe that the EU's peace-building role should not be limited to providing peace in Europe, but that the Union's contributions to global security should be strengthened, by using the EU's instruments 'wherever needed'.¹³

It is highly unlikely—even unthinkable—that many of these statements could have emanated from the three Nordic EU members a decade ago. The three governments have moved away from a previously somewhat downbeat image of their own possibilities to envisage wielding a comprehensive mix of both soft- and hard-power instruments in order to influence issues related to conflicts

⁸ Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 'Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja: The EU is the most important factor in Finland's security and defence policy', Speech at the Finnish Committee for European Security seminar, Lohja, 20 Aug. 2004, URL <<http://www.regeringen.fi/vn/liston/base.lsp?r=88091&rapo=40334>>.

⁹ Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 'Utrikesminister Laila Freivalds tal vid Folk och Försvars rikskonferens i Sälen' [Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds' speech at the Folk och Försvar national conference in Sälen], 19 Jan. 2004, URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/1248/a/7688>> (author's translation).

¹⁰ Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, *A Changing World: The Government's Vision for New Priorities in Denmark's Foreign Policy* (Udenrigsministeriet: Copenhagen, June 2003), URL <<http://www.um.dk/Publikationer/UM/English/ACHangingWorld/>>, p. 24.

¹¹ Møller, P. S., Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'The need for a strong global role for the EU', Speech at the conference on Global Challenges to the EU, Copenhagen, 23 Mar. 2004, URL <<http://www.um.dk/da/menu/EU/DanmarkIEU/Taler/>>.

¹² Freivalds, L. and Toumioja, E., 'Vi vill stärka EU:s säkerhetspolitik' [We want to strengthen the EU's security policy], *Dagens Nyheter*, 11 Nov. 2003 (author's translation).

¹³ On Denmark see Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (note 10); and on Finland and Sweden see Freivalds and Toumioja (note 12).

and wars. They have begun to ‘think like bigger states’ or, at least, to realize that they now have at hand a greater array of instruments as a result of being part of a larger actor.

This adaptation has presumably taken place for a number of different reasons, but two explanations stand out as particularly important. The first is related to the very nature of the EU’s peace-building activities as they have evolved over the past decades. The EU’s unusual decision-making system makes it easier to agree on carrots than on sticks and on broad multilateral solutions than on ‘unilateral’ EU policies that have not been accepted by other states. Almost by default, EU policies aimed at peace and security in other parts of the world—in contrast to EU policies in many other areas, such as trade and agriculture—are less guided by any one discernible ‘national interest’ than are the equivalent policies of many large state actors. The CFSP is also characterized by an unusually high degree of what Kjell Goldmann has called ‘internationalistic’ activities—activities characterized by ‘a desire to improve conditions generally by the application of norms thought to be universally valid rather than further one’s own immediate national interest to the best of one’s ability’.¹⁴ The EU’s foreign and security policy has gradually developed into a policy that is guided by the will to spread norms such as democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, as well as by an emphasis on compromises and negotiated solutions to conflicts. Furthermore, the EU has increasingly grown into one of the most active and outspoken supporters of the UN system, a trend that has been further reinforced since the war in Iraq in 2003.

For the three Nordic EU members this has meant that, in terms of policy content, adaptation to the CFSP has been painless and has very rarely provoked a need for difficult choices between a traditional national policy and a different EU policy. For the lion’s share of foreign policy issues there has, in effect, been something of a ‘perfect match’ between traditional ‘Nordic foreign policy’ and EU foreign policy. Put somewhat differently, for these three governments the EU’s policies have—although often not by design—almost always acted as a megaphone for the types of policy that these three Nordic countries would have pursued anyway.

In Finland and Sweden the only policy that has been gradually altered is that of non-alignment. The Finnish and Swedish governments were initially somewhat unsure about how to handle those domestic critics who argued that EU membership was not compatible with military non-alignment, but today this issue has been settled. By altering their definitions of military non-alignment—making it equivalent to not signing agreements on mutual defence guarantees—these two countries are no longer hindered in any tangible way from being active participants in all aspects of EU peace-building activities, including the military dimension. The issue of non-alignment is simply no longer relevant for

¹⁴ Goldmann, K., “‘Democracy is incompatible with international politics’: reconsideration of a hypothesis”, eds K. Goldmann, S. Berglund and G. Sjöstedt, *Democracy and Foreign Policy* (Gower: Aldershot, 1986), p. 28.

these states' attitudes towards the EU's security and defence policy. This has gradually been understood and appreciated by other EU members' governments and, consequently, the policy of non-alignment seems no longer to have any deleterious effect on Finnish and Swedish influence within the CFSP and the ESDP.

One typical example of the good match between Nordic and EU foreign policy is seen in the Union's strong support and active contributions to the UN system. For instance, the EU has, as one analyst puts it, 'taken on a different and potentially more powerful mediating role in the UN in North–South relations based upon the European commitment to social development and social market economy'.¹⁵ Most recently, the battle group concept was developed with the intention of putting the EU's forces at the service of the UN, a development which has been applauded by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.¹⁶ It has therefore been natural for the three Nordic EU members to see the Union as a means for further strengthening their own traditional policies and influence in the UN. As Freivalds has put it,

Sweden has always contributed actively to the UN's peace-building activities. As EU members, we have additional possibilities to support and underpin the UN system. By working actively to provide the EU with a strengthened capacity—both politically and with civilian and military means—to contribute to the UN's peace-building work, our Swedish UN-policy is strengthened through our EU efforts.¹⁷

Similarly, the Danish Government has expressed its wish to 'work to ensure that the EU fully exploits the existing framework and thereby exerts an impact on the international scene, including in the UN Security Council'.¹⁸ In this context, however, the Danish Government has been obliged to note that its own ambitions may be crippled by the defence opt-out, maybe more than ever since January 2005, when the country took up a seat in the UN Security Council. Møller argues that Denmark's opt-out may be more unfortunate than ever: 'We may actually find ourselves in the paradoxical situation that Denmark will one day sit in New York and request the EU to carry out a crisis management task for the UN, but the next day in the Council of Ministers in Brussels, Denmark will then find it necessary to activate the Danish defence opt-out and announce that we, unfortunately, cannot contribute to carrying out the task!'¹⁹ Thus, Denmark is the only Nordic EU member that cannot fully exploit its EU

¹⁵ Laatikainen (note 1), p. 427.

¹⁶ United Nations, 'Secretary-General, noting next year's review of Millennium Development Goals, urges stronger efforts to meet them', Press release SG/SM/9542, 14 Oct. 2004, URL <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sgsm9542.doc.htm>>. On battle groups see chapter 6 in this volume.

¹⁷ Freivalds, L., Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Vad vill Sverige med EU och FN?' [What does Sweden want from the EU and the UN?], Speech, 14 Apr. 2004, URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/1248/a/16997>> (author's translation).

¹⁸ Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (note 10), p. 13.

¹⁹ Møller, P. S., Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'EU's sikkerhedspolitik: et kig frem og et tilbage' [The EU's security policy: one look forward and one look back], *Jyllands-Posten*, 22 Oct. 2004 (author's translation).

membership to further its traditionally strong support for the UN, while the two militarily non-aligned members Finland and Sweden benefit from the possibility of promoting a comprehensive approach to UN peace-building through the EU system.²⁰

A second important reason for the Nordic EU members' gradual embrace of the Union's foreign and security policy has no doubt lain in the dramatic changes in the international system after the demise of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. During the cold war, a policy of neutrality could be used rhetorically as a morally guided 'third way' in international politics. With only one superpower left, neutrality has lost much of its meaning and thereby also the perceived value it may previously have added to any small state's foreign policy. Since then, the only option left for small or middle-size powers that want to reinforce their influence in the new unipolar system has been to act collectively with like-minded states.

Among the Nordic countries, Sweden has perhaps been the most outspoken about the need to use the EU to create another strong voice in today's international system. In the words of the late Anna Lindh, then Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, it is

important for all those who worry about the development of a world which we call unipolar, where only one big country decides the agenda, where only the US makes decisions over right and wrong, that they are able to see that the EU should not develop as a counterweight or opposite pole to the USA, but that we need more committed efforts, more committed voices, and that sometimes a strong EU will agree with the USA, sometimes a strong EU will have an opposite view from the USA, but the EU is needed to balance the USA.²¹

Speaking more specifically about the need for an enhanced military crisis management capacity for the EU, Freivalds also relates the issue to the USA, saying that 'it is disturbing that the EU still does not possess the capacity to halt more severe conflicts without asking the USA for support'.²² In the view of the Swedish Government, however, a further development of the EU's role in international security management should not be interpreted as adversarial competition with the USA. The transatlantic link is perceived to be of fundamental value for European security, and the development of a more capable EU is seen as strengthening the health of that link.²³ This view is shared by the Danish Government, which argues that a stronger EU is a precondition for well-functioning transatlantic cooperation. In the words of Møller: 'Only a strong

²⁰ On the position of Denmark see chapter 1 in this volume.

²¹ 'Anna Lindhs sista stora tal' [Anna Lindh's last big speech], *Dagens Nyheter*, 18 Sep. 2003, URL <<http://www.dn.se/DNet/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=147&a=183472>> (author's translation).

²² Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 'Utrikesminister Laila Freivalds tal vid lunchseminariet "Aktuellt i utrikespolitiken", arrangerat av Olof Palmes Internationella' [Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds' speech at the lunch seminar 'Current Foreign Policy', arranged by the Olof Palme International Center], 18 Dec. 2003, URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/1248/a/7676/>> (author's translation).

²³ Persson, G., Swedish Prime Minister, Debate in the Riksdag, Stockholm, 30 Jan. 2004, Snabbprotokoll 2003/04:61.

Europe together with a strong USA can find the necessary solutions and take responsibility for forming a just and sustainable world order based on our common values.'²⁴

The EU's increasingly active role in international security management has, however, not only affected its member states. The two Nordic non-EU members now also relate to the EU's external policies in a more intense way than before. The Icelandic and Norwegian governments are generally supportive of EU policies and regularly align themselves with the EU's foreign policy statements. As the ESDP process took off, a former Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Thorbjørn Jagland, called it 'One of the most dynamic processes in the EU cooperation at present' saying that it 'also affects fundamental Norwegian interests' and that: 'We are ready to contribute civil and military resources. We want Norway to be linked as closely as possible to the new EU cooperation.'²⁵ His former Icelandic counterpart, Halldór Ásgrímsson, has similarly argued that relations with the EU 'are and will remain a dominant aspect of Icelandic foreign policy'.²⁶

For Iceland and Norway, however, the obvious problem lies in their meagre opportunities to influence EU policy making. It matters little whether they adapt their national foreign policies and strategies to EU foreign policy: they will still be absent from the decision-making table. This has led to somewhat ambivalent rhetoric surrounding Norway's attitudes towards the CFSP and the ESDP. Seeking various ways to influence their development, Norway is a strong supporter of the 'Berlin Plus' arrangements and has been deploring the fact that 'there is little will to use the cooperative arrangements established between NATO and the EU'.²⁷ The Norwegian Government also sees the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as the best guarantor of a strong transatlantic link and clearly sees a risk of NATO being marginalized by a strengthened dialogue directly between the EU and the USA. At the same time, however, Norway has welcomed the Union's takeover of most of NATO's tasks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the grounds that this will 'contribute to more equal transatlantic relations'.²⁸

²⁴ Møller (note 11).

²⁵ Jagland, T., Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'On Norway and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)', The Storting, Oslo, 9 June 2000, URL <<http://odin.dep.no/odinarkiv/norsk/dep/ud/2000/eng/032001-090043/>>.

²⁶ Ásgrímsson, H., Icelandic Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, 'Report on Foreign and International Affairs', Althingi, Reykjavik, 6 Apr. 2004, URL <<http://www.mfa.is/speeches-and-articles/nr/2205/>>.

²⁷ Petersen, J., Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Norsk sikkerhetspolitikk etter utvidelsen av EU og NATO' [Norwegian security policy after enlargement of the EU and NATO], Speech delivered at Oslo Militære Samfund, 4 Oct. 2004, URL <http://odin.dep.no/ud/norsk/aktuelt/taler/minister_a/032171-090279/> (author's translation). 'Berlin Plus' arrangements are a package of agreements reached in 2002–2003 between the EU and NATO dealing primarily with the EU's access to NATO planning capabilities but also with other assets and capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations.

²⁸ Petersen (note 27).

IV. Nordic contributions to the EU's role in peace-building

The Nordic countries have not only adapted to the EU's peace-building role but also begun to participate actively in the shaping of this process. However, tracing the influence of various actors within the CFSP and the ESDP is not a straightforward task. Formally, most initiatives are presented by the rotating EU Presidency irrespective of their original authors. Often, the early stages in the drafting process also involve many authors, not the least of whom are various bodies within the Council Secretariat. Sometimes, the member state that launches an initiative will make this publicly known, but at other times outside observers—and sometimes even the participants themselves—cannot tell where a proposal originated. The conclusions and decisions reached in the end are often not particularly revealing about who the initiators were or about the various positions during the process. During the complex and continuous negotiations between 25 national administrations, others' active support for, amendments to or rejection of an initiative may often be as important for the final outcome as the original idea. In other words, specific member states' substantial contributions to the EU's peace-building role are difficult to evaluate. They should be judged not only in terms of the injection of original 'national' initiatives into the process, but also in terms of active support (or lack of support) for various other initiatives in the policy-making process.

Furthermore, contributions should be understood in relation to the individual member states' capacity to influence the process. This capacity is dependent on a number of different assets, both tangible and intangible, such as economic power of various sorts, military power, prestige, reputation, will power and diplomatic skills.²⁹ For small member states, the will power—or the capacity to formulate new initiatives—will also be affected by the limited resources of their ministries. The CFSP/ESDP policy-making process is a time-consuming and intense area for small national ministries, and a lot of resources are spent on just keeping up with the process and responding to the EU agenda. As a Danish diplomat has put it, the EU's foreign policy cooperation 'is in fact determining the agenda' of the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.³⁰ A Swedish diplomat similarly argues that quick reaction must, by necessity, often be prioritized over a country's own initiatives because the CFSP decision-making procedures are 'characterised by positioning with "lightning rapidity" so that you, for example, end up with the group of countries you want to belong to in the following process. . . . It is more important in the CFSP to have the others' views and to formulate a position of your own, than to make more in-depth analysis of the problem of your own. It is another way of working than before'.³¹

²⁹ Petersen, N., 'National strategies in the integration dilemma: an adaptation approach', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 36, no. 1 (Mar. 1998), pp. 38–39.

³⁰ Quoted in Tonra, B., 'The impact of political cooperation', ed. K. E. Jørgensen, *Reflective Approaches to European Governance* (Macmillan: Basingstoke, 1997), p. 184.

³¹ Quoted in Ekengren, M., *Statsförvaltningens europeisering i tid och rum: en studie av den politiska tidens förändring till följd av EU-samarbetet* [The administration's Europeanization in time and space: a

In other words, in small EU member states the CFSP process may drain substantial parts of the ministries' capacity to formulate their own new initiatives by virtue of the constant need to respond to others' proposals, whether via the Coreu communication network³² or the multitude of CFSP/ESDP working groups, committee meetings and bilateral contacts between civil servants. While EU capitals have given varying degrees of freedom to their representations in Brussels, this is doubtless a greater problem in general for the smaller member states.

Against this background, the Nordic contributions to the CFSP/ESDP process and policies have not been so meagre. Albeit to varying degrees, the three Nordic EU members have influenced the EU's peace-building role over the past decade. However—and perhaps rather surprisingly considering the previously quite strong Nordic identity in, for instance, the UN—very few, if any, CFSP initiatives have been proposed jointly by all three Nordic EU members. One plausible explanation, which Knud Erik Jørgensen alludes to, could be a general perception among the Nordic countries that joint and exclusively Nordic initiatives have little chance of success.³³ The Nordic reputation in the rest of Europe may simply not match the somewhat self-satisfied domestic rhetoric on moral superiority that is sometimes found in the public debate in some of the Nordic countries.

Individually and bilaterally, however, the three Nordic EU members have contributed innovative solutions to both the institutional and policy development of the CFSP and the ESDP. In the institutional category, the Finnish–Swedish initiative to include the Petersberg Tasks in the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam is one of the most frequently quoted examples.³⁴ Such a solution would probably have been found even without this Nordic initiative, and one of the most important Finnish–Swedish motivations may well have been to use this initiative to avert any discussions of collective defence. Nonetheless, it did demonstrate that the newly arrived non-aligned member states were prepared to contribute constructively to the discussion on military matters in the EU framework as long as no collective defence guarantees were involved.

Since the creation of the ESDP in 1999, Denmark, Finland and Sweden have generally been among those members that have forcefully argued that this policy area should not be devoted exclusively to military crisis management. All three have cautioned about the risks of having a military bias within the ESDP, not because the military dimension is not seen to be important but

study of the change in the political time as a consequence of EU cooperation], Research Report no. 25 (Swedish Institute of International Affairs: Stockholm, 1996), pp. 73–74.

³² The Coreu (CORepondance EUropéenne) communication network links the EU member states and the Commission to allow for cooperation in the fields of foreign policy and to make it easier for decisions to be taken swiftly in emergencies.

³³ Jørgensen, K. E., 'Possibilities of a "Nordic" influence on the development of the CFSP?', eds M. Jopp and H. Ojanen, *European Security Integration: Implications for Non-alignment and Alliances*, Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CFSP vol. 3 (Ulkopoliittinen Instituutti: Helsinki, 1999), URL <<http://www.upi-fiia.fi/northerndimension/publications.html>>, p. 121.

³⁴ On the Petersberg Tasks see chapter 6 in this volume.

because such a bias may hinder the development of other instruments, such as civilian components. These arguments fall well within the more general philosophy held *inter alia* by the Nordic countries that the EU's peace-building capacity must be developed within a broad concept of how to address conflicts and how to prevent them in the first place. Together with the strong emphasis on a clear distinction between external crisis management and collective defence, these ideas have been something of a pervading red thread in most initiatives of the Nordic EU members.

It was, for instance, these convictions (among others) that led the Finnish Government to propose the Northern Dimension initiative in September 1997. Although this initiative did not specifically touch upon the more 'traditional' aspects of security, it did aim at contributing to regional security and promoting the further integration of Russia with the West.³⁵ Similarly, during the Finnish EU Presidency, in the second half of 1999, Sweden began working actively to promote 'conflict prevention' as a parallel track to the development of civilian and military capabilities for the EU. By the end of the Swedish Presidency a year and a half later, this initiative had developed into the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts.³⁶ Furthermore, as the establishment of new military ESDP bodies started to be discussed early in the ESDP process, Sweden highlighted the fact that the civilian crisis management track also needed new institutional solutions and proposed the creation of the EU Committee for Civilian Crisis Management (CIVCOM).³⁷

More recently, and in order to match the more precise capability objectives that have guided the development of the EU's military capabilities over the past few years, Denmark, Germany and Sweden initiated the Civilian Headline Goal. Sweden borrowed ideas from the military battle group concept and proposed that the EU should also enhance its civilian capabilities by creating multi-functional and rapidly deployable civilian crisis response teams, a concept which will be further elaborated within the new Civilian Headline Goal process.³⁸ In contrast to many of the EU's first military objectives, concepts and institutional solutions, which were often copied from previous arrangements

³⁵ Ojanen, H. with Herolf, G. and Lindahl, R., *Non-Alignment and European Security Policy: Ambiguity at Work*, Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CFSP vol. 6 (Ulkopoliittinen Instituutti: Helsinki, 2000), URL <<http://www.upi-fia.fi/northernndimension/publications.html>>, p. 137. On the Northern Dimension see the Internet site of the EU's Directorate General for External Relations, URL <http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/north_dim/>.

³⁶ Council of the European Union, 'EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts', Gothenburg, 15–16 June 2001, URL <<http://www.eu2001.se/static/eng/pdf/violent.pdf>>; and Björkdahl, A., *From Idea to Norm: Promoting Conflict Prevention*, Lund Political Studies 125 (Lund University, Department of Political Science: Lund, 2002), URL <http://www.svet.lu.se/Fulltext/Annika_bjorkdahl.pdf>, pp. 111–34.

³⁷ Rieker, P., *Europeanisation of Nordic Security: The EU and the Changing Security Identities of the Nordic States* (University of Oslo, Faculty of Social Sciences: Oslo, 2004), p. 117.

³⁸ Swedish Parliament, EU-nämndens protokoll 2004/05:10 [Committee on EU Affairs verbatim report 2004/05:10], Stockholm, 19 Nov. 2004, URL <<http://www.riksdagen.se/Webbnav/index.aspx?nid=6380>>; and Council of the European Union, Ministerial Declaration, Civilian Capabilities Commitment Conference, Brussels, 22 Nov. 2004, URL <http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/82760.pdf>.

within NATO and the Western European Union, these initiatives are clearly novel and inventive contributions. They are tailor-made for the EU, in just the same way as the military battle group concept and the civil–military planning cell were. Taken together, these new initiatives will increase the Union's opportunities—although not necessarily its political capacity—to contribute more fine-tuned and complex combinations of instruments for the promotion of peace and security in other parts of the world.

The Nordic input also includes both Danish and Swedish proposals on how to better coordinate the EU's peace-building activities with, for instance, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN.³⁹ Among the states in the region, Denmark has also been particularly active in influencing EU policy on the Middle East. Another notable initiative was the Swedish proposal for the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.⁴⁰ This idea was first raised by Lindh in the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 19 March 2003, the day on which the Iraq war broke out.⁴¹ The initiative aimed, according to the then Greek EU Presidency, to provide 'potential alternatives to the pre-emptive use of force against countries that pose a threat to international security'.⁴²

Such Nordic initiatives have, in general, had quite a strong focus on the EU's use of non-military means for peace-building. As a consequence, many Nordic and non-Nordic practitioners and analysts have a shared perception of Denmark (owing to its opt-out) and of Finland and Sweden (because of their policy of military non-alignment) as countries with an aversion to things military in the EU context. This conclusion is no longer valid, if it ever was in the first place. While it is quite natural that member states with small armed forces have less influence in defence-related issues within the EU, none of the three Nordic members, as argued above, now has any political hesitations about the need for a further enhancement of the EU's military capability. In practice, however, Denmark has clearly not been an active contributor to the Union's military operations, while Finland and Sweden have shown a great political readiness to contribute, although with relatively limited opportunities to deliver. Both countries participated in Operation Concordia in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and they also participate in the EUFOR Althea operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, Sweden was the only other state to contribute combat troops to the French-led Operation Artemis in the Demo-

³⁹ On Denmark see Jørgensen (note 33), p. 125; and on Sweden see, e.g., Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, *Ministerrådspromemoria 2001-05-09* [Cabinet memo 2001-05-09], Cabinet meeting (General questions), 14–15 May 2001.

⁴⁰ Council of the European Union, *EU Strategy Against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Document 15708/03, Brussels, 10 Dec. 2003, URL <http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/DV/Council WMD Strategy 15708_/Council WMD Strategy 15708_en.pdf>

⁴¹ Swedish Parliament, *EU-nämndens protokoll 2002/03:18* [Committee on EU Affairs verbatim report 2002/03:18], Stockholm. 14 Mar. 2003; and Swedish Parliament, *EU-nämndens protokoll 2002/03:22* [Committee on EU Affairs verbatim report 2002/03:22], Stockholm. 11 Apr. 2003—both at URL <<http://www.riksdagen.se/Webbnav/index.aspx?nid=6380>>.

⁴² Greek Presidency, *Informal General Affairs and External Relations Council (Gymnich)*, May 2–3: Press Statement, Kastelorizo, 3 May 2003, URL <<http://www.eu2003.gr/en/articles/2003/5/3/2662/>>.

cratic Republic of the Congo during the summer of 2003, thereby making Sweden one of the very few EU members to have participated actively in all six civilian and military EU crisis management missions.

Paradoxically, Iceland and Norway have also been more active than Denmark when it comes to contributions to the build-up of the EU's crisis management capability and to ESDP operations. Norway has, for instance, offered 3500 troops, complemented by air and maritime force elements, for a supplement to the Helsinki Force Catalogue, and Iceland and Norway each participated in four of the first six ESDP operations. The planned Swedish-led battle group, with contributions from Estonia, Finland and Norway, will further highlight Denmark's marginalization. As the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs has noted, 'the closer the interaction between the military and civilian capabilities becomes, the greater the chance of us having to stay out of combined operations altogether'.⁴³ In sum, however, all the Nordic countries have contributed actively to the development of the Union's peace-building role. The three EU members have not only accepted and adapted to the CFSP and the ESDP but also shown a willingness to influence the process and to strengthen their own voices in international politics through the Union.

In addition, all the Nordic countries have seen active participation in EU military operations as one way in which they can further increase their influence on the Union's broader agenda for international peace and security. As Urban Ahlin, Chairman of the Swedish Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, has put it, if the EU wants to 'provide troops, the question is posed to all. The country that does not raise its hand will count as a lightweight—even in other political issues'.⁴⁴ Something of a 'troops for influence' strategy⁴⁵ has been chosen by all the Nordic countries apart from Denmark, whose government nonetheless accepts that the reverse logic is also true: Denmark's influence is weakened precisely because of the defence opt-out.⁴⁶ For Norway, participation in EU military missions cannot improve its influence over EU decision making but may interestingly be thought of as a strategy to avoid losing influence in NATO.⁴⁷

The only Nordic country that also seems to have another explicit, and different, major motivation for its active participation is Finland. In the words of the Finnish Government, active participation in the ESDP also creates the type of 'practical capability to cooperate, on which a reliable *offer* of support in the event of a crisis will also rest'.⁴⁸ Thus, and in contrast to Sweden, Finland

⁴³ Møller (note 19).

⁴⁴ Holmström, M., 'Försvarets bantning ger stort manfall' [Downsizing of the armed forces results in fewer troops], *Svenska Dagbladet*, 28 Nov. 2004, URL <http://www.svd.se/dynamiskt/inrikes/did_8630718.asp> (author's translation).

⁴⁵ Rieker (note 37), p. 233.

⁴⁶ Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (note 10).

⁴⁷ Rieker (note 37), p. 233.

⁴⁸ Finnish Parliament, 'Statsminister Matti Vanhanen vid remissdebatten om statsrådets säkerhets- och försvarspolitiska redogörelse' [Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen at the referral debate on the government's

appears to see a collective defence aspect to the ESDP: indeed, this motivation may be just as important for Finland as the opportunity to actively influence the EU's policies on distant conflicts and wars.

V. Opportunities for new 'Nordic' contributions

The three Nordic EU members have begun to see the new opportunities created by their membership. In terms of active input into the CFSP/ESDP process, they are not doing badly at all. They have demonstrated their willingness, their diplomatic skills and that when they try to influence the process this works well. On several issues they have managed to influence their fellow EU members and have thereby reinforced Nordic voices in the international arena. In fact, they have arguably influenced this policy area to a greater extent than they realize, or at least give themselves credit for. Nordic decision makers seem to underestimate their own opportunities to inspire new European peace-building activities around the world. To the extent that the three Nordic EU members still 'punch below their weight' within the CFSP and the ESDP, as one analyst has argued,⁴⁹ their governments' somewhat erroneous judgement of their own influence may well be a part of the explanation.

The actor that most clearly punches below its own weight, however, is the European Union itself. While Iceland and Norway, as long as they remain outside the EU, can hardly be expected to do much more about this, there is ample room for new initiatives from the other three Nordic countries. With many of the previous political sensitivities about the CFSP and the ESDP gone, nothing is preventing Finland and Sweden from further exploring the meanings of 'activism' within the EU context. While Denmark may be somewhat paralysed by its defence opt-out, most EU peace-building activities will still have no military component and thus, at least in a formal sense, they offer Denmark the chance to be as full a member as any other state.

There are many EU weaknesses in this policy area, and some may argue that the biggest problem is the intergovernmental nature of the CFSP and the ESDP themselves. The three Nordic members, however, are content with this overarching solution and are not likely to advocate any fundamental transformation of the whole institutional set-up in the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, and within the existing system, there are still many issues that cry out for new solutions or at least reinforced efforts from the member states. One such issue is the need to improve the coherence between various external policy areas. While this is one of the most discussed problems of the CFSP, few have so far been able to come up with innovative ideas on how this will work in practice. These questions will be partially addressed—but hard to resolve—if the process of creating a 'double-hatted' EU minister for foreign affairs and a single external

report on security and defence policy], 28 Sep. 2004, URL <<http://www.government.fi/vn/liston/base.jsp?r=88929&k=sv>> (author's translation; emphasis added).

⁴⁹ Jørgensen (note 33), p. 128.

action service resumes in the coming years. This is an area where the Nordic countries, as unusually outspoken proponents of more comprehensive EU peace-building activities, could be expected to contribute new ideas.

Another problem for the EU, and one which is getting bigger as the Union's ambitions in international security management increase, is the scarce allocation of funding for the CFSP in the EU budget. While the three Nordic EU members are among the net contributors to the EU budget, and are thereby also in general opposed to any budget increases, they seem to be sympathetic to an increase in the CFSP budget line. Why not be more active and collectively outspoken about this need? A related problem is that of financing national contributions to the EU crisis management missions. The Nordic countries, just as many other EU members, may sometimes have problems in quickly despatching personnel and equipment because of shortcomings in their domestic budgetary procedures. Why not provide good examples and seriously address this issue at home, and thereby show that states can adjust their national legislation and show some measure of political will even without supranational pressure?

The EU's capacity for quick reaction when conflicts erupt also calls for further elaboration. Partly as a result of Nordic initiatives, the EU has become better at detecting conflicts at an early stage, and the EU's Joint Situation Centre (SITCEN) is now constantly monitoring a number of unstable geographical areas. However, detection is not the same thing as action. All member states are in a sense equally responsible for proposing action once an early warning has been issued, but why not make it a Nordic priority to be among the first to propose swift EU action? As the three governments constantly point out, the EU now has a unique array of foreign policy instruments. Why not be the ones who, early on, suggest the use of one or the other instrument?

Finally, why not—at least rhetorically—start pleading for a few causes that may be 'unwinnable' in the short term but are desirable in the long term? One such issue could of course be the apparently logical but seemingly impossible change in EU representation on the UN Security Council. Why not argue in favour of an EU seat at the table, if not as a substitute for the French and the British chairs, then at least as a complement? Similar solutions seem to have been worked out in other forums, such as the Group of Eight. In connection with the upcoming reforms of the Security Council itself, there will be plenty of opportunities to at least voice such ideas. If nothing else, this would provide new input to the public debate, both domestically and in the wider EU context. At least in Denmark and Sweden, the level of public understanding of why the governments have embraced the CFSP and the ESDP is still low. A greater and more nuanced public appreciation of these governments' work and ambitions in this area should *prima facie* make it easier for the governments to increase their active contributions to the CFSP/ESDP process in the coming years.