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SUMMARY

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

► **Europe's citizens know almost nothing** about the discussions under way about the **Strategic Compass**, the **European Union's upcoming strategic document** for 2030 that will structure its security to a considerable extent.

The **national representative bodies** that are the Member States' parliaments **have been excluded from this process**, even though it will have a significant impact on the future. **This report tries to correct this oversight by informing the public**, because the subject is complex, and by **alerting** them, because the risks and stakes are high. In the future, <u>parliaments must be involved in periodically updates on the Strategic Compass</u>.

► **The work on the Compass** has been limited to experts and the executive branches and was **launched during the uncertain period inaugurated by the Trump administration**, which questioned the security guarantee that NATO provides to Europe. The Biden Administration has **reassured the Allies** and reaffirmed NATO's coverage, so much so that **their ambitions for Europe's security and defence have been greatly scaled back.**

► However, **Trumpism is not dead**, and even if it does die, **the United States' strategic interests do not always coincide with those of the** <u>**EU, so it should take care to leave room for manoeuvre and autonomy in**</u> <u>**defence and security to manage crises**</u>. Furthermore, NATO's responsibilities now tend to cover **resilience**, a domain that the EU has also taken up via the Strategic Compass. <u>**The EU should assert its own priorities whilst seeking coordination with NATO.**</u>

► The Strategic Compass should be **finalised in March 2022 under the French Presidency** of the Council of the European Union (first half of 2022). **France is active on issues of defence and security**. It readily takes strong initiatives and invokes general principles such as strategic autonomy. **The gap** between its ambitions and those of most Member States has become **obvious**.

► If <u>**France wants to be convincing, it must take care to listen to**</u> <u>**its partners and promote balanced measures**</u> tactfully and with conviction, especially when working with Atlanticist Member States that are more reluctant than ever to move further towards strategic autonomy. **These measures could:**

- **seek to improve how the many instruments intended to overcome the EU's capability shortfalls** operate and interact and work to acquire a European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) by encouraging cooperation,

- **try to better accommodate the principle of unanimity**, which is a major obstacle to initiating operations, which are increasingly rare despite an increase in risks and conflicts,

- work to improve operations, in particular by **Europeanising military command** and **speeding up force generation**. A 'first entry force' of 5,000 trained troops could be established, finally mobilising the battlegroups; created in 2006, they have never been deployed and are often unavailable.

These possibilities would show substantial progress towards a defence and security policy that seems out of steam despite several revivals. **<u>France must therefore support the implementation of a mechanism to politically monitor and support the Strategic Compass.</u>**

► **It may be difficult to walk this fine line, but it is essential, as the potential pitfalls of the Strategic Compass are serious**: it could prove to be completely lacking in scope, or it could emerge with ambitions that entirely overlap with those of NATO. Depending on how detailed it is, the Compass could **end up being a straitjacket if there is a major crisis**.

Recommendations for the French Presidency of the Council of the EU

1. Reiterate that, through the Strategic Compass, the European Union is entitled to set its own priorities, which may be distinct from those of NATO.

2. Take care to support measures (see above) that will appear to our partners as balanced and concrete and support an open and respectful discussion.

3. Promote a mechanism for politically monitoring and supporting the Strategic Compass.

4. Propose that the Strategic Compass be updated every five years, each time involving Member States' parliaments.

I. A STRATEGIC COMPASS FOR A FREE AND STRONG EUROPE

The start of this century has been characterised by the emergence of new types of threats—jihadist, cyber, spatial, 'hybrid'—destabilising initiatives from middle-ranking powers such as Turkey and Iran, and the rise of China, which now disputes the United States' global leadership. Naturally, the US's "pivot to Asia" calls into question the priority NATO gives to Europe's security.

However, **common security and defence policy** (CSDP) **operations are becoming increasingly rare**. EU Member States agree on the need to do more collectively. But they are still struggling to be more specific and operational in a sovereign domain that requires unanimity, where interventions and investments are costly and where, on the eastern border, NATO appears as the only reliable solution.

A. A COMPASS DESIGNED TO RECONCILE ASSESSMENTS

To jumpstart a constructive review of EU security, in 2019 Germany proposed drafting a "strategic compass", a sort of white paper for EU defence and security, which we recommended in the report "European defence: the Challenge of Strategic Autonomy".[1] Initiated during the German Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2020 and expected to be completed during the French presidency in the first half of 2022, this exercise **organises a discussion among experts and representatives of the executive branches of all Member States on an unprecedented scale**. It began with a **threat assessment** based on contributions from their intelligence services. Finalised in late 2020 by the European External Action Service (EEAS), the classified assessment was **not approved politically**, which avoided having to prioritise threats that are perceived very differently from one country to another.

On this basis, the discussion then revolved around four 'baskets': '**crisis management**' and '**resilience**' for the objectives, '**capabilities**' and '**partnerships**' for the means. A **strategic review** extended to resilience and partnerships seeks to provide an **exhaustive response to the threats.** The exercise avoids explicitly promoting the EU's 'strategic autonomy' and 'sovereignty', terms that still irritate certain Member States. The EEAS will provide a synthesis of Member States' contributions in the second half of 2021, and the final political discussion should be completed in March 2022.

What can we hope for from this approach, given the context of the US's and NATO's recent return to the international stage?

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[1] *Senate report no. 626 (2018-2019), July 2019.*

B. A COMPASS TO JUMPSTART THE CSDP...

The results of previous jumpstarts to the common security and defence policy, from the Lisbon Treaty (2009) and then the '**European Union Global Strategy**' (EUGS) in 2016, **have been below expectations.** At any given time, any process can be blocked due to a lack of a shared vision by the rule of unanimity.

1. An ambitious approach to capability, but which remains disappointing

The EU has developed many instruments to make up for its capability shortfalls and acquire a European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) by encouraging cooperation. **But, for the large part, Member States are orienting their investments according to their own strategic interests** or those of NATO. They are also undertaking partnerships outside the CSDP, such as those between France and Germany (the future combat air system, future tank) or with the United Kingdom (Lancaster House). **As a result, Russia, with defence spending nearly four times less than the EU, discredits the CSDP on the eastern border in the eyes of certain Member States**.

a) First avenue: better fulfil the potential of each of the instruments available

• The **Capability Development Plan (CDP) sets the priorities in terms of the EU's defence capabilities.** In the first phase, the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) uses the Headline Goal Process (HLGP) to identify the military resources needed for the five illustrative scenarios go smoothly. By reconciling these needs with the forces that the States report providing to the EU, the EUMS makes an inventory of gaps in capability, based on which **the European Defence Agency** establishes the CDP.

However, the Member States only report a small share of their capabilities here, compared to around half as part of the NDPP, the NATO Defence Planning Process. **This 'under-reporting', which reflects a hesitancy towards the CSDP, reduces the reliability of the EU's capability process**. Furthermore, the HLGP's most demanding scenario, which lacks credibility given that it provides for the deployment of 60,000 soldiers, leads to targets that are totally unreachable. **In France, the Ministry of the Armed Forces supports adding a sixth, more realistic scenario**, that resembles Operation Serval. It would be based on the deployment of just 5,000 soldiers but would still be very demanding in terms of equipment in order to fight in a hard-to-access environment.

• The **CARD (Coordinated Annual Review on Defence)** presented by the EDA gives a complete overview of Member States' spending and investments, including research. It allows us to see their defence planning

and the development of their capabilities while listing the gaps with regards to the CDP. This inventory is intended to facilitate cooperation on capabilities. **In November 2020, European defence ministers approved the first CARD**, which criticised a '*costly fragmentation*' and identified 55 possibilities for multinational cooperation in the military field and 6 '*next generation capabilities as priority areas'*. We fear that the Strategic Compass, as a parallel process, encourages a certain 'wait-and-see' approach.

• **The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)**, established in late 2017, seeks to increase defence spending by **adopting NATO's 2014 objective for each Ally to allocate at least 2% of GDP to defence**, with 20% of that for investments, and to provide a framework for **cooperative projects in operations and equipment to increase European capabilities.** PESCO, which also includes smaller countries, already includes 47 projects of this type. But the **results remain mixed**, with **unequal achievements** that call for being **more selective with projects** and an **openness to third countries since 2020 that requires vigilance**. This is particularly the case as regards the US's ITAR (International Traffic in Arms Regulations), which prevents the sale without their consent of equipment that includes American components.

• With the new **European Defence Fund (EDF)**, the Commission is looking to support investment in defence research and the development of shared technologies and equipment, including PESCO projects. Non-EU member countries are not eligible for the fund. With €8 billion for the 2021-2027 period, a much greater amount than the instruments it replaces, this fund is **real progress**, but its success could be hindered by the **tendency of many Member States to see it as a redistribution fund.**

b) Second avenue: improve the interactions between available instruments

In short, the CDP covers the list of priorities that Member States want to set by vaguely taking inspiration from a list of capability shortfalls established based on barely realistic scenarios and statements that lack sincerity. However, it does provide structure. **The philosophies at work should interact in a better way**: the EUMS with the illustrative scenarios, the EDA with the CDP and the CARD, and the Commission, which organises industrial cooperation via the EDF. All while respecting the constraint of aligning with the timeline of NATO's capability planning. Finally, it would be good to **integrate aspects of the EU's capability process in national planning.**

2. An operational approach that is running out of steam

Out of 17 missions and operations under way, three so-called 'executive' military operation involve combat forces: *Althea* (2004), *Atalante* (2008) and *Irini* (2015). That leaves three 'non-executive' military operations, which are training missions (EUTM), and 11 civilian missions.

a) First avenue: overcome the principle of unanimity

• <u>The current easy option: ad hoc coordination</u>: to act quickly, Member States—especially France with missions like Agenor and Takuba— are more than willing to intervene outside the CSDP. In doing so, they deprive themselves of its benefits (command, financing, political legitimacy) and the participation of certain Member States. Germany, for example, is legally prohibited from participating in an operation without a UN, NATO or EU mandate, except for certain preventive actions.

• <u>The avenue of automaticity in case of aggression</u>: the Strategic Compass exercise seems to reveal a new consensus for the mutual defence clause of Article 42.7 TEU, invoked just once, by France after the Paris attacks in 2015.

• <u>The avenue of facilitated consent for greater flexibility</u>: Article 44 TEU allows us to imagine that a Member State could propose **a 'turnkey' operation conceived with a few other partner States.** This would save time in the pre-studies and discussions between Member States with a view to establishing an operation concept. Another avenue, put forward by France, is that of **'bricks' of cooperation** that the CSDP could provide to a national operation, to an ad hoc European cooperation such as Takuba or Agenor, or to a NATO or UN operation.

• <u>The avenue of bypassing institutions</u>**:** outside the CSDP and the EU, the studies conducted by the 13 Member States of the **European Intervention Initiative (EII)** favour the emergence of a common strategic culture. Other multinational initiatives in Europe seek to **create a quick response force**: Eurocorps, Franco-German Brigade, Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF), Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF).

• <u>The avenue of a hard core: establish a European Security Council?</u> Since EU Member States are struggling to agree on defence issues, we could wonder whether to establish a 'vanguard' outside the CSDP. This option, presented several times by Angela Merkel as a 'European Security Council', was ultimately supported by Emmanuel Macron (joint statement of 19 June 2018).

b) Second avenue: improve operations and their context

● **Improve mission quality**

The force generation derived from the three EUTMs suffers from incomplete training. Civilian missions mainly suffer from unsatisfactory expertise in regard to the needs due to a lack of ambition from contributing States. In Africa, these gaps are becoming even more problematic, given that Russia, China, and even Turkey are now there as rivals.

● **Accelerate force generation by making battlegroups sustainable**

Established in 2006, the EU Battlegroups are each made up of 1,500 troops and are intended to provide a military presence in groups of two. However, they have **never been deployed** and are **often unavailable**.

Collective financing through the European Peace Facility would be incentivising. During the discussions on the Strategic Compass, a small majority of States co-signed a French non-paper proposing a "first entry force" in line with the sixth scenario (see above). Its core could be two big battlegroups with land, air and maritime components.

● **Better funding for missions, the European Peace Facility (EPF)**

With €5 billion for the 2021-2027 period outside the EU's regular budget, this year the EPF replaces the Athena mechanism, which funds certain shared expenses for CSDP operations, and the African Peace Facility (APF). **The EPF materialises progress that was anticipated by allowing for direct military aid, even of a lethal nature**, which will help to improve a crucial point of training in EUTMs.

● **Europeanise military command**

For the command of CSDP military operations, it is possible to employ either:

- the **'Berlin Plus' agreements (2003)**, which allow the NATO command structure to be used, which was the case in Macedonia and Bosnia (where the Althea operation still uses it); using these agreements again currently seems unlikely,

- an **'autonomous European Union operation'** that relies on a national military staff, chosen for each operation from among five eligible Member States, each time requiring a period of familiarisation with how the relevant European bodies operate,

- or, since 2017, for non-executive military operations, the MPCC (Military Planning and Conduct Capability), led by the head of the EUMS.

The three EUTMs are overseen by the MPCC. But **the human and material situation at the MPCC does not always allow it to assume its role perfectly.** The head of the EUMS is not expected to declare it fully operationally capable until the end of 2021, one year behind schedule. Later,

it would be beneficial to extend the MPCC's scope to executive military missions. This would provide a military staff for planning, otherwise referred to as an 'OHQ',[1] for all military missions. In this perspective, France supports **maintaining a single command for the EUMS and MPCC** in order to preserve the unity of capability reflections and a satisfactory balance between the Council and the Commission. Indeed, certain Member States would like to call them into question.

• **Provide information to military command**

European intelligence is very patchy. Here, France advocates using the EU's electronic intelligence tools, including SatCen (the satellite image analysis centre), and increasing information gathering capabilities.

C. ... AND RESIZE THE EU'S ACTIONS TO MEET ITS SECURITY NEEDS?

1. 'Resilience', a necessary and consensual objective supported by the Commission

Resilience is about preserving access to contested strategic spaces such as cyberspace, space, seas and airspace. It is also about reducing our industrial dependence in security and defence and strengthening our access to critical technologies and strategic materials. Finally, it is about ensuring our economic, health and climate security. **The Commission, which now seeks to be 'geopolitical', is very active on these issues. A change of dimension can already be seen** in the negotiations with pharmaceutical laboratories, the European recovery plan, and the actions towards Russia and China. In 2020, the **DG DEFIS** (Defence Industry and Space) was created, headed by Thierry Breton, **demonstrating the EU's new propensity to leverage its economic power to strategic ends.**

2. 'Partnerships' that should be nurtured carefully

Reinforcing a stature as a geostrategic player implies **making many partnerships.** The partnership with NATO has special weight, to the point that it is provides more structure for CSDP than the latter does for it.

a) NATO: the central issue of 'Who does what?' with the EU

• NATO guarantees the security of the EU's Allied territory through the mutual defence clause in Article 5, the very foundation of the alliance. It

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[1] Operational Headquarters: *another way of referring to an operational planning staff (to conduct, plan and organise military missions). An MPCC in the role of OHQ would be placed between the EUMS, which deals with concepts at the European level, and the military staff that commands the operation on the ground*

is also responsible for managing crises outside its members' territories, integrated into its strategic concept in 1999.

The EU, with a CSDP that meets the level of ambition set out in Helsinki in 1999, ought to be able to manage crises in its nearby environment without NATO. The EU cannot count on the consent of all non-EU allies (Turkey opposes certain operations in the Mediterranean) nor on their aid (the United States may not want to get involved). But **the CSDP's potential is insufficient**, so much so that the **distribution of roles** tends to end up as follow:

- NATO defends Europe's territory and manages crises at the top of the spectrum, both involving the Eastern border,

- the European Union responds to other security challenges around Europe—stabilisation and peacekeeping operations, controlling migrant movements—which mainly involves crises on the southern border.

This complementarity between NATO and the EU must be reaffirmed and clarified with a realistic level of ambition, which would lend credibility to Europe as a power, possibly based on the French first entry scenario (see above). Whatever the case, without drawing up a detailed, rigid distribution of roles that could prove counterproductive, **the Strategic Compass should finally clearly state what the EU must know how to do.**

In addition to the 'Berlin Plus' agreements (see above), the relationship with NATO should be seen in terms of its many partnerships, which have been revived since the Warsaw summit in July 2016. NATO and the EU now exchange real-time alerts on cyberattacks, participate in each other's exercises and collaborate in their response to migration crises. Military mobility, a major chapter of cooperation for both organisations, is what justifies the participation of the United States, Canada and Norway in a specific PESCO project.

b) USA, UK, China, Indo-Pacific, Africa

Joe Biden reversed most of the decisions criticised by the EU. The quality of the relationship with **the United States** has been restored, but there are certain constants that should **lead us to beware following them blindly**: the pivot to Asia and their desire to impose their approach to China, the promotion of a capability integration within NATO that benefits their military-industrial complex (thus at the expense of the EDTIB), economic competition, extraterritorial sanctions, ITAR regulations, etc.

Without giving up on establishing a privileged security and defence link with the **United Kingdom**, we must be **realistic about the post-Brexit appetite for European mechanisms** of a country so strongly anchored in its transatlantic partnership. Its latest strategic review was drawn up with

NATO and the US in mind, and the UK is seeking to inject into the Alliance the resilience issues that the EU is committed to addressing.

China poses a growing challenge to the EU, especially on issues of resilience: digital sovereignty, misinformation, industrial capacity, competitiveness, market access, risk of denial of access to sea lanes, especially in the straits. The initial enthusiasm of the 17+1 member countries is waning. There is an increasingly widespread conviction that we must 'act as one' towards China, which is described as being at once a rival, competitor, and a partner and which is disserved by a now-conspicuous hubris. **Dealing with the 'China issue' solely through NATO** would be a pitfall that risks allowing America to interfere in the EU's trade policy. Therefore, the EU must quickly **develop a strategic line that requires reciprocity** in economic matters. Indeed, China could takeover Former President Trump's role as a driver of the EU's 'geopoliticisation".

In essence, the **Indo-Pacific** is another way for the EU to deal with China, which is likely to deny certain maritime access to this area that is home to 60% of the world's population and the most dynamic GDPs. But there is a **risk** that such a broad security and defence issue **could be more appropriately dealt with in the NATO framework**, together with the maritime powers of the United States and the United Kingdom, at the risk of reducing the EU's autonomy in dealing with China.

Finally, the EU must confirm a "**pivot to Africa**" where, in a newly competitive environment (China, Russia, Turkey), stronger cooperation aimed at consolidating institutions, developing infrastructure, educating the people and combating the crisis-induced poverty will promote growth and security, aid in the fight against terrorism, and help control emigration.

II. A COMPASS THAT MIGHT BE POINTING A LITTLE TOO FAR WEST

A. THE GREAT RETURN OF ATLANTIC AFFINITIES ...

1. NATO's renewed credibility in the face of a CSDP weakened by Brexit...

The election of Joe Biden and the announcement that the United States is resuming its role as the world's policeman, notably within the framework of a NATO reaffirming its role as the Allies' protector, are reassuring. Similarly, the appointments of Antony Blinken and Karen Donfried, Deputy for European and Eurasian Affairs, were welcomed throughout the European Union. **Reassured, European decision-makers** often aspire to resume the course of the traditional Atlantic relationship.

Compared to the pre-Trump situation, **Brexit adds an argument for tipping the balance in favour of NATO**, since the UK is the ally with the highest defence spending ($60 bn), after the US ($785 bn) and ahead of Germany ($56 bn) and France ($50 bn). **EU countries now account for only one fifth of the defence spending of NATO countries**.

2. ...by the health crisis and the ensuing budget impacts...

The health crisis has resulted in **heavy spending to support the economy** while focusing security attention on the lower end of the spectrum and resilience. Thus, EU Allies will be more likely to rely on NATO for the upper end of the spectrum, especially as they are forced to make **budget adjustments**. **These may entail capability and operational sacrifices**, for which better coordination would be unlikely to compensate.

3. ... and by political configurations likely to become less favourable

The **German elections** in September 2021 and the **French elections** in the spring of 2022 could jeopardise the **EU's mobilisation for security and defence.** In Germany, the elections could result in a new coalition that includes the Greens, who are historically more suspicious of armed intervention and perhaps more intransigent towards China and Russia - as is the US.

B. ... DESPITE INCREASINGLY DEMANDING AND COMPLEX COORDINATION WITH NATO

1. Potentially different geostrategic aims

China is an ultimate threat for the US (which sets the agenda for NATO), **not for the EU**. The European Union's economic and strategic interests may justify choices of cooperation, including with Russia, that the United States might not approve of. Conversely, Turkey, against which the EU may have an interest in acting, is part of NATO, which does not want to weaken itself by alienating an ally whose geographical position is considered strategic by the United States.

2. The intangible 'NATO umbrella'

Joe Biden has a very slim majority in Congress, especially in the Senate, which weakens his international policy and gives reason to worry for the upcoming elections. The midterm elections will take place in little more than a year, and presidential elections in a little more than three.
The Pax Americana, renewed via NATO, could be shorter than hoped. It should be seen as a chance for the EU to buy time to organise its security in a more comprehensive way.

3. The imminent perspective of a 'great leap forward'

NATO is showing great ambitions, as evidenced in particular the NATO 2030 agenda, approved by the Allies in Brussels on 14 June 2021. In the past few months, **NATO's work has developed a 360° defence strategy**, summarised herein.

The Agenda suggests using Article 5 in case of a cyberattack, which merits clarification. These actions could come from countries where the EU and the United States do not share the same risks or objectives, and identifying the source country requires caution. Furthermore, it **considers resilience in its widest sense, going so far as assigning objectives to Allies and monitoring their achievement.**

If all the Agenda's prospects come to pass, **the resilience that the EU seeks to orchestrate could be overshadowed by a NATO-led resilience, just as the CSDP barely survives alongside the Alliance. While the immense power of the American army may explain this, nothing would justify it** given the EU's resources.

4. NATO's capability advantage

Europe's capability planning is less directive and incentivising than the NDPP (NATO Defence Planning Process), and **is less adhered to**, particularly by Member States without a military programme act and which defend their military budgets solely on this basis.

This raises the issue of the coherence among the commitments of countries in the EU and in NATO. 38 of the 47 PESCO projects meet NATO priorities to a certain extend. However, it is not NATO's role, through the NDPP, to have a say in the commitments made within the EU. In the same vein, modelling Europe's norms and standards developed through PESCO on NATO norms and standards could jeopardise the establishment of an EDTIB. Reserving EDF funding for European projects is a partial safeguard. But the Agenda plans to set up a **NATO fund for innovation**.

5. The concurrence of strategic reflections

The Strategic Compass, which envisages a partnership approach to NATO, **is not intended to be a local version of the "Strategic Concept"** that the Alliance is working on. On paper, the reflections are not taking place at the same time, nor are they being completed simultaneously, since the Strategic Concept is expected to be released in summer 2022. **The schedules were planned so that the Strategic Compass would not be influenced.** But NATO, as requested by its Secretary General in the framework of the NATO 2030 strategy, is intensifying its work and reflections. According to certain observers, everything is happening as if NATO were in a race. Its options risk **heavily influencing the Strategic Compass** — which would suit the desires of countries such as Poland or certain Baltic countries. **A political**

dialogue between the HR/VP and the NATO Secretary General would be very useful to **arrive at the necessary coherence** between the two exercises **while ensuring the autonomy of the Strategic Compass approach**. But currently, nothing indicates that such a dialogue could take place.

III. A STRATEGIC COMPASS THAT HAS BECOME RISKY

A failure of the Strategic Compass would be very damaging for the CSDP: experience shows that disillusions in this area push back any possibility of progress for many years. Here, we express **our great regret** as to the methodology: **concertation and discussions on the Strategic Compass were not extended to parliaments. This deprives the Strategic Compass of a means to enrich and deepen the audience among Europe's citizens, whose absence will weigh on the process's completion in early 2022.**

A. THE RISK OF AN UNAMBITIOUS DOCUMENT

The stated reaffirmation and strengthening of the Atlantic security guarantee weigh on the ambitions most Member States have for the CSDP. The threat assessment that they will accept politically may focus only on the most consensual, hybrid and technological ones. This **could favour resilience over crisis management** and capabilities that are solely industrial and technological. For the CSDP, this would mean **losing the two years spent on drafting the Strategic Compass. We might then add the years following the publication** of the Strategic Compass, which is still being presented as binding for Member States.

An incomplete Strategic Compass could be relativised—and made presentable—through binding initiatives to **improve only non-executive civilian or military missions**, which Germany prefers to executive missions. But **we must oppose any attempt to promote the use of the military within borders** to assume, in the name of resilience, a generalist role that would permanently distance them from their primary mission.

B. THE RISK OF A DOCUMENT GEARED SOLELY TO NATO'S NEEDS

There is a real risk that the document will fit the mould of NATO's Strategic Concept. The compass would not offer anything that could be seen as a duplicate of NATO resources or as distancing itself from NATO's ambitions, whether in terms of the military or of resilience. Major expectations would then revolve around a deeper partnership with NATO.

We fear that the Strategic Compass's ambitions would be partly within the hands of the United States. Indeed, the signals that they send in terms of the room allowed for EU autonomy will be interpreted and

followed very closely by the most Atlanticist Member States through to the very end of the process.

C. THE RISK OF A MORE AMBITIOUS DOCUMENT WITH LITTLE EFFECT

However, the final document could include **interesting opportunities**, especially in terms of **resilience** concerning contested spaces, that should be made permanent. In terms of the CSDP, the **first entry force**, supported by Josep Borrell, would be a significant advance that could be considered globally acceptable if it is conceived to avoid any duplication that could offend NATO or the United States.

This is why a **mechanism for political monitoring and support** should be implemented, in line with one of France's key concerns.

D. THE RISK OF A DOCUMENT THAT BECOMES A STRAITJACKET IN A CRISIS

As the health crisis has shown, the **EU is capable of finding willpower when events require. A very formal document**, especially if it assumes a minimal capability for action, could **prove counterproductive** in a crisis. This reasoning applies to relations with NATO, which the compass should not make too rigid. Similarly, less flexibility in our relations with Russia, Turkey, China and certain North African countries could be damaging. **Updating the Strategic Compass every five years** would allow us to adjust it to the geostrategic reality while limiting all the risks stated above.

E. THE ADDITIONAL RISK OF FRANCE BEING SEEN AS IN CONTROL

France, perhaps worried that a disappointing Strategic Compass may tarnish its presidency of the Council of the EU, **should take care to avoid indulging its penchant for spectacular statements and promoting concepts.** If it does so, it would only upset its partners and undermine the process.

Nevertheless, France is still respected, and its assessments are eagerly awaited: it will therefore have to stand by its convictions, explain them and try to convince other countries, in the interest of all EU countries.

INTRODUCTION

When the opposition between the Western and Soviet blocs ended, revealing a possible 'end of history',[1] the 1990s saw the rise of liberal democracy and the market as vectors of growth, trade and peace that would lead to a drop in world conflicts. But the 21st century opened a new era of uncertainty.
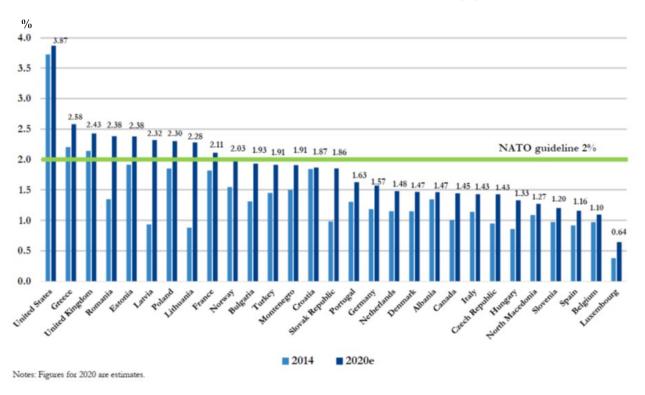
The beginning of this century has been characterised by the emergence of new dangers - in particular risks from jihadists as well as cyber and a whole range of new so-called "hybrid" threats - by the new assertiveness of powers with destabilising aims - Russia, Turkey and Iran, to focus on the recent period and our immediate environment - and by America's world leadership that is gradually being challenged by the spectacular rise of China. Obsessed with its Asian competitor, the Obama administration began a "pivot to Asia" in 2011 which, in the long run, called into question the priority NATO gives to Europe's security.

It is true that, since the 1990s, the European Union had gradually established a common security and defence policy (CSDP). But its ambitions were limited. Most Member States, either because they felt they faced too great a threat, particularly on the eastern edge, because their defence capabilities were too weak, or both, essentially continued to rely on NATO's security guarantee to the Allies. This guarantee, which is primarily provided by the Americans, whose colossal military expenditure - by far the largest in the world - represents 70% of all Allied spending, was deemed immeasurably more reassuring, convenient and, in short, economical.

Due to an awareness of the scissor effect resulting from an increased number of threats—not all of which fall within NATO's remit—and the risk of a security guarantee within the Alliance that is less unconditional from the Americans, European Union Member States have recently been encouraged to do more for their security.

The Americans themselves are directly calling for better 'burden sharing' on defence between Allies, so much so that each of them agreed to spend 2% of their GDP on defence within 10 years at the NATO summit in Newport in 2014. This resulted in a reversal of the downward trend in defence spending among EU countries from 2015.

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[1] *'The End of History and the Last Man', Francis Fukuyama, 1992.*

DEFENCE SPENDING AS A SHARE OF GDP IN 2014 AND IN 2020 (%)[1]

Notes: Figures for 2020 are estimates.

The Trump administration openly called into question America's guarantee of transatlantic coverage. Once the shock had passed, Europeans increasingly asked themselves if the time was right to effectively jumpstart the CSDP to prepare for any eventuality.

This would be no mean feat for a policy that is often criticised for its complexity, illegibility and even relative ineffectiveness (in the sense of added value compared to national initiatives, even combined), and for the indifference of European citizens towards it.

Ultimately, the Biden administration strongly reaffirmed the US commitment to NATO. The European desire for genuine autonomy in security and defence matters could be jeopardised as soon as it was strengthened.

However, the threats outside the Alliance's traditional remit remain. Furthermore, Trumpism is not dead; there is no reason to expect that it will not continue to prosper and offer an electoral proposal that will convince a majority of Americans, if not for the upcoming midterms, then the next presidential elections.

What would happen to NATO's protection if it had to weather four more years of US suspicion towards their European allies? Four years of an American foreign policy that relies on challenging multilateralism? Four

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[1] *Based on 2015 prices and exchange rates. Estimate for 2020. Source: NATO, 'Defence spending of NATO countries (2013-2020)', October 2020.*

years of uninhibited middle powers, using a range of new conflict powers, feeling freer than ever to engage in all sorts of actions in order to unite domestic opinion put to the test by economic difficulties and attacks on freedom?

Today, the European Union is far from able, or even wanting, to take on the role of the world's pole of stability, which would combine a respect for multilateralism and human rights with the universal respect that a leading-rank power inspires. The success of the Biden administration on the domestic front is therefore crucial, since it could determine the political sustainability of the return of the United States to the world stage, which Europeans are now seeing with relief, and the advent of a new *Pax Americana* - whether under the UN or NATO banner.

Still influenced by the sudden American dawn, the Europeans are betting on this favourable scenario, assuming that, even today, European defence—in the sense of a defence of European territory—as envisaged by the Treaty of Amsterdam (see below) can only be foreseen in the distant future.

However, even in this optimistic scenario, some Allies—such as the United States, the United Kingdom or Turkey—might not want to follow the EU in a crisis management operation outside its territory, which the EU would nonetheless deem indispensable for its security. Let's remember the Obama administration's decision not to intervene in Syria in 2013. The US does not want to engage directly in the Sahel either for the moment. The increase in the risks in a more unstable, unpredictable world, a harbinger of a possible return to demanding, so-called 'high intensity' operations in external theatres that interest the European Union far more than NATO, is a shared observation. However, given its current desire, capabilities and organisation of its security and defence, everything leads us to believe that the European Union would struggle to establish an effective, proportionate intervention force.

Can the European Union give itself the resources to take on this minimal crisis management role, in supplement to the role that NATO plays for its territorial defence? It has been trying for thirty years, more or less.

Here, it is not useful[1] to go back to the project for a European Defence Community (EDC) that France rejected in 1954 or the Western European Union (WEU) set up the same year.[2] In the contemporary international order, the shared acknowledgement of the need for an effective European security and defence apparatus goes back to the wars in Yugoslavia (1991-2001), which, with some 150,000 deaths in 10 years, offered

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[1] *It provided for a European army under the supervision of the NATO Commander-in-Chief, who was appointed by the US President.*
[2] *The WEU was dissolved in 2011 and incorporated into the European Union.*

the distressing spectacle of a Europe incapable of acting on its own doorstep without turning to NATO, i.e. the United States.

The Maastricht Treaty, which came into force in 1993, introduced the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as the second pillar of the EU. In 1997, the Treaty of Amsterdam gave the CFSP the task of '*the progressive framing of a common defence policy, which might lead to a common defence*', with the goal of being able to carry out the Petersberg tasks.[1]

At the Franco-British summit in Saint-Malo in 1998, the United Kingdom lifted its veto on the creation of European crisis management capabilities. **In 2003, the first EU missions and operations took place**.

Then, in 2004, the Treaty of Nice specifically established the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which was succeeded by the **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)**, an integral part of the CFSP, in the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009. The position of High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR/VP) was created. They have authority over the European External Action Service (EEAS), established in 2011, which manages the EU's diplomatic relations with non-member countries and conducts the CFSP. Since 2016, special attention has been paid to CSDP instruments with a new flurry of initiatives of varying outcomes, bearing in mind that CFSP/CSDP decisions are still adopted in principle by unanimity.

Of course, a defence and security policy cannot be conceived without a strategic document, and so in December 2003 the "*European Security Strategy*" was adopted, which even then was based on a common threat assessment and defined objectives to promote the European Union's security interests. It was revised in 2007 and succeeded by the "European Union Global Strategy" (EUGS), adopted on 28 June 2016, which is now the EU's updated doctrine for improving the effectiveness of the defence and security of the Union and its Member States.[2]

All in all, **the record of thirty years of summits, meetings, votes, treaties, plans, establishment of bodies and instruments of all kinds to strengthen and organise the security and defence of the EU remains disappointing.** Thirty years of effort have not produced a detailed and shared diagnosis of the threats facing the EU, forces that can be immediately mobilised to respond to a crisis, effective decision-making procedures for

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[1] *Defined in 1992 within the framework of the Western European Union (WEU), the so-called 'Petersberg tasks' include humanitarian or rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and combat forces for crisis management (including peace-making operations). They effectively sought to ward off the risk of repeating the humiliation of Yugoslavia.*

[2] *The EUGS articulates the EU's foreign policy actions in five main areas: the security of the Union, governmental and societal resilience in neighbours to the east and south, an integrated approach to conflict, regional orders of cooperation, global governance in the 21st century. In the field of security and defence, the EUGS lays out three strategic priorities: react to foreign crises and conflicts, reinforce capabilities in partner countries, and protect the Union and its citizens (see box below).*

launching an operation, nor a capability process that provides sufficient incentives to make up for the EU's shortcomings in terms of the availability and production of the necessary equipment. Despite some promising advances, it has largely been thirty years of posturing.

However, there is now a general agreement that Europe needs to do more in the field of security and defence in the face of the growing scope and variety of threats. But experience shows that divergences never fail to appear whenever the time comes for specificity on the issues that generally require unanimity.

So, the time seemed right to tackle once again all the outstanding problems while looking for an approach that was new in both its method and breadth of vision.

This is the spirit in which **Germany proposed** in 2019 **the drafting of a 'strategic compass', which would be a sort of white paper on the EU's security and defence.**

Launched under the German Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2020 and expected to be finished during the French presidency in the first half of 2022, **this exercise organises a reciprocal exchange between experts and representatives of all Member States on an unprecedented scale.**

It starts with an assessment of the threats on all fronts, from conventional conflicts to supply shortages—a risk highlighted by the health crisis—to attempts to deny access to certain spaces, misinformation, and computer hacking. **To identify the measures to take as a result of these threats, the approach widens its focus**: beyond the traditional areas of **crisis management** and the civilian and military **capabilities** that this requires, it is structured to deal equally with **resilience**, favouring a more comprehensive response to the variety of threats, and with **partnerships**, including NATO. Indeed, it seemed necessary to tackle these four chapters together in order to **promote the emergence of a truly geopolitical European Union, strong and free to decide its own destiny, which could exist on the geopolitical stage.**

What phase have we reached in the process of this strategic compass, which indeed seems decisive for the future of Europe and our collective security? What hopes can this approach reasonably raise? Does it not entail certain risks—particularly in the light of recent international developments—**and how can we guard against them, where appropriate?**

Looking for answers means tackling complex issues that are either dealt with in a piecemeal and technical manner by experts speaking to other experts, or in a more political way but which is based on arguments of authority. Sometimes—and this is typical of French leaders—these issues give rise to clear analyses that lead to strong proposals, but which disregard the range of sensitivities that exist among European partners. There is a risk that these proposals will be received, with an often-perceptible annoyance,

as *pro domo* pleas to reinforce an autonomy that matches the French vision of these issues, but which is in reality unrealistic, even dangerous.

This is the purpose of this report is to provide reasoned answers to these essential questions, placing them in their context so that they can be understood by Europe's citizens, whose future is at stake.

Shedding light in this way on the terms of the debate could strengthen the ambitions of the Strategic Compass for the benefit of a common good: a Europe that is free yet respectful of its commitments, a Europe that is strong yet aware of its limits, a Europe that is both prosperous and protective.

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To gather input for their work, the rapporteurs held **hearings** with French and European administrations, experts, members of the European Parliament and officials in the defence ministries of other EU Member States (list in the annex). They also sent a **questionnaire** (also in the annex) on the Strategic Compass to all French embassies in EU countries.

A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC COMPASS

The Strategic Compass is intended to be **Europe's new defence doctrine** that will match the **EU's actual capabilities for action with its 'level of ambition'**—which no doubt merits clarification—by defining the **security and defence initiatives to take in the next ten years.**

The EU's 'level of ambition'

The EU's 'level of ambition' includes a **political aspect** and a **military aspect.** It results from several texts drafted between 1999 and 2016.

Politically, the EU defined its level of ambition most recently in the EUGS and its implementation plan for security and defence. The EUGS mentions **three strategic priorities** for security and defence: **react to external crises and conflicts**, **reinforce partners' capabilities**, and **protect the Union and its citizens**.

Militarily, these objectives require *'full spectrum defence capabilities'.* However, the EUGS has not led to a complete review of the types of operations that the EU and its Member States should be able to undertake. Thus, the EU's current military level of ambition is still derived from the TEU and headline objectives.

Under the TEU, the EU and its Member States should be able to carry out the following operations: '*joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation*'.

The Strategic Compass will comprise two main contributions: a shared assessment of the EU's threats and vulnerabilities and orientations and objectives for 2030, itself organised into four sections or "baskets" that will structure the EU's stance in its strategic environment: crisis management, resilience, capabilities and partnerships.

This work was formally launched by the Foreign Affairs Council in defence format on 17 June 2020. It will continue until the French Presidency of the European Union (FPEU) in the first half of 2022. The roadmap initially set out is on track to be respected:

1. June 2020: process launched
2. November 2020: threat assessment finalised
3. First half of 2021: discussion of resources and objectives, Member State contributions
4. Second half of 2021: synthesis with a view to a draft Strategic Compass
5. Political discussions and adoption of the Strategic Compass in March 2022

The drafting of the compass and related preliminary work is led by the High Representative/Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell, in close cooperation with the Member States. **Converging Europeans**

around shared interests of defence and security is this work's main challenge.

• **The threat assessment**

Drawing up an inventory of threats means recognising that, perhaps not enemies, but at least adversaries and shared risks exist. Each Member State carries out this type of assessment regularly, as does NATO, which overhauls its 'Strategic Concept' every ten years or so.

However, this is the first time the European Union has conducted a deep, ten-year threat assessment. It was finalised on 26 November 2020. Based on contributions from intelligence services, this assessment is presented as a **raw, classified, uncertified document** produced by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and coordinated by the EU Military Staff (EUMS).[1] It is divided into three parts: regional threats, transversal threats and threats to the EU. It also includes a prospective analysis component to identify how threats may evolve in the next five or ten years.

• Europe's response to these threats: setting guidelines and objectives for 2030

Member States were invited to present their contributions to the Strategic Compass in the first half of 2021. In February, the EEAS produced a scoping paper, an initial synthesis of the contributions organised into four baskets, intended to trigger new proposals in an iterative approach. This document was not publicly distributed either. At the core of the process, contributions in the form of 'non-papers'[2] from certain Member States fuelled discussions in 'workshops', groups whose size varied depending on the subject discussed (by the non-paper) and which were made up of experts and representatives of Member States. These 'non-papers' were co-signed by varying numbers of Member States and then handed to the EEAS. The work's progress was punctuated by meetings of the Council of Ministers.

We can detail the content of each basket of the Strategic Compass as follows:

• internal and external **crisis management**: through this basket, the goal is to become a 'security provider' that proves to be more 'capable and effective' in the face of crises, to improve operational response and reactivity; here, we target European external missions and operations.

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[1] *Specifically, it was drafted by SIAC, the Single Intelligence Analysis Capability, which brings together the (military) intelligence service of the EUMS and the (civilian) Intelligence and Situation Centre (IntCen) of the European External Action Service (EEAS).*

[2] *Informal notes. In France, the Armed Forces Ministry was initially solicited for the non-papers on crisis management and capabilities, whilst the Europe and Foreign Affairs Ministry worked on resilience and partnerships. For the workshop discussions, only the Europe and Foreign Affairs Ministry took part.*

• **resilience**: this consists in securing access to shared assets (cyber, high seas, space), in assessing strategic vulnerabilities in defence and security (destabilisation, hybrid threats, threats to critical infrastructure, procurement chains, etc.), in strengthening mutual aid and solidarity between Member States (clauses in Articles 222 TFEU[1] and 42.7 TEU[2]). This is a rather new chapter that seeks to protect shared values, institutions, tools and assets.

• developing **capabilities**: more specifically, developing the necessary civilian and military capabilities, improving the capability development process, promoting innovation and technological sovereignty, in keeping with the main capability tools implemented recently: Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), the European Defence Fund (EDF, see above), etc.

• **partnerships**: this section covers the structure of cooperation with certain international organisations (UN, NATO, OSCE, African Union, ASEAN, G5 Sahel, etc.), the development of a strategic approach with third countries, and aid to EU partners so they can manage their own security.

The first two baskets set out the ambitions, the other two cover how they will be implemented. In other words, **the first two baskets cover the objectives, the two others, the means.**

There is a lot of overlap between these chapters, and there is no guarantee that the final product will be organised in this way. **The EEAS will draft its synthesis in the second half of 2021. This draft Strategic Compass will be presented to the Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) in November 2021.**

• Finishing the process

The Strategic Compass will be finalised with a view to adoption in **March 2022, during the French Presidency** of the Council of the European Union (FPEU) in the first half of 2022.

• **In this work, the most salient specificities of the French approach**, as signalled by the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, would be the following:

First, France does not intend to lock itself into a pre-established plan. For example, it drove making the issue of access to shared spaces (cyber, space, maritime spaces) a key one by triggering a workshop. Given the increase in risks, France feels that the European Union can help stabilise access to the spaces through normative action.

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[1] *Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides for joint action of the EU and its Member States should one of them suffer a terrorist attack or a natural or human-caused catastrophe.*

[2] *As the mutual defence clause of the Treaty on European Union, Article 42.7 TUE is to the EU what Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty is to NATO, proportionally speaking.*

Secondly, it will be particularly attentive to how the compass is implemented. France will work to develop an implementation plan by 2030 with the presidencies that will follow: Czechia in the second half of 2022 and Sweden in the first half of 2023.

Finally, it is important to France that there is a good coherence between the Strategic Compass and NATO's Strategic Concept, which is being revised simultaneously, **without the former conforming to the latter.** Furthermore, while France wants to reaffirm the Allies' collective defence through NATO, it does not want the result to be a rigid 'sharing' of responsibilities that it considers dangerous, judging that it is up to countries that are members of both the EU and NATO to make sure their respective actions are coherent on a case-by-case basis.

I. A COMPASS FOR A FREE, STRONG AND PROTECTIVE EUROPE

A. RECONCILING ASSESSMENTS...

In the former Eastern Bloc, the Baltic States, Poland and Romania are focusing their attention on Russia and their expectations on NATO and the United States, rather than the EU.

Meanwhile, Southern Europe, France and Belgium are primarily sensitive to the risks of terrorism and migration, represented by the Sahel, the destabilising influence of Turkey's policies and the conflicts in Syria and Libya. Given NATO's overall refusal to take action in these theatres, these sensitivities come with the conviction that the EU must achieve its 'strategic autonomy', a concept on which Italy, Spain, and even part of Germany tend to agree.

Finally, countries like Austria, Ireland and Sweden traditionally feel distant from traditional threats; they do not belong to NATO and take a neutral stance militarily to security matters.

These divergences of view, which also apply to the attitude towards China and Libya, may seem deep, even insurmountable. But the **stances** that make up the range of the European Union's geostrategic sensibilities **are not written in stone**.

1. An accumulation of threats that calls for pooling

a) A growing number of increasingly varied and serious threats

Under the Trump administration, Europeans were **stunned by the questioning of the automaticity of America's contribution through NATO to the collective security of its European members.** Donald Trump explicitly made the United States' guarantee of the security of certain Member States via NATO dependent on their trade behaviour, using US protection as a bargaining chip - in particular against Germany in order to get it to reduce its exports.

At the same time, the Europeans were exposed to threats that were more specific, numerous and varied and which called for a common approach.

The risks of destabilising regional conflicts on the European Union's doorstep—such as in Syria, Libya and Nagorno-Karabakh—which could justify resorting to the CSDP as part of a crisis management operation, grew. A new assertiveness on the part of neighbouring middle powers— Russia, Turkey, Iran—tensions over water and energy, climate change and food security are all circumstances that could precipitate or sustain such conflicts.

There were also proven aggressions, the nature of which fell within the scope of NATO's collective defence, but to which the Alliance struggled to provide a coordinated response because one of its members was involved: Turkey. Its attitude, its illegal actions to the detriment of Greece and Cyprus, against which France was the first to speak out vigorously, eventually led to a general condemnation, at least formally, within the EU.

There were other types of threats that replaced previous ones as they were identified, but which were not properly understood either by NATO or by the European Union, and that also called for organisation. The threat of terrorism, whether endogenous or exported, with its components of radicalisation and combat Islamism, is at the fore. The risk of migration causes concern, as do cyberattacks and misinformation, with active campaigns from Turkey, Russia and China. In general, China's rise has been accompanied by an increasingly intrusive and less friendly attitude that calls for as coordinated a response as possible.

Hybrid threats are a mix of the previous ones, resulting from security breaches that combine conventional and unconventional methods that can be diplomatic, military, economic or technical. They are ever-changing and hard to define, the work of regional or global powers seeking to extend their influence by using all the means at their disposal, including political and industrial espionage.

Under another angle, the use of chemical, bacteriological and nuclear weapons is also among the threats to the European Union within and outside its territory.

For around two years, 'resilience' issues such as access to contested spaces—especially maritime routes—and the control of investments in strategic sectors have aroused a fairly broad consensus. The health crisis, by highlighting the threats to the supply chain which could also seriously compromise the European Union's sovereignty, has put a spotlight on the notion of resilience.

As a counterpoint, the systemic threat posed by climate change, which has a direct effect in the Arctic and is already contributing to certain surges of migration in Africa, is also present but over a longer period of time, unfortunately with growing intensity each year.

b) The beginning of a certain convergence of views

The political context, if we focus on the Franco-German relationship, became favourable from 2017 onwards, with the conjunction of a French president, who was more pro-European than his predecessors, and a German chancellor who, under pressure from a Germany-demonising Trump, no longer hesitated to speak of the need for Europe to take control of its own destiny.

Europeans quickly came to agree that the environment had become more hostile than it had been in 2016, when the EUGS was established, which itself was quickly made obsolete since it had been published the same week as Brexit took place and six months before Trump's election. Its main virtue was that it brought about a moment of reconciliation (after strong divergences had emerged over the military intervention in Iraq) around a relatively low common denominator.

Consequently, they agreed on the need to give itself the means to be taken seriously and on the benefit of a new strategic document that would be a veritable white paper of European defence. Since it should be published in early 2022, after the new US administration is in place, it is likely that the Strategic Compass will become obsolete.

In general, **Member States have progressively realised that meeting a global security objective is increasing difficult at the national level, but remains realistic at the supranational level, and yet NATO cannot cover all the risks**. There is growing awareness that Member State sovereignty and European sovereignty reinforce each other more than they compete—an idea which may help to counter a populism that is harmful to the European construction in general and its defence and security policy in particular.

Of course, the Strategic Compass will never be able to iron out all the differences in approach between European partners, some of which appear to be insurmountable, particularly in military matters. In fact, if we look at Poland or the United Kingdom, **the Trump period had mixed effects**, as these countries displayed an extra level of eagerness towards the United States and energetically reaffirmed their Atlanticism, with unusually expensive acquisitions of American military equipment, which is directly explained by the prospect of securing their protection.

But, overall, the differences in approach have become smaller than often assumed.

As a positive sign, certain northern and eastern European countries have joined, or are about to join, Takuba[1]—even if certain participants also see it as a way to gain experience alongside us to be more effective in their own territorial defence. For example, Poland, Romania and the Baltic States are participating in the Mali EUTM.[2] How the Czech Republic and Slovakia perceive risks has evolved in recent years, to the point that they are showing greater interest in 'strategic autonomy'. In general, the Central European states seem ready for greater commitment within the CSDP. This is the case

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[1] *Takuba brings together the special forces of other Member States in the Sahel: Czech Republic since January 2021, Sweden since February, Italy in March. Liaison officers from Portugal, Belgium and the Netherlands are to be integrated into the force headquarters in Menaka. Ukraine, Greece and Hungary are among the potential contributors. Subject to approval by its Parliament, Denmark will contribute in 2022.*

[2] *EUTM Mali training mission for the Malian armed forces launched by the EU on 18 February 2013.*

for cyberattacks, where Poland and the Baltic States are now promoting the idea of a European cyberdefence and a solidarity clause in this area, which amounts to a small breakthrough—even if certain changes in attitude in Poland and the Baltic States can be explained quite simply by Turkey's blocking of the NATO defence plan for the past several years.[1]

Reciprocally, France is present in Estonia with the Lynx mission in the framework of the eFP.[2] **The more the staff of the Member States work together, the more likely it is that their strategic cultures will converge.**

2. A 'Strategic Compass' that is both inclusive and ambitious

In keeping with the German vision, which is very inclusive on security and defence issues, the Strategic Compass is based on **a participatory approach whose primary objective is to leave no Member State behind.** In constant cooperation with France in proposing non-papers and organising workshops, Germany insists that, in the Strategic Compass, discussions are as important as the final product.

From the outset, the **risk in undertaking this process appeared non-negligible: that of a narrow final result, reduced to the broadest common denominator of 27 approaches which would remain very different, and which would not have particularly changed as a result of the exercise. But, after several decades of symbolic progress and very real sacrifices in terms of European defence and security, we can understand the need for a change in method**.

Bringing politicians and experts to the table to think about the risks we face together, making sure that all can understand and make sense of their neighbours' risks, is a **simple, smart and positive approach that can, to a certain extent, excise the deepest obstacle to European security and defence: the profound differences of opinion on the threats**. Within this process, **shared thinking on the objectives** and, therefore, on the reality of what the European Union, through its members, can contribute to security and defence, has the same potential to being viewpoints together.

It is also an occasion to bring new ideas to the table on which Member States may not yet have taken a stand, somewhat increasing their chances of being adopted since it would not require backing down.

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[1] *Turkey makes its support conditional on Alliance Member States recognising the Syrian-Kurdish rebels of the People's Protection Units (YPG) as a terrorist organisation.*

[2] *In the framework of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP), French forces have been participating, since March 2017 and up to the level of a reinforced company with support, in deployments in Estonia within a British battalion (framework nation) or in Lithuania within a German battalion (framework nation). The current mission began in March 2021, deployed in Estonia. Also within the framework of the eFP, air force cooperation projects are being developed with the Baltic countries.*

Paradoxically, can bold proposals lead to a successful, inclusive Strategic Compass?

In any case, such a mechanism incidentally allows our least sensitive European partners to **take better ownership of defence issues**, especially since extending the exercise to resilience issues, which are broader and less military in nature, will have drawn their attention.

Finally, the logical sequence of questions, 'What threats are we exposed to? – What objectives do we set to tackle them? – Consequently, what resources are needed?', and answering them through various workshops of different sizes depending on the field and the Member States involved, encourages a constructive approach and an unprecedented sharing of viewpoints and assessments of all Europe's security problems—it is up to the EEAS to synthesise them.

We can add that France is not the initiative behind the approach, which is an advantage for an exercise intended to strengthen Europe's security and defence apparatus and removes certain suspicions. Along the same lines, during its presidency France must carefully refrain from conspicuously trying to take advantage of the compass's orientation (see below).

According to most sources, the threat assessment is of good quality and is already finished, making it a solid basis for the rest of the study. Information was shared between intelligence services without any hesitation. In particular, the universal intelligence services of France and Germany have been able to provide useful information to other Member States, most of whose intelligence services are regional in scope. **But the content of this assessment would obviously be greatly diminished if, at this stage, it were to be politically adopted.**[1]

Regarding the objectives, the workshops were reportedly very well attended, without a 'free rider' attitude. The 'non-paper' system works - for example, France coordinated the production of a non-paper on crisis management signed by 14 states (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain).

The intermediate scoping paper (see above) **set the bar high enough to avoid overly general, and usually sterile, discussions.** The more granular the Strategic Compass is, the easier it will be to apply operationally.

Of course, Member States do not each place the same level of importance on the Strategic Compass. In this regard, embassy contributions

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[1] *In this respect, the exercise is not comparable with NATO's Joint Threat Assessment (JTA), which is an assessment mechanism negotiated between the intelligence agencies of the allied countries, with a line-by-line agreement on the threat assessment. The JTA serves as a yardstick for defining NATO's deterrence and defence posture and even its capability requirements.*

show that this importance is often correlated to the importance they place on the CSDP and strategic autonomy.

But the overall take-up of the approach remains satisfactory, with brainstorming sessions that brought together governments, think-tanks and experts seen as generally productive, even if more space could have been given to the latter. In essence, **we have only one true regret concerning the method, but it is a big one: the consultation and discussions were not extended to parliaments, depriving the Strategic Compass of a means to enrich discussions and to gain a deeper understanding among European citizens, the absence of which could weigh heavily when it comes to completing the process**.

To some extent, this report aims to address this shortcoming, confirmed by all the contributions from our embassies: in the EU, **the Strategic Compass is uniformly absent from public debate**.

3. A 'Strategic Compass' that does not employ divisive concepts

From our point of view, it is clear that the Strategic Compass's ultimate goal is strategic autonomy for the EU, a concept that we have promoted in a report entitled "European Defence, the Challenge of Strategic Autonomy".[1] One of the first recommendations of this report was, with a view to achieving this autonomy, '*work must be done for the collective preparation of a European White Paper on Defence, a link that is currently missing in the chain between the EU's Global Strategy, its capacity processes, and its existing operational mechanisms*', an ambition that the Strategic Compass could partially or totally fulfil.

But this concept of strategic autonomy, like that of "European sovereignty", not to mention the very French '*Europe de la défense*' - an expression that is strictly untranslatable - is bound to provoke serious reservations from States that continue to see it as a way of distancing ourselves from, or even seceding from, NATO. Translated into English, '*autonomie stratégique*' (strategic autonomy) takes on a harsher meaning[2] that triggers a knee-jerk rejection from Member States for whom NATO's protection seems the most vital while arousing mistrust as to the intentions of those who promote it.

Let's be tactful, knowing **that only the idea counts: making Europe capable of taking action, even by itself, for its security**. It is this **capability for action** that we are trying to promote.

Since the Strategic Compass is supposed to bring all Europeans into agreement on new lines of progress for European security and defence, we should be pleased that **the discussions on the Strategic Compass are**

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[1] *Senate report no. 626 (2018-2019), July 2019.*
[2] *Autonomy is close to the idea of autarky.*

organised around concrete problems, thus avoiding the misunderstandings that still arise when employing these concepts. To this end, the Strategic Compass remains inspired by a Germany whose pragmatism reassures other countries.

Similarly, **this report is not structured around these concepts**. This choice is all the more necessary because, having withdrawn from NATO from 1966 to 2009, having promoted the idea of a European army, and now being the only Member State to possess nuclear weapons, France cannot promote these concepts without immediately arousing the suspicion that it is trying to promote an EU defence without the United States in a De Gaullian gesture whose flame never seems to be completely extinguished.

It is true that the EUGS explicitly makes strategic autonomy an objective to be achieved, which allows France to deny ownership of the concept. And **it is true** that this objective found **new resonance during the Trump administration** among Member States worried about the weakening of the NATO umbrella. But, as we will see, the **election of Joe Biden** and his confirmation of the US's commitment to NATO **has radically altered the situation to the extent that, now, for most Member States:**

- either the expression triggers distrust,[1]

- or the expression is used without hesitation, but then stripped of its core meaning, i.e. by limiting it to resilience by targeting the economic, technological, digital (particularly from the point of view of cyberdefence), trade, health, food or environmental fields, without addressing strictly military or defence issues.

B. ... TO JUMPSTART THE CSDP[2] ...

To achieve a more effective EU security and defence policy, the EU Global Strategy (EUGS, see above) was supplemented by an Implementation Plan on Security and Defence (IPSD), which arose from the conclusions of the Council of the European Union on 14 November 2016. It established the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), relaunched the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), established the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) and reinforced the EU's rapid reaction capability, which includes the European Union Battlegroups (EU BGs). The Council also adopted the European Defence Action Plan (EDAP), which includes the establishment of the European Defence Fund (EDF), and a plan to implement the EU-NATO Warsaw Declaration of 8 July 2016. These

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[1] *Of course, this relative disaffection is not universal: in a joint letter recently published by Mark Rutte and Pedro Sánchez, the Netherlands—very unexpectedly—and Spain supported greater strategic autonomy for Europe. Josep Borrell has also unwaveringly advocated strategic autonomy. On the other hand, contributions from embassies show that countries such as Poland and Romania are less willing to hear about it than ever before.*

[2] *the Common Security and Defence Policy.*

instruments were largely preceded by the establishment of the European Defence Agency (EDA) and have since been joined by the European Peace Facility (EPF).

Despite this proliferation of 'acronym' initiatives, the relaunch of the CFSP/CSDP by the Lisbon Treaty and then the EUGS has been disappointing. Cooperation on capabilities does not lead to sufficiently effective coordination to truly increase the EU's autonomy, while the CSDP is proving to be less and less active on the ground, in contrast to the intensity and frequency of crises on the EU's doorstep.

The assessment suggests untangling the web of existing instruments, which implies initially separating the CSDP's capability and operational aspects.

1. The capability aspect

Here, the aim is to allow the European Union to **overcome its capability shortfalls** while acquiring **a "European Defence Technological and Industrial Base" (EDTIB)**, which will create jobs and, above all, be essential to its autonomy in security and defence. It is worth remembering that, in the Strategic Compass, capabilities constitute the third 'basket', whose size is determined by the first two, which address crisis management and resilience objectives, respectively.

a) Overcoming inertia

The many instruments available, which are clearly not well coordinated, have produced **disappointing results, with a European security and defence capability that is much lower than the level of military spending would suggest.**

The fault lies in a lack of common will: Member States are ontologically driven to act autonomously in the military field, which has a strong sovereign aspect.** They tend to allocate their capability investments according to their own strategic interests and their desire to maintain control in line with their idea of their own power and rank.

So, we should not be surprised that **the CSDP's capability achievements are still meagre compared with those that result from national initiatives or partnership projects outside the CSDP**, for example those that have united France and the United Kingdom for more than 10 years under the Lancaster House agreements, in particular the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF), or those that unite it with Germany with major capability projects such as the FCAS (future combat air system) and the MGCS (Main Ground Combat System), the "tank of the future".[1]

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[1] *Nevertheless, these recent cooperation projects, which are very structural, are experiencing shocks which **raise the question of whether there really is a 'Franco-German engine' for European***

Similarly, **NATO elicits a significantly better coordinated capability response than that of the CSDP** (see below).

Will the Strategic Compass, by building a measure of consensus on the threats, encourage some commonality of views on the capabilities deemed necessary and, therefore, greater political involvement by Member States in mobilising capability instruments, particularly with a view to establishing an EDTIB?

Of course, this renewed impetus should result in **maintaining the NATO and European objective** (see below) of **defence spending of 2% of GDP**; slowing down this effort risks causing a strategic decline that may be difficult to overcome. The Europeans have already started to increase their defence budgets and have just returned to 2008 spending levels. However, while French defence spending represented 2.1% of GDP in 2020, other EU countries, despite significant progress, remain far from the 2% objective, in particular Germany, Italy and Spain, with 1.6%, 1.4% and 1.2% of their respective GDPs in 2020. However, the upward trend in expenditure (see the graph in the introduction) could slow down (see below).

But first of all, this resolve must result in a significant increase in cooperation and coordination in capabilities. Improvement in this area would allow for a very significant optimisation of military spending at the EU level.

b) Instruments to be mobilised...

For many of the instruments established, there is an obvious discrepancy between their potential and how they are actually used.

(1) The European Defence Agency (EDA)

When discussing the CSDP bodies, priority was probably given to the European Defence Agency (EDA), which was created in 2004. It helps its 26 Member States (all EU countries except Denmark, which has a CSDP opt-out[1]) to develop their military resources by promoting collaboration, launching initiatives and making proposals to improve the EU's defence capabilities. It works to strengthen the European defence industry by acting as a catalyst and facilitator for defence ministries willing to work on collaborative defence capability projects.

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defence. Indeed, Germany willingly sees its relationships with EU countries within a multilateral framework by seeking to include other countries in the above-mentioned projects. From Berlin's perspective, the Franco-German relationship appears less exclusive than it does in Paris, not least because of the Framework Nations Concept (FNC), through which Germany maintains close relations with the Netherlands, Poland and other Central European countries.

[1] *EU opt-outs are exceptions to the principle that EU law applies in all 27 Member States. Member States that benefit from one may decide to end it.*

In particular, it draws up the **Capability Development Plan (CDP) and presents the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)** (see below).

Care should be taken to ensure that new initiatives—in particular PESCO—do not marginalise this body with its proven expertise and valuable experience in studying and initiating capability projects.

(2) The Capability Development Plan (CDP)

• The Capability Development Plan (CDP), which has been drawn up periodically by the EDA since 2006, sets the EU's defence capability priorities in the short, medium and long term. It has been strengthened to reflect EUGS's level of ambition (CDP of 28 June 2018).

This plan is established in part on the '**Progress catalogue**', a catalogue of the capability shortfalls, drawn up by the European Union Military Staff (**EUMS**) based on the **Headline Goal Process** (**HLGP**). The HLGP is a process to identify capability shortfalls, defined in 1999 and **based on five war game-style 'illustrative scenarios'**. This process can be compared to the NDPP, the NATO Defence Planning Process (see below).

In the first phase of the HLGP, the EUMS identifies all the military resources needed for these scenarios to be a success in a 'Requirement Catalogue'. The needs are then compared to the inventory of forces that the countries report being able to make available to the EU in a 'Force Catalogue'. Finally, a 'Progress Catalogue' is drawn up, inventorying the capability shortfalls.

• **There is a bias that exists when drawing up the Force Catalogue, since certain countries consider that materials made available for NATO are not available for the CSDP.** Only a small share of Member States' capabilities is reported as available to the CSDP, whereas they report around half for NATO as Allies.[1] The idea that increasing EU forces also helps to strengthen NATO in a spirit of non-duplication should guide Europe's practices, in accordance with the 'single set of forces' model. **Sincere reporting is no doubt an essential area of improvement that would make the EU's whole capability process more reliable** whilst authentically demonstrating adherence to the CSDP project.

• Additionally, the HLGP seems questionable in that it makes a somewhat simplistic association between the intensity of a crisis and the volume of forces required. Thus, for a very low-intensity crisis, very few soldiers would be deployed. Conversely, **the fifth scenario**, intended to respond to a very high-intensity crisis, **relies on the deployment of 60,000 soldiers**. However, this extreme scenario, directly derived from the Helsinki objective (see below), and no longer likely outside the NATO framework[2], is

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[1] *Poland makes an air fleet available to NATO, but just one plane available to the EU.*
[2] *Even within this framework, according to certain observers.*

already half considered obsolete. Remember, the heaviest operation that the EU has taken on to date, which succeeded NATO in Bosnia, comprised 10,000 troops. **However, this scenario is systematically studied, resulting in capability targets that are both useless and unreachable.**

In France, the Armed Forces Ministry supports adding a more realistic sixth scenario, similar to Operation Serval, of a deployment of around 5,000 troops—which would be equal to two large Battlegroups (see below)—for a combat mission in a hard-to-reach environment, requiring a first entry capability under air cover.

This scenario would break with the correlation between the number of troops deployed and the intensity of the operation in favour of a realistic assessment of the interventions under consideration, which are proportionally **more demanding of material resources and training than in the number of soldiers**. It would lend credibility to the capability process and reveal much more immediate needs, and satisfying them would be more **in line with the level of commitment that Europe is ready to make and give it a chance to clarify its 'level of ambition'** (see below). In particular, such a scenario would reveal our shortcomings concerning 'critical enablers', capabilities such as air-to-air refuelling, strategic transport, UAVs and satellites, for which we remain highly dependent, particularly on the United States.

(3) The Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)

• Presented by the EDA, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) provides a **complete overview** of Member States' **defence spending and investments**, including **research**. It allows us to see their **defence planning** and the **development of their capabilities** while **listing the gaps with regards to the CDP**.

The aim of this inventory of the European defence landscape is to facilitate cooperation on capability by identifying avenues for collaboration in order to achieve the objectives defined by the CDP. Thus, the CARD seeks to align Member States' defence planning in a European perspective.

In **November 2020**, Europe's defence ministers approved the **first CARD**. This report argues that '*continuous efforts will be needed over a long period in defence spending, planning and cooperation to **overcome costly fragmentation** and benefit from synergies and enhanced military interoperability*'.

The report identifies 55 possibilities for multinational cooperation in all military domains, including 17 in land operations, 14 in air operations, and 12 in maritime operations.
CARD identifies six 'next generation capabilities as focus areas' for Member States to concentrate their efforts:
- Main Battle Tank, for which 11 countries have expressed an interest in cooperation,
- European Patrol Class Surface Ship (7 countries),
- Soldier systems (10 countries),

- Counter UAS/Anti Access/Area Denial,
- Defence in Space,
- Enhanced Military Mobility.

The report specifies that the CARD may '*result in new cooperation projects launched by Member States in various formats - under PESCO, within EDA or in other bilateral or multinational frameworks - should they choose to take them forward*'. In this regard, it would be a shame for the Strategic Compass, just when it jumpstarted thinking on capabilities, to delay the implementation of the CARD's recommendations on the most obvious shortcomings.

(4) Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)

• The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), provided for in the Lisbon Treaty, was not launched until December 2017.

Overview

This is a policy framework which essentially aims to **increase defence spending** and **initiate equipment and operational projects**. In line with how capability instruments interoperate, PESCO is the **framework for cooperation on projects to increase European defence capabilities**.

PESCO was initially seen as an instrument to integrate the military capabilities of a limited number of States who would sign up to ambitious commitments. Ultimately, PESCO was extended **to all Member States** except Denmark and Malta, in accordance with a very integrative vision promoted by Germany, as opposed to France's vision.

PESCO's commitments

PESCO Member States undertake to **respect 20 commitments**, in particular:

- **increase defence budgets in real terms**, with a target of 2% of GDP dedicated to defence, of which 20% is allocated to investments. This adopts the financial commitments made within NATO,[1]

- make national forces easier to deploy and make progress on their **interoperability** plan,

- increase the number of multinational capability projects and **strengthen the EDTIB**.

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[1] *The Allies agreed to increase their national defence spending to a minimum of 2% of GDP at the Riga Summit in 2006. This became a tangible commitment in September 2014 at the NATO summit in Newport, Wales, after the years of crisis between 2008 and 2012 had resulted in significant cuts in budgets and capabilities. The Wales Summit Declaration on the transatlantic relationship, for example, called for Allies to spend 2% of GDP on military spending (excluding pensions) within 10 years, with 20% of that spending to be devoted to investment and innovation.*

Each year, each Member State produces a **national implementation plan** in which they detail the measures taken to fulfil each of these commitments. These documents are evaluated in a report by the High Representative.

<u>A framework for many projects involving many partners</u>

Since PESCO was launched, **47 collaborative projects** have been approved: 17 projects on 6 March 2018, 17 others on 9 November 2018, and 13 on 12 November 2019. France is involved in 38 of these projects: it coordinates 10, participates in 21 of them, and is an observer on 7 projects. A fourth wave of projects was initiated in 2021.

The most ambitious project in terms of capability is probably the MALE (*Medium Altitude, Long Endurance*) Eurodrone. Bringing together Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the Czech Republic, it aims to address one of the European Union's major shortcomings, which France encountered in its fight against terrorism in the Sahel, forcing it to buy US Reaper drones. Other examples include ECOWAR (EU Collaborative Warfare Capabilities) for land-air-sea collaborative warfare and TWISTER (Timely Warning and Interception with Space-based Theater Surveillance) for space surveillance.

Previously, cooperation almost always involved the same key Member States: France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. From this point of view, **PESCO provides welcome change**. For example, it is the first time that France has cooperated with Lithuania, Poland and Finland.

<u>Openness to third States</u>

By virtue of a decision of the Council of the European Union of 5 November 2020, **PESCO is now open to third States**. The United Kingdom could take part, but they have not shown any interest in PESCO at this stage. However, **in March 2021, the United States** made an official request to take part in certain PESCO projects, in particular **military mobility**, alongside Canada and Norway. This participation was accepted by the Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) on 6 May 2021.

• A mixed record

<u>Inconsistent achievements</u>

In May 2020, a report on the European Union's military services regretted that Member States were struggling to meet their commitments, that many were not differentiating their contributions from their contributions to NATO, and that most projects were progressing very slowly, or not at all — with other sources considering that some projects were literally stalled straight out of the gate. This report recommends being **more selective**, **reducing the number of projects in favour of better political support**, with the lowest priorities being addressed through bilateral or multilateral initiatives instead.

The **2020 Strategic Review of Permanent Structured Cooperation**, approved by the Council on 20 November 2020, includes an assessment of the progress made as well as guidelines for the next phase (2021-2025). It stressed the **need for more binding commitments and tangible achievements by 2025**.

An openness to third States that requires vigilance

France is worried about the effects of the US ITAR (International *Traffic in Arms Regulations*) regulations that limit the export of technologies by requiring manufacturers of defence equipment that contains one or more American components to obtain US approval to sell the equipment. A shared 'ITARised' project would obviously run counter to the goal of strategic autonomy, which PESCO is intended to promote by increasing Europe's defence capability.

The above-mentioned decision of the Council of the European Union specifies that the participation of a third State must not lead to dependence, restrictions imposed on research and development of capabilities, or the use and export of weapons.[1] Member States must commit to staying within this legal framework. **But perhaps the way to avoid ITARisation would be to conclude a binding international agreement exempting all projects under this framework from US extraterritorial regulations** prior to any administrative arrangement.

Furthermore, Turkey would also like to join the European project on military mobility, which poses a value compatibility problem. More generally, and rightfully so, certain Member States consider that third State participation should remain the exception in order to avoid situations where the mutual benefits could become unbalanced.

Organisational redundancy

Cooperation projects may be launched within the EDA (see above) in such a way that PESCO, whose efforts fall short of the initial ambitions as reflected in the 20 commitments, in a way duplicates the Agency.

(5) The European Defence Fund (EDF)

• The European Defence Fund (EDF), a long-standing French project supported by Germany and the **flagship measure of the EDAP** (see above), has been **operational since 1 January 2021**. It replaces both the Preparatory Action on Defence Research (PADR), with €90 million allocated from 2017 to

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[1] *The Decision states in the fifth paragraph of Article 3, which concerns the conditions under which a third State may participate in a PESCO project: 'its participation must not lead to dependencies on that third State or to restrictions imposed by it against any Member State of the Union, as regards armament procurement, research and capability development, or on the use and export of arms or capabilities and technology, which would hamper progress or prevent the usability, whether joint or otherwise, the export or the operational deployment of the capability developed in the PESCO project'*

2019, and the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP), with €500 million over the 2019-2020 period, which were set up to support PESCO. In fact, 15 of the 26 projects selected in the 2020 EDIDP were PESCO projects.

With the EDF, **the Commission wants to support investment in defence research and the development of common technologies and equipment, including PESCO projects**, which have been given priority treatment with a 10-point increase in funding. The stakeholders must include **at least three companies from three different European countries**. The funding rate is increased for projects that include SMBs, which encourages the growth of small defence businesses and the inclusion of smaller EU countries.

Ultimately, the EDF is intended to **stimulate cooperation between manufacturers** and **help create a true EDTIB**. In the long run, the goal is also to improve **interoperability** between Member States' military equipment. All these objectives work to **strengthen the European Union's strategic autonomy**.

In this perspective, as this is a European resource, **companies** and subsidiaries of companies from **non-EU countries are not eligible for EDF funding**, contrary to what the Trump administration had hoped for. Like PESCO, the EDF is a European initiative that the Americans saw as unfriendly if it was not open to all Allies. Even now, they do not look favourably on this restriction.

In the same spirit, the beneficiaries of the Fund and their subcontractors must not be subject to the control of a third country or third-country entities, except in special cases. Furthermore, companies that participate in an EDF-funded programme are required to '*refuse any provision that seeks to limit the use of the desired products, in terms of intellectual property, by foreign legislation*'. This provision limits the effects of the American ITAR legislation (see above).

Overall, €8 billion was allocated to the fund for the 2021-2027 period, including €2.7 billion intended for research and €5.3 billion for development initiatives. 5% of funds are allocated to breakthrough technologies and innovative equipment. While this envelope is less than the commission's initial ambitions (€13 billion), **dedicating such a share of the European budget to military ends is notable progress**.

Beneficiary projects include the European Secure Software Defined Radio (ESSOR) and the European MALE 2020 UAV (see above) led by Airbus in the EDIDP framework. The EDF is now called on to monitor the implementation of these projects.

On 22 February 2021, European Commissioner Thierry Breton, in charge of the internal market, industrial policy, digital technologies, defence and space, presented an **action plan for the EU intended to 'increase**

synergies between civilian, space and defence industries', which relies on the EDF (see below).

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If correctly funded over time and used in accordance with its purpose, the EDF could benefit all industries, both large corporations and SMBs, promote a lasting convergence of industrial bases, and allow Member States to access structural, next-generation technologies and equipment that meet the capability objectives of EU Member States, not only as such, but also, if necessary, as members of NATO. France intends to play a driving role by supporting greater powers for the new DG DEFIS within the commission on defence issues, while consolidating the respective roles of the EEAS and the EDA.

However, there are two points on which we must remain vigilant. On the one hand, the tripartite governance of the EDF (Member States, Commission, Manufacturers) allows the Commission to introduce **complexities** that could discourage certain companies. In particular, the EDF works with annual budgets whilst projects are multi-year.

On the other, **certain Member States see the EDF as a redistribution fund**, which leads back to the overall debate on PESCO's selectivity for its members and projects. A certain divergence in point of view seems to have emerged between the E4 (France, Italy, Spain and Germany), which highlights defence objectives, and the E23 (the other Member States), which stresses the defence industry. Within the E4, Germany stands out, however, by its sharp tendency towards civilian-military integration and a greater readiness to conceive of the military apparatus in the wider field of security than the three other countries, which maintain a heavily operational conception.

c) ...and to better interact, including with the operational aspect

(1) A necessary coordination

• There are several categories of explanations for a **capability process** that still seems **disappointing in its achievements and sub-optimal in its operations**.

- First, **the process is fragmented and presents certain flaws in logic**.

The Capability Development Plan established by the EDA is intended to take into account the 'Progress Catalogue' from the EUMS's HLGP (Headline Goal Process). Remember, this Progress Catalogue identifies, with regard to the CSDP's level of ambition, the missing capabilities that must be obtained quickly on the basis of a "Force Catalogue" that results from capability reports that are known to be sometimes inaccurate (see above).

In any case, one would expect the CDP to explain how to acquire the capabilities identified in the Progress Catalogue in terms of time, costs and cooperation. However, the CDP's ambition is actually broader, since it is also supposed to take into account the needs expressed by the Member States, whether or not they are linked to the CSDP.

Ultimately, the CDP merely lists the priorities that the Member States are willing to set for themselves,[1] based on a Progress Catalogue that is not always reliable and with deadlines that are not always reliable either![2]

Thus, the CDP only imperfectly reflects the EU's capability needs. Nevertheless, it contributes to the CARD, which allows us to compare the CDP's objectives to Member States' results.

Furthermore, PESCO projects that receive funds from the EDF, which follows an industrial logic set by the Commission with a view to developing an EDTIB, **are not directly linked to these mechanisms.**

The entire capability process, which follows a 'bottom-up' philosophy, emphasises Member State initiatives. But they condition their approval on building capabilities whose ambitions are indeed affirmed.

However, **it would be useful to better articulate the three philosophies at work**: the EUMS with the Headline Goal Process which produces the Progress Catalogue, the EDA with the CDP and the CARD, and the Commission, which organises industrial cooperation. Each pursues distinct objectives that are justifiable, but they should now be aligned and made coherent to respond to and serve each other, while taking into account the additional constraint of aligning the EU's capability planning time cycle with NATO's.

- The process is also **insufficiently incentivising**. In the NATO process, the general capability targets are established in the same manner as the EUMS, then each country is assigned a specific capability target according to its means—for example, buy a refuelling tanker or acquire new combat aircraft. Then, there is a collective review process where countries that have not reached their targets are 'named and shamed'. No such thing exists with the CARD.

- Lastly, **it coexists not only with a long-standing, well-established and effective NATO capability process[3]** (see below), **alongside which the**

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[1] *The EDA, as an intergovernmental body, takes decisions on a unanimous basis.*

[2] *There may be a line not to cross in recommending that the CDP stick to obtaining the capabilities listed in the Progress Catalogue, given the CSDP's current ambitions and the sincerity of capability reports.*

[3] *However, merging the two processes is impossible, because the objectives are not the same: a capability process seeks to build a military apparatus, and this is not the same for managing crises external to Europe as for collective defence on Europe's territory. Even if they one day are, a single planning, which would take into account the United States here but not there, would remain inconceivable.*

European process can be seen as a new obligation of questionable value, but also alongside national capability processes, which obviously take priority. Many countries, including France, do not meet the targets set by both the NATO and European capability processes; Turkey, similarly, ignores NATO capability targets.

In this respect, the scoping paper provides for the inclusion of aspects of the EU capability process in national planning.[1] The priority given to the national aspect is explained in part by a poor alignment of national capability processes with the European capability process. The ideal situation would be one that integrates the relevant aspects of the CSDP in the national 'capability kitchens'.

(2) Looking for an overall coherence with the EU's level of ambition

- While **European defence spending is nowhere near that of the United States**, it remains intrinsically significant. If it were **better conducted and coordinated**, it could **cover our needs satisfactorily**.

The USA spends €785 billion on defence (estimate for 2020). This colossal expense is essentially justified by maintaining its global leadership — the United States spends more than all the other States combined — and providing opportunities for an industrial-military complex that is structural to their economy. In reality, just 5% of this spending is dedicated to Europe.

Europe's defence effort must be assessed not in comparison to its Allies' spending, but to that of its potential adversaries. **Europe already spends €219 billion on its defence** without the United Kingdom (Brexit) and Denmark (opt-out), **whereas Russia spends €61 billion, nearly four times less. This is the reality of the relative resources of the 'Russian ogre' which arouses such fear in Eastern and Northern Europe**.

Thus, the major problem for Europeans is the fragmentation of their spending. When 27 countries all want to have fighter planes and ocean-going ships and each buys equipment on its own, even 4% of GDP spent on defence would not be enough to create a coherent crisis management tool. Countries such as Russia or Israel have one command, objective and planning unit. **In reality, with coordinated spending, the target of 2% of GDP** (see above) **would probably be enough for the EU to have a real European defence, whereas it is currently struggling to deal with all the crisis management scenarios on its own**.

Perhaps, therefore, it would be better to not focus on indefinitely increasing the pressure on financial input, the main effect of which is to provide outlets for a military industry that is still insufficiently located in Europe, but **rather to exert real pressure on military output, which forces**

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[1] *'Embedding EU military capability development processes in national defence planning processes and make best use of EU defence initiatives.'*

Europeans to better integrate their capabilities and, if possible, to produce them.

From this standpoint, the Strategic Compass is precious in that it could set a level of ambition that is at once sufficiently high, realistic, and specific.

• **Which one?** Remember that, unlike the five illustrative scenarios built to model a capability requirement, the sixth scenario put forward by France, that of a European first entry force of 5,000 troops but which is very demanding in terms of equipment, is both realistic and operational. In this same perspective, the non-paper on crisis management coordinated by France proposes to rapidly prepare such a **'first entry force' of 5,000 troops, which could match this level of ambition.**

In general, it would be essential for the Compass's success for it to establish a scenario that reflects an ambition that is consistent with a prudent sharing of crisis management roles between NATO and the EU (see below). It would collectively oblige the Member States to draw up a detailed and coherent set of capabilities, in line with the possibilities of human deployment that could be organised simultaneously. This would result in a lower level of ambition—especially compared to Helsinki (see below), which is very demanding but which no one speaks of anymore—in exchange for effectiveness.

2. The operational aspect

• **The jumpstart of the CSDP's instruments in recent years has, paradoxically, been accompanied by a net decline in EU missions and operations**. The situations in Syria, Mali, Libya and Nagorno-Karabakh did not elicit the slightest desire to send a European force. And when a launch is considered, it is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve. Then, there is a clear discrepancy between the political objectives that are decided and the resources allocated during force generation, as demonstrated by Operation Irini, so much so that it reduces missions' and operations' added value. In short, to put it simply, between the time needed to come to a unanimous agreement and the time needed for force generation, **the EU may not be capable of launching an operation at the required speed**, unlike certain Member States, whether they gather a coalition or not.

In fact, among the 17 ongoing missions and operations, there are now only three executive military operations[1]; the others are split between 'non-executive' military operations and civilian missions from which it is sometimes difficult to disengage, given that a dozen of these missions and operations seem to have more or less achieved as much as they can.

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[1] *Meaning that combat forces are made available.*

CURRENT CSDP OPERATIONS

17 civilian or military missions are currently deployed (18 others have ended), including:
• **6 military operations, including 3 executive and 3 non-executive operations** (training):

- in the Mediterranean (EU NAVFOR MED Irini anti-smuggling mission launched in 2015)

- on the Somali coast (NAVFOR ATALANTA naval operation against piracy launched in 2008)

- in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR ALTHEA peacekeeping mission launched in 2004)

- in Central African Republic (EUTM CAR armed forces training mission launched in 2016)

- in Mali (EUTM Mali military training mission launched in 2013)

- in Somalia (EUTM Somalia military training mission launched in 2010)

• **11 civilian missions** for policing and security force or rule of law support, capacity building or border assistance:

- in Europe (EULEX in Kosovo, EUBAM in Moldova and Ukraine, although the latter is not directly led by CSDP, EUAM in Ukraine, EUMM in Georgia)

- in the Middle East (EUPOL COPPS and EUBAM Rafah in the Palestinian Territories and EUAM in Iraq)

- in Africa (EUBAM in Libya, EUCAP SAHEL in Mali, EUCAP SAHEL in Niger and EUCAP Somalia)

• A few basic principles can be reiterated based on the texts. Article 42.1 TEU states that the CSDP, '*an integral part of the CFSP*', '*shall provide the Union with an **operational capability drawing on civilian and military assets**', which it may use in '**missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security** in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter.*'

As the EU does not have an army, carrying out CSDP missions relies on civilian and military '***capabilities provided by the Member States***' (same article).

Article 42.4 TEU states that '*decisions relating to the common security and defence policy, including those **initiating a mission** as referred to in this Article, shall be **adopted by the Council acting unanimously** on a proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy or an initiative from a Member State.*'

Thus, **the decision to initiate an operation** is taken in an **intergovernmental framework where one State can block all the others.**[1]

The CFSP is headed by **the HR/VP, who has authority over the European External Action Service (EEAS)**, which in charge of steering the EU's civilian and military crisis management components.

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[1] *In general, decisions on CSDP matters are taken unanimously in the European Council or the Council of the European Union.*

a) A desire that needs a jumpstart

There are many causes behind the CSDP's slowdown. The CSDP's first period, from 2003 to 2008, benefited from the remaining effects of the Balkans humiliation as well as the interest that a new policy elicits. Over time, with the replacement of political leaders, the favourable environment dissipated, leaving a granite bedrock of aversion to lethal risks, a strong affinity to NATO, and a pacifism supported by neutral Member States such as Ireland and Austria. Add to this the lack of a European command capability for executive missions, incomplete intelligence as well as the spectre of very big issues since 2008 (financial crisis, Brexit, etc.), and we can understand the sort of resignation that Member States have towards the CSDP's growing inertia.

Since this framework leaves them free to participate in a mission or not, we must ask ourselves: how can it incentivise a Member State that—like France—has the resources to conduct and coordinate a given operation by itself with volunteer Member States—just as it did with Takuba, for example?

In reality, **once the obstacle of unanimity has been overcome, the CSDP has a lot to offer**. **Financial solidarity**, while limited, remains substantial[1], and this should increase for military missions with the European Defence Fund (see below). The Military Planning Capability, which presages a European **military command**, indirectly relieves national military staffs of non-executive military missions. Finally, the CSDP provides essential **political legitimacy**.[2]

Thus, the disconnect between the increase in conflicts and the evolution of CSDP military missions is not normal and is detrimental to the EU's strategic weight on the world stage.

We must take actions to the obstacles to using the CSDP, while keeping in mind the increasing seriousness and variety of the risks, for example in terms of access to contested strategic spaces, which must encourage us to **implement new, faster, more flexible possibilities for engagement**.

b) Overcoming the principle of unanimity

The unanimity required to initiate an external operation is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain among the 27 Member States,[3] **especially for military operations**, since civilian crisis management is easier

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[1] *It can reach around 15% of expenses.*

[2] *These factors undoubtedly contributed for the latest mission being set up in Mozambique: an EUTM mission that was agreed in principle in May 2021 and could be operational by the end of 2021.*

[3] *However, the last operation, initiated by Portugal for Mozambique (see above), was decided within a reasonable timeframe. But it is too early to speak of a trend reversal.*

to gain approval through the Political and Security Committee (PSC), which brings together the Member States' ambassadors.

As recently as the late 2000s, France and Spain easily gained approval for Operation Atalanta against piracy on the Somali coast, and France was able to initiate EUFOR Chad without much difficulty. In 2013, it was harder to gain acceptance for EUTM Mali, but it was successful thanks to very well-prepared plans. In 2020, Irini was blocked several times by Austria and Hungary, who did not want to participate.

The principled opposition of some Member States to military operations, combined with the increasing number of criteria to be taken into account, is becoming a blocking factor. In fact, debates in the PSC are revealing an increasing number of divisions: one Member State denounces the local armies' violations, another rejects the prospect of lethal equipment, and yet another highlights problems of gender balance - at least 30% women are needed, and there are not enough of them... Certain smaller Member States that traditionally agree to operations while remaining outside them are beginning to take positions of principle for domestic political reasons.

Could we imagine going back on the principle of unanimity? No doubt we could soften the edges with so-called 'constructive abstention' mechanisms, already used for the EPF for providing lethal weapons (see below). But **a full reversal of the principle of unanimity in a domain as intrinsically sovereign as security and defence is still far-fetched. Therefore, we should try to accommodate it while remaining capable of initiating a sufficient operation within a useful timeframe.** The scoping paper includes an objective to '*enhance flexibility and speed of decision-making*'.

> *(1)* The current easy way to take quick action or overcome opposition is ad hoc coordination.

Member States who feel an urgent need to intervene are increasingly doing so outside CSDP structures. France is the main driver of this change. Rather than spending time working to obtain an agreement that may never come, it prefers to work pragmatically with volunteer European countries with sufficient capabilities—with the additional advantage of not automatically excluding the United Kingdom (Brexit) and Denmark (opt-out).

Thus, Operation Agenor[1] in the Strait of Hormuz, which is exactly the sort of mission for which the CSDP was created, remains a coalition of

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[1] *Agenor, the military component of the European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASOH), aims to enhance the capability for situational awareness and surveillance of maritime activity, as well as to ensure freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. France is the framework nation for Agenor, which reached full operational capability in February 2020.*

eight volunteer countries managed by France outside any NATO or EU institutional framework. Takuba[1] is another example of an ad hoc coalition.

More flexible forms of coordination than those organised by the CSDP in its current definition and which nevertheless require EU approval can also be considered. By coordinating the assets of national navies present for other missions in a test area, the Gulf of Guinea, the 'Coordinated Maritime Presence' (CMP)[2] illustrates this trend.

But ad hoc coordination has one major drawback: it means that some Member States, in particular Germany, cannot participate. While its desire to participate in military options is of course often tempered by its historical reluctance, **Germany's rejection of these operations is constitutional before it is political**: without a UN, NATO or EU mandate, Germany is legally prohibited from participating in an operation. This same type of legal obstacle is sometimes used by Spain (for example, for Takuba) and Italy.

(2) The possibility for automaticity in case of aggression

The work on the Strategic Compass seems to have led to a new consensus for **the mutual assistance clause of Article 42.7 TEU,**[3] invoked only once, by France, following the attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015, leading to the mobilisation of some European partners in the Sahel. The use of this clause, rather than Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, of which it is a kind of replica, was an important political symbol (especially since simply invoking Article 222 TFEU[4] would have been just as justified). But certain

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[1] *Initiated in July 2020 to supplement Barkhane, Takuba brings together the special forces of other Member States.*

[2] *The CMP is a pilot project stopped by the EU in January 2021 and included France, Spain, Italy and Portugal. By carrying out joint manoeuvres with the navies of neighbouring countries, the CMP is tasked with fighting piracy and other missions.*

[3] *Article 42.7 of the EU Treaty is the mutual defence clause of the Treaty on European Union (this article derives from Article 5 of the Brussels Treaty, which created the WEU). It stipulates that: '**If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter** [which sets out the conditions of legitimate defence]. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States. Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation.' In speaking of 'Member States' and not EU institutions, it allows for dialogue and direct support from country to country, rather than involving European institutions that can be cumbersome.*
This article was introduced in the Lisbon Treaty at the initiative of those EU Member States that support a greater role for the EU in defence matters (notably Greece, which, while protected by the mutual defence clause of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, wished to introduce an additional level of defence, bearing in mind that Turkey, its long-standing rival, remains its ally in NATO).

[4] *'The Union and its Member States shall act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the object of a terrorist attack or the victim of a natural or man-made disaster.'*

Member States remain adamantly opposed to any invocation of Article 42.7 TEU on the grounds that it **duplicates Article 5 of NATO**.[1]

Then, in 2019, the EEAS initiated a study of this article by organising prospection exercises—based on complex conventional and non-conventional crises—between Member States in order to identify a doctrine for a combined use of Articles 42.7 TEU and 222 TFEU.[2] Thanks to these exercises, the same reluctant Members States may now be **reassessing the benefit of the mutual aid clause** in line with Article 5 if NATO does not want or will not act. Initially independent of the Compass, this reflection can only add to it.

(3) The avenue of facilitated consent

➢ Unanimity on a 'turnkey' operation

Article 44 TEU allows the Council to '*entrust the implementation of a task to a group of Member States which are willing and have the necessary capability for such a task. Those Member States, in association with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, shall agree among themselves on the management of the task*'.

Thus, we can imagine **a Member State submitting an operation conceived with a few other partner Member States directly to the PSC**, which would save significant time by avoiding the pre-studies and discussions between Member States needed to establish the concept for the operation. The non-paper coordinated by France on crisis management suggests undertaking such a reflection on using Article 44 of the treaty. On this basis, we can imagine approving an ad hoc operation like Takuba after the fact.[3]

➢ CSDP support reduced to '**bricks of cooperation**' for greater flexibility

Another avenue, supported by French authorities, is that of 'bricks' of cooperation that the CSDP could provide to a national operation, an ad hoc European cooperation such as Takuba or Agenor, or a NATO or UN operation. Whenever an EUTM mission is working in the same direction as a national or ad hoc operation, it would be normal for it to be able to

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[1] *The 'non-duplication' principle, of which Secretary of State Madeleine Albright spoke on 8 December 1998 to her European partners as part of the '3D rule' (for non-decoupling, non-duplication and non-discrimination) for the relationship between European defence and NATO, is regularly brought up as a common-sense argument. But, while this principle is justified in terms of optimising military spending, it also tends to be an obstacle to developing and implementing an autonomous European security and defence policy.*

[2] *'The Union and its Member States shall act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the object of a terrorist attack or the victim of a natural or man-made disaster.'*

[3] *Such a possibility would nevertheless only have limited benefit, given that Denmark is already scheduled to participate in 2022 and that France wants to keep the option of including the United Kingdom—both countries that do not participate in the CSDP.*

contribute. We can imagine interactions between EUTM Mali and Barkhane or Takuba.

The non-paper on crisis management coordinated by France suggests that logistics, transport, medical support or strategic communication capabilities could be provided in common for national or European operations taking place in the same theatre of operations.

(4) The avenue of bypassing institutions: EII and other initiatives

Outside the CSDP and the European Union, we should mention the **European Intervention Initiative (EII), whose 13 members participate in various working groups. Their studies enrich the European Union and NATO while encouraging a shared strategic culture**. The EII strengthens both institutions by improving their members' ability to act together militarily and by giving rise to concrete projects, notably in the framework of PESCO. The EII is also welcome in that it allows the United Kingdom to be involved in spite of Brexit and Denmark in spite of its opt-out.

There are other multinational initiatives in Europe, many of which aim to establish a rapid reaction force (as we shall see, the Strategic Compass gives hope of success in this area) that could intervene urgently to maintain or restore peace in the event of a crisis outside EU territory, instead of ad hoc coalitions.

First, there is the **Eurocorps**, one of the first attempts at a European rapid reaction force. Established in 1992 at the initiative of France and Germany and comprising five Member States (France, Germany, Spain, Belgium and Luxembourg), Eurocorps is an army corps-level military staff based in Strasbourg that is intended to command up to 60,000 troops in EU or NATO operations. It participates in the rotating duty rosters of both the EU BGs (see below) and the NATO Response Force (NRF).[1] Eurocorps has been engaged in NATO operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and in EU missions in Mali and the Central African Republic.

There is also the **Joint Expeditionary Force** (JEF), established in 2014,[2] and the **Combined Joint Expeditionary Force** (CJEF), established in the framework of the Lancaster House agreements (see below). Finally, there is the **Franco-German Brigade** (FGB), created in 1989. This binational unit comprised of 5,600 troops—40% French and 60% German—intervened as part of the Stabilisation Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina (SFOR), in Afghanistan (ISAF) and Kosovo (KFOR). From October 2018 to April 2019, the FGB was deployed in Mali, but by separating the French, dedicated to Operation

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[1] *The NATO Response Force is a multinational joint NATO force, created in 2002 and reinforced in 2014 by the establishment of a "Very High Readiness Joint Task Force" (VJTF), commanded by Supreme Allied Command Europe (SACEUR).*

[2] *Created under the initiative of the United Kingdom, it brings together Northern European countries: the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, and the three Baltic States. It was declared fully operational in July 2018.*

Barkhane, considered as highly lethal, and the Germans, who were included in Minusma and EUTM-Mali.

(5) The avenue of a hard core: a European Security Council?

Many Member States such as Poland, the Baltic States, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands (and the UK before Brexit) are strongly opposed to the idea of a European defence, while countries with a tradition of neutrality, notably Ireland and Austria, are reluctant to support any European military action, even external. **If European states find it difficult to move forward together in the field of crisis management and defence, then the issue may arise of forming a "vanguard", a kind of "Eurogroup of defence" outside the CSDP framework**.

This possibility, which Angela Merkel has presented several times as a 'European Security Council', was ultimately supported by Emmanuel Macron, as demonstrated by their joint declaration on 19 June 2018, known as the Meseberg Declaration. In the words of one of its recitals, the two States commit to: '*look into **new ways of increasing the speed and effectiveness of the EU's decision making** in* [their] *Common Foreign and Security Policy*'. They feel we '*need a **European debate on new formats**, such as an **EU Security Council** and means of closer coordination, within the EU and in external fora*'.

A new format could be all the more useful given the European Council's poor performance in its role as the supreme body in strategic matters. As its attention is focused on internal affairs, its consequently few interventions in foreign policy tend to result in decisions taken in reaction to immediate events (pronouncement of sanctions, managing migration risks), without developing a strategic vision. In the Council of the EU, the Defence Ministers meet only once every six months in a minor format dependent on the Foreign Affairs Ministers' formats. Finally, in the European Parliament, defence is relegated to a subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

This could lead to the emergence of a genuine strategic political body with a limited format that is capable of specifying what its objectives are: crisis management, collective defence, or both. Decisions could be taken by qualified majority (except for force deployment), it would theoretically be possible to include the British. Thereafter, each Member State could join an original core group, which could be the E4, whenever it wishes.

c) Improvements within easy reach

(1) Improve mission quality

- The three current EUTMs,[1] which comprise all the current non-executive **military missions**, are not fulfilling all their respective expectations in Mali, CAR and Somalia. Increasingly fewer forces are being generated there despite training efforts, so much so that some observers

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[1] *European Union Training Mission*

wonder what is happening to those contingents, who may be returning to civilian occupations. **The main problem is that these forces are neither trained nor equipped by the EUTM.** More generally, **the training process should be revisited,** starting from the most basic organisation - for example, washing themselves and raising the flag in the morning - to recruitment, combat and retirement.

Strategic reviews of CSDP crisis management instruments and missions take place approximately every six months. Mostly undisclosed, they **regret a lack of Member State participation, qualified staff and robust mandates**.

• The results of **civilian missions** also fell short of expectations. **Despite the explicit recommendations for a 'compact'[1] adopted two years ago**, the Member States are still far from assigning their best people to them, with the result that **their expertise is highly unsatisfactory in relation to needs**.

However, in the Sahel, everyone has seen that military success is an illusion as long as the functioning of civilian institutions is deficient. The provision of adequate staff to fulfil civilian mandates is therefore a real concern. Perhaps we should think about a European civilian reserve of specially trained units that could be deployed rapidly.

In any case, **improving the quality of civilian and military missions would certainly help improve results which, as they stand, do not provide sufficient incentives for Member States to initiate new ones**. Under another angle, **in Africa, some of the shortfalls of our missions are becoming even more problematic, given that Russia, China, and even Turkey are now increasingly acting as rivals.**

(2) Accelerating force generation: finally a legacy for EU BGs?

• **The time needed for force generation under CSDP is still a handicap.**

European aspirations for a rapid reaction force date back to the intervention force defined in 1999 at the Helsinki Council. Modelled on SFOR (the NATO stabilisation force deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1999), this force would have been comprised of 60,000 troops that could be mobilised in 60 days and operational for at least one year, making it capable of carrying out all the Petersberg tasks (see above). But this 'headline goal', set for 2003, has never been achieved.

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[1] *On 19 November 2018, the Council and the Member States adopted conclusions on the establishment of a civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) <u>compact</u>. These conclusions set out the strategic guidelines for strengthening civilian CSDP and contain 22 political commitments made by the Council and the Member States.*

In 2004, the Union adopted the 'Headline Goal 2010', which led in 2006 to the **European Union Battlegroups** (EUBGs) for military interventions under the CSDP.

Each battlegroup is comprised of at least 1,500 troops, excluding support. It must be deployable within 15 days for an initial mission duration of 30 days, extendable up to 120 days. The system provides for **two battlegroups to be on standby per half year**, totalling four per year. Battlegroups are trained and certified in the months leading up to going on standby.

But the EU BGs have never been deployed. Furthermore, they are not always functional,[1] unlike NATO's reaction force, which is directly comparable. This state of affairs, the subject of **regular regret**, has political, technical and financial explanations.

Several measures could help to make the battlegroups operational: extending the duration of the standby periods from six months to one year, calibrating the resources made available by the Member States, which are too loose in this respect, and **allowing them to be financed by the EPF**[2] (see below).

• **Removing the logjam could also, through the Strategic Compass, be part of a more general approach** to solving the problem of speed in deploying operations. **Within the framework of the non-paper dedicated to crisis management coordinated by France, a small majority of Member States supported, at this stage, the permanent availability of a "first entry force", mentioned above, comprising 5,000 military personnel with land, air and sea components subject to joint training. The battlegroups could form its core**, and certain staff also be shared with **the forces made available to the United Nations or NATO**. Josep Borrell supports the establishment of such a force. This target of 5,000 troops may, in itself, prove to be the **best acceptable balance** between Member States' **actual resources** (which, while the target may seem small in comparison, it is not insignificant) and their low **level of determination** towards the CSDP, compared to which the target does not seem out of reach.

• In addition, the German Ministry of Defence initiated the **EUFOR Crisis Response Operation Core (EUFOR CROC) PESCO project**, in which France is involved. This project explores different scenarios for assembling existing intervention forces[3] in order to achieve a coherent "Full Spectrum

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[1] *In 2021, the schedule remained empty in the first half of the year, and in the second half of the year, only one battlegroup was functional, led by Italy as the framework nation alongside Austria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia (Hapsburg battlegroup). Similarly, in 2022, the schedule remained empty in the first half of the year; for the second half of the year, Spain confirmed its commitment as the framework nation of the battlegroup, with the participation of Portugal (Iberian battlegroup).*

[2] *In June 2017, EU leaders did consider taking over the deployment of the battlegroups as a common cost under the Athena mechanism, but ultimately no decision was taken.*

[3] *A project adopted during the first wave of PESCO projects in March 2018.*

Force Package" (FSFP), which would facilitate and accelerate force formation when the EU decides to launch an operation. The EUFOR CROC project is very interesting from the perspective of accelerating force generation, but it tends to focus on scenarios at the lower end of the spectrum.[1]

(3) Better funding for missions: the European Peace Facility (EPF)

Civilian missions are financed from the EU budget ('CFSP' budget). External military operations, on the other hand, are financed through an **ad hoc pooling mechanism covering certain common costs**. This was the **'Athena' mechanism until it was replaced by the European Peace Facility** (EPF) in 2021. The rest of the expenses are directly covered by the Member States through their material and human contributions to the operation.

• Decided by the Council of the European Union on 18 December 2020, the EPF should:

- **allow certain common costs of EU military missions** for crisis management carried out within the CSDP, **by absorbing and reinforcing the Athena mechanism**[2],

- **encourage cooperation and military assistance**. In particular, the EPF:

> • **extends to all regional organisations** an initiative **that was previously limited to the African Union (AU) through the African Peace Facility (APF)**, which has been replaced by the EPF,[3]

> • **now allows third States to receive military support** outside the framework of a regional organisation—which would permit support for the G5 Sahel, for example,

> • now allows the EU **to provide military equipment, even of a lethal nature, to its partners**.

With **€5 billion allocated for the 2021-2027 period** outside the Union's ordinary budget, the EPF **is still funded by direct annual allocations from EU Member States.**

The EPF has passed a significant milestone with the possibility of providing direct military aid, including of a lethal nature. Thus, it **will**

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[1] *Germany's traditionally reserved attitude in military matters can explain this. With this in mind, Germany and France likely did not have the same degree of conviction when they signed the non-paper supporting the first entry force of 5,000 troops.*

[2] *A mechanism whereby all Member States participating in the CSDP (all except Denmark) pay an annual contribution based on their gross national income for expenses not directly related to military activities, such as soldiers' accommodation, fuel or certain staff operating expenses, which can represent up to* **15% of a mission's total budget***.*

[3] *The Council of the EU, which is competent for the CFSP and CSDP, will therefore be responsible for the EPF, whereas the Commission played an important role for the APF, as it was an instrument for cooperation and development.*

help to properly equip the armies trained within the EUTM framework. A sensitive and controversial subject, the provision of weapons relies on the principle of '**constructive abstention**': when the Council wants to transfer weapons to a partner, hesitant countries can abstain without blocking a decision that must theoretically be adopted unanimously.[1]

The EPF should be mobilised during the second half of 2021.

THE AFRICAN PEACE FACILITY (APF) AND THE CBSD TOOL

• **Created in 2004 using the European Development Fund, the APF** was established at a time when many Europeans and NGOs were opposed to the idea of cooperation and development budgets supporting military units. This is why **the APF operates in a 'grey area'**: it cannot provide lethal military aid or fund military salaries, but it can fund transportation, communications and command equipment, living expenses for soldiers on mission, and their bonuses. Originally allocated €250 million, the APF later met with a certain success, reaching a cumulative €3.5 billion over the 2004-2019 period, 93% of which concerned peace support operations (PSO).

• **Created in 2017, the CBSD tool** ('Capacity Building in support of Security and Development') **widened the range of civilian actions available to the EU** by allowing it to finance certain types of training within a limited framework, as well as equipment and infrastructure intended for troops.

• **Result:** most of the AU-led peace operations over the past 15 years would not have been possible without **the APF**, which has allowed the EU to increase its role in security cooperation. But it **did not allow for the provision of military equipment**. Furthermore, it excluded military cooperation with a third country since the APF can only support peace operations led by the AU or regional African organisations mandated by the AU. Finally, **the CBSD tool, which is also a development aid, has not been able to meet more of the EU's needs in terms of military supplies**.

It should be noted that a **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)** is being set up in parallel; this new major cooperation and development programme merges several instruments and will now fund the civilian interventions of the APF as well as those of the CBSD (see previous box), all of which are civilian in nature.

(4) Europeanise military command

(i)   The first steps towards a European command with the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC)

Until 2017, the command of CSDP military operations relied on the NATO military command structure or a national military staff. The **lack of a European command was a shortcoming** that the Council, on 8 June 2017, wanted to **overcome** by establishing the **Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) within the EU Military Staff (EUMS),** which is part of the EEAS.

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[1] *At the same time, there is a mechanism for reluctant Member States to avoid paying for any weapons. Their contribution to the EPF is not reduced but redirected to less sensitive activities.*

Thus, for the command of CSDP military operations, it is possible to employ either:

- the **'Berlin Plus' agreements**, which allow the use of the **NATO command structure**[1] in a spirit of non-duplication of structures, and has already happened twice, for Macedonia and Bosnia (where Operation Althea, although not very active, is still underway and therefore still requires this structure); it seems that using these agreements is currently unlikely for a new hypothetical operation in the future,[2]

- an '**autonomous European Union operation**' that relies on a **national military staff**, chosen for each operation from among five eligible Member States.[3] In this military staff, the operation commander reports to the PSC and supervises the force commander for the theatre of operations. Since the State chosen is different for each operation, here we regret the significant 'cost of entry' due to the time needed to become familiar with how the relevant European instances function,

- or, since 2017, **the MPCC for non-executive military operations**. The officer at the head of the MPCC is the operation commander; they report to the PSC and, similarly, supervise the theatre force commander. **As a precursor to an EU armed forces headquarters, the MPCC**'s goal is to reinforce reactivity, efficiency and coherence in the EU's reaction. After a "phase 1" that ended in 2020, the objective was for it to be able to assume responsibility at the strategic level for **the planning and operational conduct of military CSDP missions with a 'non-executive mandate'**, i.e. non-combatant mandate, as well as for a small executive operation focused on land—the equivalent of a battlegroup. **Today, the three EUTMs**, i.e. all the missions with a non-executive mandate, **are headed by the MPCC**.

(ii)   The methods for a balanced increase in power

• Despite a **uniformly positive assessment** of services rendered, **the MPCC's human and material situation still does not allow it to fully assume its role**: positions remain vacant[4] and the infrastructure is deficient,

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[1] *The 'Berlin Plus' agreements, adopted on 17 March 2003, laid the foundations for EU-NATO cooperation on the basis of a 'Strategic Partnership for Crisis Management' and set up a 'permanent cell for planning and conducting EU civilian and military operations without recourse to NATO resources'. To conduct a CSDP operation in this framework, it was not possible to rely on SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe), who is always American. Thus, it was decided that it would be their deputy, D-SACEUR. But the D-SACEUR is British. Since Brexit, this poses an obvious problem (see the British partnership below), but which has few practical consequences at this stage (see following note).*

[2] *Indeed, it has become difficult to use Berlin Plus, since Turkey requires Cyprus to leave the room for Berlin Plus. Furthermore, Berlin Plus negotiations are very slow.*

[3] *For example, Spanish command for Atalanta, Italian for Irini. French command in Mont Valérien was last used for the EUFOR Chad/CAR operation (2007-2009).*

[4] *Phase 1 requires a fixed team of 60 people, to which must be added 50 people for executive missions. After four years, in June 2021, the availability of additional staff was secured, but the number of staff had reached a ceiling of 47 people out of 60.*

especially the lack of a secure information and communication system.[1] This shortcoming, which we can criticise for all European bodies, requires using non-interoperable national resources to conduct operations. Furthermore, the MPCC does not have the resources, particularly logistics, which military planning staffs typically have to facilitate operations.

However, the MPCC has planned to move in 2022 into a suitable building that includes civil command, the EUMS, and the civil intelligence centre. With further improvements expected, in particular in the information and communication system, it seems that the head of the EUMS will be able to **declare the full operational capability (FOC) of "Phase 1" of the MPCC at the end of 2021**, i.e. one year later than the initial target.

• Secondly, **it could be beneficial to extend the MPCC's scope to executive military missions[2] and thus have a planning staff - in other words, an 'OHQ'[3] - for all military missions**, with the staffs commanding operations Irini or Atalanta returning to the MPCC. This change would correct a shortcoming that helps explain the disappointing performance of the CSDP, among other things.

Sometimes there are objections based on the **principle of non-duplication**[4] of NATO command structures, often reiterated when organising the EU's security and defence. But, apart from the fact that the CSDP focuses on crisis management and NATO more on defence, this is quantitatively a **false problem**: with a planning structure that could comprise perhaps a hundred officers, the EUMS cannot seriously be considered as duplicating a NATO integrated military structure comprising almost twenty times as many.

• While Germany and France both support extending the MPCC's role, which would avoid having to rely on Member States' commands, their approaches are different.

Today, both the EUMS—competent in matters of doctrine and capability development—and the MPCC are placed under the single authority of the EUMS Director-General, which has been French General Hervé Bléjean since 2020.

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[1] *In this regard, a non-paper from France and the Baltic States insists on the primary importance of improving communication and information security within institutions as well as between institutions and theatres of operations.*

[2] *In 2017, this was impossible due to a British veto. A yet-to-be-agreed phase 2 is already planned, after which the MPCC should be capable of commanding a major inter-army executive operation.*

[3] *Operational Headquarters, another way of referring to an operational planning staff (to conduct, plan and organise military missions). An MPCC in the role of OHQ would be placed between the EUMS, which deals with concepts at the European level, and the headquarters that commands the operation on the ground, plans and manages logistics and transport, ensures force generation, organises rotations, etc.*

[4] *See note above.*

Most of our European partners, in particular Germany, want this MPCC to have its own military staff. They want to separate it from the EUMS with its own head—reporting directly to the PSC—which would conduct the European Union's executive and non-executive military operations.

For its part, France still prefers a robust and unified command architecture that covers the operations-doctrine-capability continuum. It has demonstrated the advantages of this at the national level where a single head, the CEMA (chief of the defence staff), heads both the military staff and the CPCO (centre for operation planning and conduct). Consequently, the CEMA has a comprehensive view of operations with feedback and is able to draw lessons for the doctrine and the consequences on capability. Similarly, NATO, with the same benefits in terms of visibility and scope of action, the SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe, currently General Tod Wolters) is the head of SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe).

The day when the MPCC conducts all military operations (or even all civilian operations[1]), becoming a sort of 'mini-SHAPE', it will be highly legitimate in establishing capability needs. **With an autonomous staff, military expertise within the EUMS would be split to such an extent that those responsible for developing capabilities would lose legitimacy. The risk** would be that the DG DEFIS, by hiring its own military experts, would favour **developing capabilities that may not necessarily meet the military needs** observed through the European Union's operations.

That's why, in France, the CEMA constantly supports the unicity of the EUMS's and MPCC's command in order to find a good coherence in capability and a satisfactory balance between the Council and the Commission.

(5) Provide information to military command

European intelligence is very patchy. An operation must be able to be conducted as autonomously as possible, without relying on third States, such as the United States or Russia, for intelligence or on the **one or two participating States** that are best equipped. It is important that no one have outside views imposed on them.

In this regard, the French non-paper on crisis management calls for an improvement in the European Union's autonomous assessment capabilities. It supports using the EU's electronic intelligence tools, including SatCen (the satellite image analysis centre based in Torrejon, near Madrid), and increasing information gathering capabilities. The end goal is to improve decision-making.

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[1] *As an aside, Germany supports the merging of civilian management (currently under the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, **CPCC**) with military crisis management (MPCC), which has the benefit of coherence but could ultimately affect the level of ambition.*

d) Establish a more broadly helpful cluster dedicated to defence?

Spread throughout the EU's military structures (EUMS and MPCC) that report to the EEAS, troops represent a small share of its personnel — around 250 for a staff of 4,500 — which undermines the prospect for a homogeneous defence cluster. The EEAS is essentially comprised of diplomats and is naturally focused on foreign policy. This configuration is not optimal: most States would never conceive of having their defence and military policy decided by a foreign affairs ministry. **Thus, it is preferable, in accordance with France's position during the EEAS's creation, to avoid placing military structures within it, but have them report to the President of the European Council**.

In any case, **a stronger military capability in a homogeneous staff and better identified as a lever of information, expertise and action - which could result from a more powerful MPCC within the EUMS - would demonstrate strong potential for other EU policies.** For example, once there is a community responsibility for air security, it would be normal for military staff to provide their skills. Similarly, in case of nuclear or bacteriological catastrophe, military staff would likely to be able to contribute and provide significant expertise. Humanitarian actions could also be concerned. Such contributions, which would assume building bridges between military crisis management and the Commission, could also reduce mistrust among the Member States who most oppose European defence developments.

But careful! The trendy objective of 'resilience' should not justify a generalised instrumentalisation of the defence apparatus, in particular based on a misguided analysis of the health crisis, by pursuing ideas that would lead to recommending that troops distribute masks or build hospitals for Europe's citizens, for example.

We must reject any attempt to withdraw the military inside the borders to take on a general, central security role, which would durably distance them from their primary purpose, leading to losses in availability, skills and, no doubt, careers. Only special circumstances can justify their involvement, which must remain exceptional and continue to fall within the scope of their profession. The fight against terrorism depends on it, as France has shown with Operation Sentinelle.

C. ... AND RESIZING THE EU'S ACTIONS TO MEET ITS SECURITY NEEDS

The baskets of 'resilience' and 'partnerships' highlighted in the Strategic Compass place this exercise in the context of a 360° geopolitical approach, which would give the EU all the attributes of a major power.

1. 'Resilience', a necessary and consensual objective

The growing list of unconventional threats justifies supporting the concept of 'resilience', the Strategic Compass's second 'basket'. First used in physics, then in psychology, this term is now understood as referring to the capability of any entity to return to its initial state after a shock.

For the EU, its content remains largely undetermined and is the subject of much debate. But everything leads us to believe that this basket will help advance the Strategic Compass. It is the receptacle for relatively new ideas that work towards a consensual objective, if resilience is understood as contributing to the EU's autonomy as part of a reflection on security that is relatively impervious to crisis management, which is linked to a CSDP that elicits much more caution.

However, many resilience issues raise defence questions, especially from the point of view of **securing access to shared assets**, which France is keen to highlight.

• Under the banner of resilience, the **issue of digital technology, which is fundamental to the security of the EU in its broadest sense**, comes up very often. Whether the issue is cybersecurity (see below), artificial intelligence or data storage,[1] this field permeates all areas of defence and security. **Europe is now clear-eyed about the range of opportunities, but also the threats, that digital technology offers. This is where the Member States most readily agree on the need for the EU to achieve 'strategic autonomy'.**

• More generally, **resilience** consists in improving our ability to protect ourselves from destabilisation attempts and **attacks below the level of a conflict**. Here, the goal is to **preserve access to contested strategic spaces**, not just **cyberspace** but also **space, the high seas and airspace**, all considered shared assets. States could find themselves exposed to denial of access attacks or hybrid threats. In the face of these challenges, we must continue to master the technological skills required to access these spaces (where the defence apparatus could be mobilised), ensure access by promoting international norms and various forms of presence, and be influencers for models and practices.

- For **cyber** threats, new thresholds of conflict have been crossed with the latest attacks the United States suffered at the hands of Russia and China. Here, the objective is to improve the EU's and Member States' ability to prevent, discourage, and dissuade cyberattacks and be able to respond and speed up the return to normal. More intense coordination and cooperation in the field, now under way (see below), is necessary.

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[1] *The aim is to 'stay in the race' for the development of industrial cloud computing that the Internet of Things requires.*

- **Space** is a fast-evolving field of confrontation, albeit relatively unknown to the wider public, where several countries such as China, India and Russia have anti-satellite capabilities. Russia has already gone on the offensive by manoeuvring an object (Luch-Olymp). But, as the stakes of space become increasingly strategic, the costs become out of reach at the national level. Therefore, we must seek to have the national 'bricks' interact better with European policy. In the United States, the rise of New Space relies on players with considerable resources (ULA—United Launch Alliance—SpaceX, Amazon) with contributions from government orders. Europe could also seek to make its space industry globally competitive while giving it a strategic dimension in terms of security and defence. In so doing, the European Union will have to step up its situational surveillance in space and geosatellite intelligence to the benefit of its own expertise capability— particularly through SatCen (see above)—and that of Member States while looking for capability synergies with defence.

- In the **maritime** domain, where China is conducting a particularly assertive, even threatening policy, our presence could expand both through the CSDP or through the concept of coordinated maritime presence (see above), the initial feedback of which is encouraging. In particular, the EU must guarantee freedom of navigation and the security of maritime lines of communication and offshore infrastructure. A stronger implementation of Europe's maritime security strategy, initiated in 2014, and an action plan are necessary. It is important to improve maritime capabilities and surveillance while organising regular naval exercises.

• Resilience also consists more generally in **reducing our industrial dependence in terms of security and defence and strengthening our access to critical technologies and strategic materials.** Finally, strictly in the field of civilian security, it consists in reducing our dependencies to guarantee our **economic, health and climate security**.

The commission now appears very active on all issues related to resilience, whether they have military implications or not (see below).

• Seen from a different angle, the fundamental issue of response time towards threats could be considered as a part of resilience. Here, the Commission is likely to rely on Article 222 TFEU (see above), but not on Article 42.7 TEU (see above), which strictly concerns the CSDP.

2. Supporting a more 'geopolitical' Commission

The EU's foreign policy has long been largely rhetorical; its power typically manifests as sanctions that are more or less approved by the transatlantic community and, above all, symbolic. It is time for this policy to begin to rely on what makes up the EU's strength: the depth and breadth of its market, its economic and financial power, and its development policy.

• Succeeding Jean-Claude Juncker in 2019 at the head of the European Commission, **Ursula von der Leyen, taking note of the damage to the environment and the international order** caused by the Trump administration—even if the situation had already deteriorated under Obama—**expressed the desire for a 'geopolitical commission'.**

Beyond certain controversies in terms of method or effectiveness, **the negotiations with the pharmaceutical laboratories, the European recovery plan, the actions towards Russia and China and the launch of the Strategic Compass are evidence of a change in dimension.**

• Of course, the European project was not overall designed to act geostrategically, but to carry a project of peace and prosperity that relies on free trade. The Commission is organised in silos, with different Directorates-General each setting their own objectives.

With this limit in mind, the establishment in 2020 of the **DG DEFIS** (for Defence Industries and Space), a new directorate general headed by Thierry Breton that **includes defence, the internal market and space**, reveals a change in mindset: it shows that **the EU will no longer shy away from using its economic power to defend its strategic interests.** A simple illustration: in June 2021, an intervention by the European commissioner implied that vaccines could be sent to Belarus in exchange for a return of cooperative relations.

In particular, DG DEFIS is in charge of implementing and controlling the EDF, giving the Commission a foothold in the capability domain through a prism of industrial cooperation.

• **The Commission is involved in reflections on the Compass. Its schedule also includes many chapters that will undoubtedly contribute**:

- In December 2020, the European Commission and the EEAS presented a **new EU cybersecurity strategy**, adopted by the Council on 22 March 2021. This strategy's objective is to **increase Europe's resilience to cyberthreats** and to make sure that all citizens and businesses can fully benefit from reliable digital services and tools. The new strategy includes concrete proposals for the deployment of tools for regulations, investment and action.

In its conclusions, the Council stressed the benefits for years to come of establishing **a network of security operations centres throughout the EU** in order to monitor and anticipate signs of attack on the network and a **joint cybersecurity unit** to help define guidelines as to the European crisis management framework on cybersecurity. **5G** is highlighted, as is the need for a joint effort to **speed up the adoption of security standards** that are determinant for an open international Internet and our competitivity in the matter. Similarly, it supports the development of **strong encryption** and strengthening the **cyber-diplomatic toolbox** with the need to **prevent and counter cyberattacks that have systemic effects likely to affect supply chains, critical infrastructure, essential services or the democratic process or institutions, and compromise economic security**. Finally, the proposal to draw up a **programme to reinforce the EU's external cyber-capabilities is supported**, to increase cyber-resilience and cyber-capabilities throughout the world.

- On 19 January 2021, the Commission issued a Communication on 'The European economic and financial system: fostering openness, strength and resilience' that discussed how to **counter the effects of extra-territorial sanctions.**

- In terms of capability, it presented an 'action plan on **synergies between civil, defence and space industries**' on 22 February 2021 that seeks to reinforce Europe's technological lead and support its industrial base.

THE ACTION PLAN ON SYNERGIES BETWEEN CIVIL, DEFENCE AND SPACE INDUSTRIES

Underscoring the link between the civil, defence and space sectors, this plan works **to make it easier for businesses, especially SMBs,** to identify European funds (EDF, space programme, digital programme, Internal Security Fund, etc.) for which they are eligible and make versatile projects a concrete reality. The objective is to guide innovation towards versatility from conception. The Commission also proposes to establish an '**Observatory of Critical Technologies**' tasked with identifying those that appear strategically important every two years.

The Commission discussed three flagship projects. First, **automating drone traffic** to make EU industry more competitive in this critical technology domain. It then proposes that the Union take the lead in imposing its **space traffic management standards** to avoid the collisions that result from satellite proliferation. Finally, the Commission supports establishing an **EU space communication system to offer resilient, highly secure high-speed Internet connectivity** through quantum encryption. After the Galileo constellation for navigation and the Copernicus Earth observation network, Thierry Breton supports launching a new constellation of European satellites that combines geostationary satellites (GEO) and a low-orbit satellite constellation (LEO).

The Commission is being very proactive here, but to build a strategic culture, it will need to work with a few Member States that have a rather firm stance on the non-militarisation of space.

- On 9 March 2021, the Commission presented a Communication entitled '**2030 Digital Compass: the European way for the Digital Decade**'.

Based on the strategy entitled 'Shaping Europe's digital future' published a year earlier and which remains the general framework for objectives in the matter, this Compass targets four priority domains: digital skills, with the goal of ensuring basic skills for 80% of Europe's population and training 20 million IT specialists; **digital infrastructure**, the safety and durability of which must ensure that Europe's space is connected and secure, while encouraging European production of digital equipment; businesses' digital transformation to ensure that companies have digital access and promote European innovation; the digitalisation of public services with ambitious objectives for key public services, online health and digital identity.

- Furthermore, the European Council has asked the Commission to draw up a roadmap for the autumn to **identify critical infrastructure and strategic sectors where the EU must reduce its dependence.**

In general, through its fields of competence, the Commission plays a primordial role in the many domains that are likely to be categorised under 'resilience'. It is active on most fronts that we can imagine, and it

must take care not to neglect disarmament through standards, as shown by the working time directive.[1]

3. 'Partnerships' that should be nurtured with care

The EU intends to consolidate its stature as a geostrategic player by building new partnerships. However, it must adopt **a pragmatic approach that does not consider bilateral partnerships as an objective in themselves** by forcefully entering into a dialogue with this or that country, organisation or area of the world. It must be guided solely by a good understanding of its interests.

Among these partnerships, the one with NATO is anything but ordinary; in fact it probably provides more structure to the CSDP than the latter does for it.

a) NATO: the central question of 'Who does what?' with the EU

Before anything else, it is important to clarify how the EU and NATO interact outside the military command organisation and the 74 measures to reinforce their cooperation that have been taken in recent times.

➢ Who does what?

• Under the terms of **Article 5** of the Washington treaty, **NATO ensures the collective defence of its members and, therefore, most of the EU's territory.** This is the **mutual defence clause**, also called the 'Musketeer clause'. Furthermore, it declares itself **competent** outside its members' territory for **crisis management**, which is not one of its original missions, but which was fully integrated into its Strategic Concept in 1999.

For its part, **to reach a CSDP that is consistent with its 'level of ambition'** (see above), **the European Union must maintain the autonomy to be able to take action to manage crises in its own neighbourhood. This means that it must be able to do without NATO and not require:**

- **the consent of all[2] the EU's external Allies**: especially the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Turkey. In particular, Turkey

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[1] *The Slovenian Supreme Court referred an interlocutory question to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) that is being decided, asking it to rule on whether Directive 2003/88/EC concerning 'certain aspects of the organisation of working time' applies to troops. France has consistently argued that the application of the directive would be incompatible with the principle of availability, which means 'serving at any time and in any place' as defined in the General Statute of the Military and would trivialise soldiers' profession. In the same category, we should mention the issue of semi-autonomous lethal arms (SALA) or explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA), where establishing standards could have direct consequences on capability.*

[2] *Decisions to intervene must be unanimous, both in NATO and the CSDP. Here is a list of NATO member countries that are not EU members: Albania, Canada, Iceland, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Norway, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States; NATO countries members of the EU: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece,*

opposes certain operations on Europe's borders—for example, in Libya—whilst its actions (hostile actions towards Greece and Cyprus, violations of the arms embargo in Libya, etc.) hardly elicit a coordinated reaction from the Allies, since it is one.

- **assistance from non-EU Allies**, in particular the **United States**, which has incomparable military potential, but which may not wish—particularly for domestic policy reasons—to intervene in theatres which are far away and where the geopolitical stakes are more indirect.

• However, **the CSDP's response appears insufficient given the threats at the top of the spectrum** despite the level of ambition set out at Helsinki due to capability issues as well as the number of troops that can be deployed quickly. **But there is reason to be reassured**: in the current international order, the only **theatres** where we could conceive of a crisis management operation that requires the top of the spectrum are the Donbass, the Baltic States or Georgia, where **we cannot imagine the United States not wanting to intervene** because Russia would be the cause.

With this in mind, the roles should be distributed as follows:

- **NATO** defends **Europe's territory** and **manages crises at the top of the spectrum**, both involving the **eastern border**,

- **the European Union**,[1] alone or within another framework such as the UN, **responds to other security challenges around Europe**—stabilisation and peacekeeping operations, controlling migrant movements—which mainly involves crises on the **southern border**.

THE RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL: AN OUTDATED DEBATE

We could ask ourselves what would happen if NATO and the EU both wanted to intervene in a theatre external to the EU. This question was debated in the early 2000's (at the same time as Berlin Plus). At the time, the right of first refusal was developed, according to which the Europeans could only act if the United States did not want to act within NATO. In reality, this debate seems largely theoretical because things can only ever happen as if this right existed: when the United States wants to act, it does so, and European countries then act within the NATO framework. The real question, then, is whether the Europeans feel it is necessary to be able to take action when the Americans do not want to.

• But **the Member States do not seem to have collectively grasped the consequences of the division of labour that results from the CSDP's level of ambition, even when mitigated by leaving the top of the spectrum to NATO**, consequently making interventions increasingly rare (see above).

As a result, there is only a diminished version of the division of labour that arises from Article 5 and the CSDP, which, according to some of observers, is reminiscent of a kind of 'American protectorate'. This situation is not satisfactory for the United States, as the EU's lack of military

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Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain; the non-NATO EU countries: Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta, Sweden.
[1] *Or European countries in other intergovernmental defence frameworks.*

power hinders its pivot to Asia. It is even less satisfactory for the EU, whose refusal to commit without the Americans is becoming strategically dangerous. Everyone sees it for the military dwarf that it is, and this limits its political reach and weakens its trade positions toward the rest of the world[1], which is its whole reason for being. **So, the EU is faced with an existential question: can it remain a trading power without being able to ensure its own security? Evidently, the answer is no.**[2]

Thus, it is worthwhile to review the complementarity between the EU and NATO, to reaffirm and clarify it on the basis of both structures' comparative advantages depending on the regions of the world or the intensity of intervention **and consistent with the level of ambition that the EU wants to set for itself. If the Strategic Compass achieved only this, it would still be significant progress** given the differences in how this complementarity is conceived. **The point is not to draw up a rigid and detailed distribution of roles** that may prove counterproductive. Depending on the circumstances and political configurations, an important place must be left for initiative, while it must be left to the States to articulate their actions. But it **would be useful to clearly state what the EU must be able do. This would be the basis for an effective reinforcement of the CSDP and greater credibility for the Union**.

THE SECURITY BELT AROUND EUROPE: A NEW OBJECTIVE FOR THE CSDP?

This concept, which appears in the scoping paper, is new. It notes that the EU is a continent surrounded by crises: the eastern partnership with Nagorno-Karabakh, the Southern border with an active Eastern Mediterranean and a risk of collapse in the Sahel, etc. This vision is accurate, but it must not limit where we can take action: certain European defence issues are more remote, others closer by.

More remote: without necessarily going as far as the Indo-Pacific, the security of our maritime supplies implies working on our freedom of movement in the Suez Canal—we can all remember the container ship affair—the Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Guinea.

Closer by: on European soil itself, because NATO, which is competent for its defence, does not tackle all the threats—at least not yet (see below)—in particular terrorism, hybrid threats, cyber threats, misinformation, foreign interference, etc.

Here, the pitfall would be to go back to the recurring 'NATO and the transatlantic relationship versus European defence and strategic autonomy' debate and the stances that were held before the Trump administration took power. As we know, countries with more limited means and contributions, particularly in the east, give absolute priority to NATO, considering that the CSDP should be limited to responding to the needs of the Atlantic alliance. But **a majority of Member States still feel that strengthening the CSDP is how the EU will become a stronger partner within the Alliance**.

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[1] *Positions which are also subject to the whims of America's extraterritorial sanctions, as shown by the trading relationship with Iran or, for a time, the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline.*
[2] *This was illustrated in July 2020 with Boris Johnson's rejection of Huawei's 5G after Donald Trump threatened to burn certain bridges, particularly in intelligence.*

The United States itself welcomes the efforts of certain European Allies against terrorism in the Sahel, which, in most of their think tanks, is seen as the best laboratory for what an 'open' European strategic autonomy allows: a European security operation that strengthens Euro-Atlantic security overall. In general, Joe Biden has no objection to a stronger CSDP and is not opposed—at least, not openly—to "European strategic autonomy". It does, however, elicit frank scepticism from NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who never fails to remind EU Allies that they only cover 20% of the Alliance's defence spending.

Of course, a greater recognition of what the CSDP brings to NATO would be made easier if EU countries increased their contribution, which requires efforts on capability (see above). But the NATO Secretary General's reservations also seem motivated by the high level of ambition that he has for the Alliance (see below).

• Here, we should note that the establishment of an autonomous European defence—which, remember, is not at all on the agenda—would probably involve a review of Article 42.2 TEU, which states that the CSDP '*shall respect the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realised in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework*'. There is a gradient of theoretical conceptions of role sharing between the EU and NATO, the edges of which are not always very clear.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO ROLE SHARING BETWEEN THE EU AND NATO

1) The **strict division of labour** between NATO and the EU as it logically results from the CSDP (see above)

Here, the markers are the territory (the CSDP is interested in Europe's neighbourhood while NATO defends Europe's own territory), the type of conflict (peacekeeping for the CSDP, the top of the spectrum up to nuclear arms for NATO), and American help (yes for NATO, no for the EU). This approach no doubt matches the United States' deepest desire, the Clinton administration having reluctantly accepted intervening in Yugoslavia and the Obama administration having felt that the Libyan, Syrian and Malian crises were not within NATO's remit. In this perspective, the US has long been in favour of the EU's strategic autonomy.

2) Certain approaches imagine a **more flexible version** of this division of labour. NATO would be the 'leader' in collective defence, and the EU in crisis management with the CSDP, each organisation supporting the other in their field of competence.

3) **The 'pillars'**: the Atlantic Alliance would stand on an American pillar and 'the European pillar of NATO'. The EU should then be capable of taking on part of the collective defence of Europe. The British, as privileged partners of the United States, are very much opposed to this, because then it would be unimaginable for the currently British D-SACEUR to come from anywhere other than an EU Member State (see above). Whatever the case, if such a defensive pillar were to arise, the United States would have to establish a calendar for removing their troops stationed within the EU,[1] at the end of which 'everyone would stay

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[1] *Here, we should clarify that American troops stationed in Europe are essentially intended for American operations in the Middle East. Faced with a Russian takeover of European territory, such*

on their side' while maintaining the guarantee of Article 5. The United States would then have more freedom to deploy their forces in accordance with their 'pivot to Asia'.

One should note that the expression 'NATO's European pillar' is used in other ways, included the rather usual referral to the EU's contribution to NATO, without especially looking to qualify it.

➤ The relationship with NATO should also be seen through the prism of **military command**.

The 'Berlin Plus' agreements were adopted on 17 March 2003[1] and laid the foundations for military and political cooperation between the two organisations on the basis of a 'Strategic partnership for crisis management'. Two new structures were created, discussed above:

- A '*permanent cell for planning and conducting EU civilian and military operations without recourse to NATO resources*' placed within the EUMS. This cell is autonomous and separate from NATO structures,

- An EU cell created within NATO military staff (SHAPE) to improve the preparation of EU operations conducted with NATO resources.

➤ Finally, it must be seen through the angle of its **partnerships**.

During the Warsaw summit in July 2016, both organisations identified certain domains in which they wanted stronger cooperation given the shared challenges the faced in the east and south: fighting hybrid threats, reinforcing defence capabilities, cyber-defence and maritime security, etc.

In December 2016, NATO foreign ministers approved a package of 42 measures to advance cooperation between NATO and the EU. This was supplemented in December 2017 by a new package of 32 measures covering **cyber-defence**, among other subjects. During the Brussels summit in July 2018, a new joint declaration presented the EU's and NATO's vision in terms of acting against shared threats and highlighting the progress made in cooperation to the benefit of transatlantic security.

NATO and the EU now exchange real-time alerts on cyberattacks, participate in each other's exercises and collaborate in their response to migration crises. The 2018 declaration strengthened their cooperation in many areas, including military mobility, counterterrorism, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear resilience, and promoted an agenda of 'women, peace and security'.

Arrangements of transparency and coordination between NATO and the EU in **intelligence** seem well-oiled, if a bit bureaucratic. Another important domain for EU-NATO cooperation is **military mobility**, a major

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as in the Netherlands or in the Suwalki region, NATO's defence of Europe would not be immediate given the reality of the resources that can be mobilised on site.
[1] *Agreements for which, in 2002, the Prague Summit, followed by the joint declaration on the European security and defence policy, opened the way.*

operational issue for the two organisations, since the ability to transport troops and equipment over Europe's territory is essential, particularly in the event of escalating hostilities on the eastern border. The US, Canada and Norway will participate in the "military mobility" PESCO project (on the EU side, an action plan was adopted by the Commission in March 2018, and the multi-annual financial framework (2021-2027) has provided for a dedicated budget).

b) The United States

The quality of the relationship with the United States seems to have been largely restored since the election of Joe Biden, who has gone back on a number of the causes of disagreement with the EU — in matters of security and defence (reduced subsidies, withdrawal from the Vienna Agreement), trade (customs duties and sanctions, fewer concerns about EU taxes on major tech companies) and climate (withdrawal from the Paris agreement) — culminating in the US-EU summit on 15 June 2021, the day after the NATO summit in Brussels.

In late 2020, the Council called for a structured dialogue with the United States in matters of security and defence, highlighting that a **solid reciprocal and long-term partnership** should be central to a renewed global alliance between the EU and the United States.

The partnership between the EU and the United States is based on **shared values**: democracy, liberalism, and respect for the rule of law and human rights. Today, one shared objective is to **revitalise the multilateral system** and to help **restore a rules-based international order**.

Beyond the fact that the transatlantic partnership remains the cornerstone of our collective defence, **we can identify many fields of cooperation and understanding in terms of the CFSP**: the United States' participation in PESCO, the approach to Russia, collaboration in the Western Balkans, joint work for de-escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean, etc.

However, certain, less-promising constants mean that the Europeans will have to be wary of following anything that is not in their interest: **the pivot to Asia and the United States' desire to impose their approach to China**, which tends to favour integrating capability within NATO to the benefit of their military-industrial apparatus (and thus to the detriment of the EDTIB), entering into a pattern of strong economic competition with the EU, using extra-territorial sanctions, etc. Furthermore, problems related to ITAR (see above) could arise within the EDA's cooperation with the United States. In the coming years, new instruments could increase the EU's autonomy *vis-à-vis* the United States, such as a carbon tax at the border that may affect certain American companies, and regulations of the community's digital space that apply to American tech giants and require them to respect European's data protection laws.

No doubt the **European Union** will need to make a particular effort to remember that an **authentic partnership requires each party to take its own interests into account.**

c) United Kingdom

Whatever Europe's aspirations are towards establishing a privileged post-Brexit relationship with the United Kingdom, **we must be realistic about the appetite for European security and defence mechanisms for a country that is so anchored in the transatlantic relationship**. There is no reason for its relative disinterest and scepticism in the matter to ebb away with Brexit. In fact, the British left Althea even though the Berlin Plus format did not require them to, they will not take part in the coordinated maritime presence in the Indo-Pacific, and they show no interest in PESCO. They drew up their last strategic review with NATO and the United States in mind,[1] seeking to have the Alliance cover resilience problems (which the EU is resolved to cover more of, particularly under the impetus of the Strategic Compass) while ensuring the D-SACEUR remains British (see above), which Brexit should have called into question.[2]

Of course, the United Kingdom still has a full interest in Europe's security. But it goes through NATO, the CJEF (Combined Joint Expeditionary Force),[3] the EII (initiated in 2018 and inspired by the CJEF to a certain degree), the JEF (see above) and bilateral relationships, especially the one with France in the Lancaster House agreements (which initiated the CJEF) since 2010. Finally, the United Kingdom remains engaged in the eFP (see above) and in maritime surveillance missions.

It seems that the contact maintained via the EII, of which the United Kingdom is a founding member, is the surest launchpad for improving the Euro-British defence and security relationship.

d) The Indo-Pacific

The European Union is as interested in the Indo-Pacific as much as it fears actions from China to deny access to a very strategically and economically sensitive area.

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[1] *The exercise provides for a spectacular increase in the number of nuclear warheads.*

[2] *Since the United Kingdom has left the EU, it would be logical for the D-SACEUR to come from one of its Member States, given that they are commander of EU operations within Berlin Plus, which counts among its prerogatives the 'strategic coordinator' with the European Union, and that Member States' military weight in NATO is greater than that of the United Kingdom.*

[3] *The result of a Franco-British ambition expressed in the Lancaster House agreements, this is a bi-national force of up to 10,000 troops that can be mobilised at very short notice and is capable of carrying out high-intensity operations across the whole spectrum of threats. However, it is likely that the UK would prefer or be unable to use it in an operation that did not include the United States, not least because of their dependence on intelligence (via the Five Eyes, the intelligence alliance of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States), which would deprive them of the possibility of independent action. The CJEF was declared fully operational in November 2020.*

This region is home to 60% of the world's population and **the fastest-growing GDPs on the planet**; 30% of the world's sea commerce goes through the Strait of Malacca towards the Suez Canal, which makes it a vital area for European supplies. More than a third of French exports outside the European Union go to the Indo-Pacific region. This area, which has several nuclear countries, has also seen the biggest efforts in defence investment over the last ten years.

The lack of regulations and multilateral consensus on the conditions for accessing and using shared spaces makes it easier for **conflicts** to arise between countries or against non-state actors throughout the region.

The EU can work to strengthen its position in the region by supporting the conclusion of a strategic partnership with ASEAN, by joining the East Asia Summit (EAS), and by resuming negotiations on free trade agreements—particularly with certain ASEAN countries—with a view to an ambitious bi-regional agreement, a revitalisation of the Europe-Asia dialogue known as "ASEM" (Asia Europe Meeting), which is destined to become a forum for the expression of Europe's ambitions in Asia, the implementation of Europe's strategy for connectivity between the EU and Asia and, above all, **the determination of a European strategy in the Pacific, which is shaping up to be a major challenge for the FPEU**.

Indeed, the EU still has only the beginnings of cooperation in the region. But its vision of the Indo-Pacific is beginning to coalesce due to the numerous exchanges with Indo-Pacific partners—summits with India, Japan, South Korea—who expect the EU to reciprocate.

Pressing the issue, especially coming from France, does elicit certain questions in terms of security and defence. It is the only Member State, alongside the Netherlands and Germany, to have maritime availability in the Indo-Pacific, keeping in mind that each of these two countries deploy just a single frigate, and even then, only for part of the year. Evidently, **there is a risk that such a broad security and defence issue could be more appropriately dealt with in the NATO framework, together with the great maritime powers of the United States and the United Kingdom**, which could compromise the EU's autonomy in dealing with China.

e) Other partnerships

The relationship between the EU and the **UN** is generally described as operating satisfactorily, in the limits of the two structures' respective objectives. In particular, the limits placed by the United Nations are systematically integrated in the CSDP's operations.

However, the **OSCE**[1] merits more attention, especially with a view to a peaceful resolution of frozen conflicts in certain countries of the **Eastern**

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[1] *Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.*

Partnership[1]—in the Donbass in Eastern Ukraine, in Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in Georgia and in Moldova. **Poland, Romania and the Baltic States consider that the EPF** (see above) **should help to reinforce this partnership**, which could stoke tensions with Russia. The Europeans should also strengthen their cross-border links with the populations of these countries, especially in health care and education.

Africa, which could become a driver for global growth but whose political and security situations have evolved in a way that is potentially destabilising for the EU, must have its full attention. It is now in competition with China and Russia in many domains. Fortunately, Africa is becoming a priority on the European agenda: the prospect of a renewed partnership with the countries in the southern Mediterranean is becoming clearer, the February 2020 joint communication 'Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa' tends to strengthen ties, a "post-Cotonou"[2] agreement between the EU and the OECPS[3] was signed on 15 April 2021, a sixth African Union-EU summit before 2022 should set shared priorities for a common future, etc. In this **"Pivot to Africa", the EU can already be proud of its intentions,** and priority will be given to consolidating institutions, creating civil infrastructure, education and fighting poverty, which has been exacerbated by the health crisis and which of course determines growth, security, an effective fight against terrorism and keeps emigration under control.

4. What relationship with China?

China poses a growing threat to the EU, as seen in the economic and information fields. Problems with China essentially revolve around **issues of resilience**: digital sovereignty, misinformation, industrial capacity, competitiveness, market access, risk of denial of access to sea lanes, especially in the straits.

In the EU's geostrategic environment, China is probably the subject that has seen the greatest change in approach over the past two years. Once discreet, it has recently become very present, even aggressive. At least the *ad hominem* insults of a Chinese ambassador in France against a French researcher and the package of Chinese sanctions against European academics and parliamentarians in retaliation for the European sanctions taken for the repression of the Uyghur minority have had the merit of clarifying the situation. The EU sees its relationship with China as a 'partner, competitor, rival' and can be summarised as a '**systemic rival**'.

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[1] *An EU neighbourhood policy that seeks to conclude agreements with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus, initiated in Prague on 7 May 2009.*

[2] *It succeeds the Cotonou agreement signed in 2000, which itself succeeded the Lomé agreements of 1975.*

[3] *Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, which replaced the ACP Group of States in April 2020.*

The 17+1 format, which brings together China and 17 central and eastern European countries along the new silk roads, was momentarily seen as a serious risk to the European Union's cohesion. But the enthusiasm of the 17 has since seriously receded. There is now a widely held feeling within the EU that everyone needs to 'play as a team' regarding China, which is trying to manage its relations with the 27 Member States separately. The ideal would be to go from a 17+1 format to 27+1.

In any case, China must be able to remain a partner on climate issues and be considered by the European Union as a simple competitor, for example on trade issues, whereas the United States slips more easily into a hostile or rival stance. **The pitfall here would be handling the China issue solely through NATO**, which would automatically result in United States interference in European trade policy.

Thus, the EU must clarify its own strategic position towards China. In economics, this means demanding reciprocity. In so doing, China could well replace Trump's America as the main driver behind the EU's 'geopoliticisation'. The EU has already adopted a new framework of sanctions for human rights breaches and stricter rules for exporting dual-purpose goods (civil and military), rules which now apply to cybersurveillance technologies produced by the EU.

II. A COMPASS THAT MIGHT POINT A LITTLE TOO FAR WEST

The United States' renewed investment in the transatlantic relationship makes the CSDP less of a priority for most Member States. Without the motivation to better organise their security and defence, their strategy could rely on NATO more than would be reasonable.

A. THE GREAT RETURN OF ATLANTIC AFFINITIES ...

Joe Biden has heralded a return to the inviolability of the NATO umbrella, singularly reducing the chances of achieving a Strategic Compass that makes significant progress in security and defence. Member States' budget and internal policy perspectives seem no more promising. In short, **just when the Strategic Compass is reaching the critical synthesis and political agreement phase, a favourable window for the CSDP is closing**.

1. NATO's renewed credibility in the face of a CSDP weakened by Brexit...

'*America is back!*' Joe Biden's election, the possibility of seeing the United States act as the world's policeman for law and democracy, alone or within a NATO that reaffirms its purpose of offering Allies unfailing protection, and the nominations of Antony Blinken as Secretary of State and

Karen Donfried as Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs were welcomed enthusiastically throughout the European Union. With a return to a safe and familiar environment, European decision makers have been reassured beyond all measure, most of them hoping for nothing more than to return to old habits.

The United States is determined to hold Russia accountable for its aggressions and interference in the cyber domain while criticising its human rights breaches (while the effects of this turnaround may be hard to see, with withdrawals of troops from the border with Ukraine that are simply anecdotal and the very worrying prison treatment of Alexei Navalny). Similarly, Turkey, which has committed illegal acts against European Allies, can no longer count on the same passivity from the United States, strongly opposed to its purchase of Russian missiles (here, the change is stark: Erdogan has now adopted much more conciliatory rhetoric towards the EU).

In this context, **the concept of strategic autonomy, which had seen growing support throughout the four years of the Trump administration, is now eliciting greater mistrust, at least as far as it focuses on security and defence**. The Bundeswehr's natural affinity for NATO, in the framework in which it was created, is now expressed within a Germany that is doubly reassured by the freezing of US troop withdrawals—a strong symbol—and the US's refusal to sanction commercial partners of the Nord Stream 2 project. Only its desire to continue a relationship with China that serves its economic interests can still distance it from the United States. Given the knock-on effect German policy has on many European partners, the argument about an unreliable United States, and thus NATO, barely works anymore. In short, **the 'conditioned reflexes' of Atlantic alignment are taking over everywhere**.

Compared to the pre-Trump situation, **Brexit adds an argument for tipping the balance in favour of NATO, since the UK is the ally with the highest defence spending** ($60 bn), **after the US** ($785 bn) and ahead of Germany ($56 bn) and France ($50 bn),[1] such that EU countries belonging to NATO now only represent a fifth of the defence spending of all NATO countries.[2]
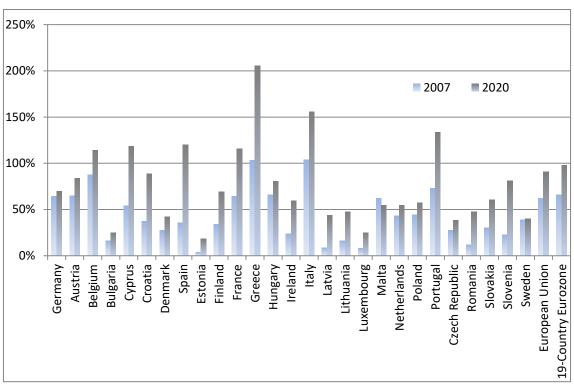
2. The budgetary impact of the health crisis

The health crisis has led to very high budgetary spending in order to distribute replacement income and support economic activity, while focusing security attention on the lower end of the spectrum and resilience. In this context, at a time when NATO is reaffirming and even expanding its guarantee (see below), the financial constraints that will replace debt

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[1] *Estimate for 2020, current exchange rate.*

[2] *As an illustration, in the embassy responses, Lithuania is described as 'careful not to weaken NATO by allowing an important place for the UK in Europe's defence apparatus'.*

increases **could cause Member States to forego operations and capabilities in order to reduce defence budgets**. The following graph shows the extent of the damage to the EU's financial situation since 2007, illustrating the two shocks of the 2008 financial crisis and the health crisis.

CHANGE IN PUBLIC DEBT AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP FROM 2007 TO 2020

Source: Senate Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee, Eurostat figures (retrieved 7 May 2021)

For those Member States that do not adopt budget measures of their own accord, the slightest upturn in inflation—which is now showing signs of picking up—will not fail to force them to do so in order to maintain sustainable levels of debt. The EU itself could end up encouraging or requiring such measures, particularly in return for its 'Next Generation EU' stimulus plan.

It is already expected that Germany's defence budget will not increase after 2022; it could even fall given widely expected budget cuts in the Bundestag, given that only spending justified by NATO can gain approval.

3. Political configurations likely to become less favourable

If we stick to the Franco-German "engine", **the German elections in September 2021 and French elections in the spring of 2022 are all uncertainties that weigh on the EU's motivation for defence**.

In France, Emmanuel Macron is more sensitive to Europe than his potential competitors in the upcoming presidential elections. In Germany,

the elections could result in a 'green-black' coalition between the CDU and *Die Grünen,* or a three-party coalition that includes the FDP (Liberal Democratic Party), given the recent changes in the Green vote. In the two political equations, the options chosen by the Greens remain the critical variable. Traditionally more reserved on issues of defence than the CDU or the FPD, today they tend to adopt a more open and realistic line that is compatible with the two other parties.[1] In contrast, with regard to the strategic approach to the Russian and especially the Chinese regimes, where Germany assumes a fairly clear difference with the United States, it would seem that the Greens have a willingness to be firm, which could bring them closer to the American view.

More generally, there is also the possibility of an upsurge in terrorism or new waves of migration, circumstances that favour populist rhetoric and parties, a tendency towards Euroscepticism and, most certainly, a national withdrawal from security and defence issues, leading to a lack of interest in the CSDP given the NATO guarantee.

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Thus, in the field of security and defence, all the political and budgetary factors are converging to push the Europeans to embrace the Euro-Atlantic bond and postpone a revitalised European project indefinitely.

B. ... DESPITE INCREASINGLY DEMANDING AND COMPLEX COORDINATION WITH NATO

Now fully recovered from its "brain death", **NATO is showing renewed ambitions and a high profile, as embodied in particular by the NATO 2030 agenda,[2] approved on 14 June 2021 by the Allies in Brussels. This does not smooth over the difficulties in terms of coordination that could be identified with EU policy.**

1. Potentially different geostrategic aims

The United States, which leads NATO, has adopted a **very tough policy towards China** because it fears that China will take away its global leadership. They will be all the more tenacious in trying to bring Europe along in a 'crusade against China' that is one of the rare political positions in

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[1] *The most radical of them have, for the most part, joined Die Linke, which now occupies the pacifist niche in the political spectrum with an anti-operation and anti-Bundeswehr stance, but which seems unlikely to join a coalition.*

[2] *In the framework of the NATO Secretary General's '**NATO 2030 initiative**', various contributions (including the report 'NATO 2030: United for a new era. Analysis and recommendations of the Reflection Group appointed by the NATO Secretary General' published on 25 November 2020) were intended to inform him so that he could issue recommendations for leaders of NATO countries. This process led to the adoption of the 'NATO 2030 agenda' at the Brussels summit with the objective that the 'Alliance remains ready today to face tomorrow's challenges'.*

the American political landscape that receives cross-party support. The NATO 2030 agenda states that '*China's stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order*' and heavily develops this assertion (the word 'China' is used 20 times).

With regard to **Russia**, where their economic interests remain weak, they **are conducting a traditionally intransigent policy**, of which the rather complacent Trump presidency was not representative. However, the Biden Administration recently expressed his wish to reach a better quality of dialogue with Russia—confirmed by the Biden-Putin summit on 16 June 2022—which it does not want to drive into the arms of China.

In any case, **while the EU's humanist values may also lead it to condemn the acts of these regimes, its perspectives are different: China is not an ultimate threat for the European Union. Its economic and strategic interests could lead it to choose to cooperate with China as well as Russia, which the United States would not approve of**. From this perspective, the Biden-Putin summit should not be seen as the start of a Russian-Western dialogue with the US as spokesperson - in this respect, it is regrettable that the subsequent Franco-German initiative to jumpstart the EU-Russia dialogue was not ultimately endorsed by the member states.

Furthermore, **the different approach towards Turkey, which is part of NATO, remains guided by the United States' strategic interests, which has significant military bases there, and by the desire of its Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, to avoid weakening the Alliance by marginalising one of its members**. In fact, he did not take up the part recommending a "code of good conduct between Allies" in the report he had commissioned from a group of experts (of which Hubert Védrine was a member) to help him draw up the NATO 2030 agenda.[1]

Finally, we can add that the United States' disengagement from the Middle East is not called into question.

2. The intangible 'NATO umbrella'

Joe Biden has a very slim majority in Congress, especially the Senate. This narrow victory adds uncertainty to his international policy, and we cannot assume an easy victory in upcoming elections. Given that the midterms will take place in little over a year and the presidential elections in a little over three, **the renewed Pax Americana via NATO could be shorter than hoped**.

Donald Trump called into question the United States' security guarantee to other Allies under the terms of Article 5 of the North Atlantic

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[1] *See note above. The NATO 2030 agenda only mentions Turkey to send it messages of reassurance, even gratitude: 'We reiterate our appreciation to our Ally Turkey for hosting millions of Syrian refugees.'*

Treaty. Should his political stance find itself in power once again, the next step could consist in working to condition this guarantee on respecting the 2% defence spending threshold. Of course, the United States is a democracy where there are many checks and balances to disruptive decisions from the head of the executive branch as well as resistance from the 'Deep State' that Donald Trump loved to point out. But no one can definitively state that the United States will never apply the slogan 'America First' to the letter and, consequently, that the EU can always count on its American Ally in a major crisis.

Logically, the EU should consider the upcoming period as an opportunity to buy the time it needs to organise its security in a more complete way. **In no way would this call into question NATO's primordial role** in its current operations: to the contrary, its potential would be even stronger.

Joe Biden, for his part, did not discuss the 2% objective during his European tour in June 2021. But, without any question of conditionality, some observers believe that stricter enforcement of this financial obligation under his presidency cannot be ruled out if, for example, the EU decided to assume a policy openly separate from that of the United States, in particular vis-à-vis China.

3. A trend towards expanding NATO's remit in the short term

A NATO summit took place in June 2021, a second is planned for 2022, each including significant issues, whereas this type of summit is usually held every two years. Everything is happening as if the NATO Secretary General wanted to mark the end of his term with major initiatives, given that his ambitions seem to largely overlap with American concerns and that the North Atlantic Council (NAC), the Allies' main decision-making body, willingly endorses his initiatives. Additionally, NATO's only true[1] ongoing mission, in Afghanistan, is currently coming to an end, which creates a vacuum.

Let's remember that NATO's primary mission is dissuasion and the territorial defence of its members, occasionally extending to crisis management. However, in the past few months, NATO's work has been on developing a 360° defence strategy, condensed in the NATO 2030 agenda.

The 'NATO 2030' working group highlighted **cybersecurity** and **resilience**, topics the EU has identified since the 2016 Global Strategy and which the Strategic Compass will promote in the "resilience" basket and for which the Member States have the main levers for action.

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[1] *Operation Sea Guardian, in the Mediterranean, is not a true combat mission.*

The **NATO 2030 agenda** goes so far as to **envisage the use of Article 5 in the event of a cyberattack**, which will require further clarification since such acts may be carried out by countries where the EU and the US do not have the same risks and goals. Care must also be taken in trying to assign responsibility for these acts. For example, if NATO wanted to be more active on issues like 5G, which in reality touches on China, we should then remember that the EU has a power over standards that does not need to be reinvented elsewhere. In general, **to handle hybrid threats, the European Union seems the best forum given the variety of its competences and instruments in its possession.**

The agenda promotes 'resilience' at length, using the word 26 times, making it an objective second only to collective defence. **Certainly, NATO is justified in dealing with resilience in military matters**—the command and control (C2) apparatus must be robust to continue to work in times of crisis, and the provision of strategic supplies such as ammunition or oil must be ensured—and even in handling specific difficulties such as a breakdown in mass transport or saturation of health capabilities in order to rescue a country threatened by collapse.

But the NATO 2030 agenda looks at resilience in its broadest sense - while recognising that it is a "national responsibility" - **and even anticipates that Allies will be subject to resilience target monitoring**: '*Allies will develop a proposal to establish, assess, review and monitor resilience objectives to guide nationally-developed resilience goals and implementation plans.*' **Compatibility with the EU agenda is secondary and left to the discretion of the Member States**: '*It will be up to each individual Ally to determine how to establish and meet national resilience goals and implementation plans, allowing them to do so in a manner that is compatible with respective national competences, structures, processes and obligations, and where applicable those of the EU.*'[1]

If these prospects come to pass, the resilience that the EU seeks to orchestrate could be overshadowed by a NATO-led resilience, just as the CSDP barely survives alongside the Alliance today. While the immense power of the American army may explain this, here, nothing would justify it.

The working group also proposed that the fight against terrorism should be included among the Alliance's core tasks, which is now mentioned in the NATO 2030 agenda (18 occurrences), and that NATO should develop a '**strategy to foster and protect emerging and disruptive technologies**', which the agenda also confirms, posing a problem of how it interacts with the EDF (see below). The agenda also discusses **climate change**, a 'threat

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[1] *As a sign of things to come, the NATO Secretary General had issued a paper a few months earlier - without consulting the Allies - suggesting that each Ally should appoint a 'minister responsible for resilience' and that the NDPP should set binding capability targets (see below), the scope of which would be extended to resilience...*

multiplier', the Allies inviting the Secretary General to '*formulate a realistic, ambitious and concrete target for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the NATO political and military structures and facilities and assess the feasibility of reaching net zero emissions by 2050.*'

Of course, the NATO 2030 agenda confirms that NATO's core missions include **crisis management**, without any particular limits. It also approves cooperation to accompany the rise in power of certain partners and, finally, takes on new ambitions in terms of **capabilities** (see below).

At the same time as this '**great leap forward**' inspired and allowed by the United States' return to Europe and multilateralism, the activity of 'transatlanticist' think tanks—German Marshall Fund, Carnegie, etc.— has never been so intense, with a flurry of symposia on the transatlantic relationship.

However, the NATO 2030 agenda warns that the resources must follow: '*When we meet in 2022, we will agree, alongside the Strategic Concept, the specific requirements for additional funding up to 2030 and the resource implications across the NATO Military Budget, the NATO Security Investment Programme and the Civil Budget, as well as identify potential efficiency measures*'. In Europe, this movement could receive the unconditional support of the United Kingdom, the Alliance's second largest contributor and Europe's largest, which regularly exceeds the objective to spend 2% of GDP on defence (2.2%).

4. NATO's capability advantage

• As part of its **NDDP** (for NATO Defence Planning Process), **NATO makes an inventory of required capabilities,**[1] **encourages Allies to develop and acquire them by distributing needs as capability objectives,** facilitates their achievement and periodically assesses progress. In this framework, Allies are intended to harmonise their national defence plans with those of NATO but without infringing on their national sovereignty. This is a **top-down process** on a **four-year cycle**.

As the backbone of the Alliance, the NDPP is considered the crucible of the West's military identity and the model for interoperability of European forces with each other and with American forces. But it is also seen as a **vector of the US's military thinking**, whereas its prescriptive aspects **create opportunities for the American military-industrial complex** (particularly among Member States who are net beneficiaries of EU policies, which sometimes elicits remarks). Indeed, **the new technologies and interoperable equipment valued here are often American**. In the future, there is a non-negligible risk that **the 'Russian threat' will justify the development of increased top-of-the-spectrum capabilities**—F35 fighter

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[1] *All of the NDPP's 14 planning domains include a capability aspect.*

planes, anti-missile defence—**that will soak up the Allies' budget to the detriment of other European targets**, particularly in the mid-spectrum.

• **At the European level, capability planning relies on several instruments, which leaves a lot of room for Member State initiatives**. Remember that the CDP, the Capability Development Plan (to which the NDPP is sometimes directly compared) established by the EDA, sets the EU's defence capability priorities by integrating the specific needs expressed by Member States. The CARD (same comment) identifies existing capabilities on this basis and facilitates cooperation to reach the CDP's objectives. Then, PESCO intervenes as a framework for cooperation where projects that seek to increase Europe's defence capabilities are implemented, if possible with EDF support, given that other cooperation projects can be initiated within the EDA (or in other bilateral or multinational frameworks). In contrast to NATO's NDPP, **the capability development organised by the EU appears to be bottom-up** and readily[1] described as **agile and flexible**.

This was to be expected: less directive, less incentivised, less long-standing and serving a CSDP that has always been less credible and vital than NATO, European capability planning is not as closely followed. This is especially clear for Member States who, without a military programme act, defend their military budgets solely on the basis of the NDPP.

• **This raises the issue of the coherence among the commitments of countries in both the EU and in NATO. 38 of the 47 ongoing PESCO projects are already broadly in line with NATO priorities**.[2] This is rather good news in that this correspondence allows for economies of scale in a spirit of non-duplication.

However, the CSDP is not NATO. Consequently, nothing can justify that NATO, through the NDPP, has a say on the commitments taken within the European Union. In the same vein, **systematically modelling Europe's norms and standards developed through PESCO on NATO norms and standards would hinder the establishment of an EDTIB**. In this regard, **reserving EDF funding to European projects** is a partial safeguard.

After the momentum provided by the NATO 2030 agenda, in which Allies agreed to "*foster technological cooperation among Allies in NATO, promote interoperability and encourage the development and adoption of technological solutions to address* [their] *military needs*', **can this approach succeed?**

The rest of the document raises doubts: '*For this purpose we will launch a **civil-military Defence Innovation Accelerator** for the North Atlantic.*

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[1] *Depending on how one looks at it, this process could also be described as complex and disorganised with many loopholes (see above).*

[2] *Fifth progress report on the follow-up to the joint proposals endorsed on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017 by the North Atlantic Council and the Council of the European Union on 16 June 2020*

*We also agree to **establish a NATO Innovation Fund**, where Allies who so wish can support start-ups working on dual-use emerging and disruptive technologies in areas key to Allied security.*' If we look at the EDF or the Commission's initiatives, it seems that **EU-member Allies have understood the non-duplication principle as a one-way street.**

5. The concurrence of strategic reflections

The review of NATO's Strategic Concept is planned for its next summit in 2022. In the NATO 2030 agenda, the Allies '*invite the Secretary General to lead the process to develop the next Strategic Concept. The Concept will be negotiated and agreed by the Council in Permanent Session and endorsed by NATO Leaders at the next Summit.*' As the last Strategic Concept dates from 2010, this review was greatly expected given the great changes in perceptions of cyber activities, space and China.

The Strategic Compass is a separate strategic document that arises from a new approach that concerns the EU and its members. It envisages a partnership approach to NATO and **is not intended to be a local version of the "Strategic Concept"**. Obviously, it is desirable that the two exercises remain compatible, but there is no question of establishing a hierarchy between them.

The upcoming sessions, as organised, seem to avoid the feared scenario of NATO-ising the Compass from the start: the EU and NATO, while working in parallel, are completing their work at different times: the European Union will have defined its priorities in the Strategic Compass in March 2022, and NATO will have defined its priorities in its Strategic Concept a bit later, probably in summer 2022. According to the European and Foreign Affairs Ministry, the schedules were designed so that European thinking could flow into NATO thinking, without allowing NATO to influence the Strategic Compass.

But the reality is quite different: NATO, which is under great pressure from its Secretary General and the NATO 2030 strategy, is taking a serious conceptual advance through the thinking that it promotes and the works it produces. According to certain observers, everything is happening as if NATO had entered a race... The options it prefers could highly influence those of the European Union within the Strategic Compass. Of course, this would not shock countries such as Poland or certain Baltic States, who have felt that the Strategic Compass should serve NATO from the start.

In any case, **it would be good if there were a political dialogue between the HR/VP and the NATO Secretary to avoid the Strategic Compass being co-opted in this way. Ideally, this dialogue would give the two exercises the coherence they need while reaffirming the exclusivity of the Strategic Compass**, which must not be a sub-product of the NATO 2030 strategy. **But nothing indicates that such a dialogue can take place.**

III. A STRATEGIC COMPASS THAT HAS BECOME RISKY

It would be regrettable if the Strategic Compass were to be a failure, particularly for the CSDP. In matters of European security and defence, experience shows that disillusions can have a great impact and postpone any chance of progress for many years.

Under the previous American presidency, the Strategic Compass was a ray of hope. But the new international situation is not favourable: the US's return to multilateralism, the reaffirmation of NATO's protection, budget constraints, the risk of the Franco-German engine stalling... We might say that the Strategic Compass is losing its bearing. This could be, as we have seen, a way to orient it more to the west.

Ultimately, whilst the European Union seemed to have resolved to take on a true political role on the international scene, **this exercise seems less an opportunity than a risk: that of encouraging the EU's strategy to take a step back next to — or even get behind — a revitalised NATO.**

This risk is the result of various pitfalls that threaten the Strategic Compass. These can be listed as follows:

- **a document emaciated** as a consequence of the **freefall in the greatest common denominator** between a few countries, including France, with ever-strong ambitions and a group of countries that want to satisfy a United States that remains very reluctant on the issue of Europe's strategic autonomy,

- **a more consistent document** that actually **reproduces the strategy of an all-powerful NATO** that is firmly **in line with its Strategic Concept**,

- **a document with apparently stronger ambitions for the CSDP**, but with reservations and that is so general that it could **be unworkable**,

- **a document with too much detail** that risks being a **straitjacket in a crisis**.

These four pitfalls, which are not exclusive since the document will have several chapters, are made all the greater by a fifth, that of a **France that intervenes too much** during its presidency, alienating its partners and further reducing the chances of reaching a document that would allow the EU to make progress on its security and defence.

A. THE RISK OF AN UNAMBITIOUS DOCUMENT

At this stage, the threat assessment is just a simple compilation that has not been prioritised. When the time comes to adopt the Strategic Compass, the objectives and the resources put on the table will have to be ranked, and these threats will have to be weighted ahead of this. This work

promises to be difficult. Already, the Polish and the Lithuanians, for example, never fail to remind us during EU Military Committee[1] meetings that the threat assessment has not been adopted.

Since the new international situation has reduced most Member States' ambitions for the CSDP, **the threat assessment that will be shared by all Member States could very well focus on the most recent ones**, the hybrid and technological threats that are global challenges and the most consensual. Therefore, working from the idea that we must strengthen our capabilities in contested spaces and adjust how we act to address hybrid threats, **the emphasis could be placed on the 'resilience' basket to the detriment of 'crisis management'**, and on the capability component in its purely industrial and technological sense.

However, **nearly two years will have been lost if the Compass does not show real progress for the CSDP**. Indeed, many capability and operational instruments are already in place; very significant progress could be made almost immediately by supporting increased power for some—the EDF has great potential with 42 PESCO projects—and improving how the others function by taking inspiration from existing assessments. It would be a clear failure if, for example, the Compass simply reiterated the recommendations of the November 2020 CARD.

Then, **this lack of ambition could unfortunately last, since it would in some way be made official by a long-term document presented as binding on all Member States.** This risk especially concerns the CSDP in its military dimension, the most decisive over the long run to preserving Europe's ability to take action.

Here, an adjacent risk is that the Strategic Compass **partially saves face by including binding initiatives to improve civil missions** and, perhaps, non-executive military missions, in line with Germany's approach.

B. THE RISK OF A DOCUMENT GEARED SOLELY TO NATO'S NEEDS

To quote an expression, a sort of *cri de coeur*, uttered during the hearings about this new Strategic Compass: **NATO is Europe's compass!**

As we have seen, everything is coming together for a relative disinterest in the Strategic Compass and falling in line behind a combative NATO and its future strategic concept. One symptom is that even a country like Finland, which is not a part of NATO and has long supported a stronger CSDP, no longer seems very energised by the Strategic Compass.

There seems to be a real risk of a document that mirrors NATO's Strategic Concept, starting with **taking inspiration from the NATO 2030**

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[1] *The highest military body set up within the Council. It brings together the 27's Chiefs of Staff; its president is Italian General Graziano, who advises the HR/VP at the EEAS.*

agenda, offering nothing that could duplicate or go against its ambitions not just in military matters but in the resilience chapter as well, and **whose main expectations concern deepening the 'partnership' with NATO**.

Ultimately, given the systematic alignment of some Member States with US positions due to their dependence on NATO, the richness of the Strategic Compass is **in the hands of the US, whose signals on the scope for a certain degree of EU autonomy will be subject to close interpretation** until the end of the process. It is possible that these signals will be part of a clever effort to encourage European Allies to fully sign up to NATO's strategy, particularly towards China, while encouraging them to continue efforts on military spending.

C. THE RISK OF A MORE AMBITIOUS DOCUMENT WITH LITTLE EFFECT

Even if it is disappointing relative to France's ambitions, the final document could include interesting opportunities, especially in terms of resilience concerning contested spaces, that should be made permanent. Regarding the CSDP, the establishment of a first entry force of around 5,000 troops (see above), supported by Josep Borrell, could be seen as significant progress. This project would be a reasonable objective at the EU level and, if it is designed to avoid any significant duplications, neither NATO nor the United States could seriously take offence.

That is why it is important to ensure that, once the exercise is over, to establish **a political monitoring and support mechanism**, in line with one of France's main concerns (see above).

The Strategic Compass should include an **implementation schedule** through 2030 of the measures it contains along with a **control mechanism**, for example regular intergovernmental meetings to review how the operational objectives are being achieved, meetings that can be taken up by future presidencies, particularly the Czech Republic in the second half of 2022 and Sweden in the first half of 2023 (which forms the next 'trio' with France).

D. THE RISK OF A DOCUMENT THAT BECOMES A STRAITJACKET IN A CRISIS

The experience has shown that the European Union can find willpower when put to the test, but this is much less true once there is some distance. Thus, **one serious pitfall would be arriving at a very formal document**, particularly if it assumes a minimum capacity for action. This would make the Strategic Compass **counterproductive if there is a problem.** Here, we can recall the origins of the EUBGs: a Battlegroup-type operation led in 2003 was a success, before an instrument was formalised in 2006, and it has never been deployed since.

This reasoning could be extended to relations with NATO: it might be beneficial for the Compass not to set them in stone, in line with one of France's concerns (see above). According to certain observers, the EU-NATO relationship also tends to improve when it is based on action.

Similarly, no doubt it would be wise not to get into the details of what the EU's positions will be in its relationships with **Russia, Turkey, China,** and certain North African countries. Prejudging our positions here would entail a loss of flexibility with significant diplomatic and operational consequences.

But finding the right balance is difficult. If we are content to characterise phenomena in a general way—using notions such as interstate conflict, regional conflict, failed state, etc.—without going into enough detail, then we risk a non-operational document.

E. THE ADDITIONAL RISK OF FRANCE BEING SEEN AS IN CONTROL

France, worried that a Strategic Compass with disappointing ambitions might tarnish its presidency, **must not fall into its worst slippery slope of spectacular statements and promoting concepts** such as sovereignty or European strategic autonomy. If it does so, it would only **upset most of its partners and undermine the process.**

Furthermore, it is customary for **countries with the EU presidency not to seek to weigh in beyond what its legitimate weight allows**.

Nevertheless, France is still respected, and its assessments are eagerly awaited: it will therefore have **to stand by its convictions, explain them and try to convince** other countries.

CONCLUSION

When the work on the Strategic Compass began in 2020, hopes were high for this future document that would structure Europe's defence and security policy. We were delighted with this project, which is intended to be the "European White Paper" that we called for in our report entitled 'European defence: the Challenge of Strategic Autonomy'.[1]

There are many instruments for an effective security and defence policy, and they have great potential. The recent establishment of the EDF and the European Peace Facility in particular is significant progress. But the political will to make the most of them by using them as they are intended is often lacking.

Thus, if the Strategic Compass confirms past ambitions and opens up new ones, it could finally allow the EU to acquire the autonomy it needs to face all its threats.

Can this objective be reached? As the Strategic Compass process comes to an end, stances have changed due to the recent strengthening of the transatlantic partnership, while the assessment could be refined.

Now that our work, conducted using same method of listening to and consulting our partners as in the above-cited report, is over, **we are convinced that the Strategic Compass now comes with a major risk: that of proving counterproductive by fostering a sort of strategic retreat for the EU** whilst NATO is reinvigorated.

Thankfully, France has the presidency next year. With precaution and, above all, an inclusive approach, it can instil a new dynamic towards the autonomy that we desire.

It has great responsibility: security threats are multiplying, while the about-face in US foreign policy, which today is resulting in a stronger NATO umbrella, remains subject to electoral uncertainties. More generally, the European Union's ability to intervene to manage crises is conditional for the rise of Europe as a power that is prosperous and protective of our interests, which most European citizens desire.

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[1] *Senate report no. 626 (2018-2019), July 2019.*

COMMITTEE EXAMINATION

Gathered on Wednesday 7 July 2021, chaired by Mr Cédric Perrin, Deputy Chairman, the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Armed Forces Committee proceeded to examine the information report by Mr Ronan Le Gleut and Ms Hélène Conway-Mouret.

Mr Cédric Perrin, Chairman. - Now, we will examine the information report 'What Strategic Compass for the EU', presented by our colleagues Ronan Le Gleut and Hélène Conway-Mouret.

Mr Ronan Le Gleut, rapporteur. - At the end of the 2010s, while the threats to Europe were increasing in number and severity, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, questioned NATO's protection of European Allies—let's recall the interview he gave to Fox News on Article 5 and Montenegro. Yet the CSDP, the Common Security and Defence Policy, was stalling despite successive attempts to revive it. So, Germany proposed a new exercise, the "Strategic Compass", to give the European Union a chance to come up with a truly effective strategic document by renewing the approach in two ways: method and breadth.

Of course, this document will have a classic structure, with a first part on the threats—up to 2030—and a second part on the objectives and the resources that the European Union must give itself as a result. But the exercise has organised a reciprocal discussion between experts and representatives of the executive branches of all Member States on an unprecedented scale. Furthermore, it expands strategic thinking to all threats to work to ensure 'resilience' beyond the European Union's security.

The threat assessment was finalised in November 2020. It has not been certified politically, which avoids one pitfall: having to prioritise risks that each EU Member State perceives differently.

Throughout the first half of the year, Member States have worked on objectives and resources in four 'baskets': crisis management, capabilities—domains that were expected—resilience and partnerships—which represent new ambitions. Here, the exercise avoids another pitfall by refraining from explicitly promoting the EU's 'strategic autonomy' or 'sovereignty', which are terms that irritate certain of our European partners, who feel that it could offend the United States.

The Strategic Compass should be finalised in March 2022 under the French Presidency of the European Union. What hopes can this approach, initiated during Donald Trump's term in office, raise today, in the context of a forceful reaffirmation of the US's commitment to multilateralism and NATO's commitment to the mutual defence clause of Article 5?

Indeed, the European Union relies on NATO, not only for the defence of its territory via Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, but also for

crisis management at the very top of the spectrum, both of which necessarily concern the Eastern flank. In principle, the EU must be able to respond to other nearby security threats—stabilisation and peacekeeping operations, controlling migrant movements—this crisis management mainly involves the Southern border. Will it be able to do so in all circumstances? While conflicts are increasing, the number of EU crisis management operations is tending to fall.

Yet the CSDP was relaunched in 2009 by the Lisbon Treaty, and in 2016 by the 'EU Global Strategy', with a flurry of initiatives that were promising on paper. But coordination is optional, the processes have loopholes for any pacifist, Atlanticist, thrifty or sceptical state, as CSDP decisions are normally taken by unanimity.

A total integration of the security and defence tools of the Member States would of course be unthinkable in an area that is fundamentally sovereign. A CSDP that would heavily guide Member States' capability developments and could require them to participate in an operation: nobody ever wanted that, not even during Donald Trump's term in office! But it does seem possible to us to correct some of the CSDP's most obvious flaws and make it more credible, at least for crisis management.

In capability terms, 'acronym' instruments—CDP, CARD, PESCO, EDF, etc.—are designed to overcome shortfalls and acquire an EDTIB, a European Defence Technological and Industrial Base, by encouraging cooperation. But what about the CDP, the Capacity Development Plan, for a start? While very structural, it is content to list the priorities that Member States want to set by taking inspiration from a list of capability shortfalls that is based on barely realistic scenarios and statements that lack sincerity.

The central problem is the preference for national capability planning. Elements of the European Union's capability process should be incorporated. This will be difficult, even more so since there is already the NATO capability process. We can also seek to correct certain flaws in how these capability tools interact. But probably not all, because some of them protect State sovereignty.

PESCO, the Permanent Structured Cooperation, has led to many projects. But it must be more selective in order to improve quality, while the risk of ITARisation—meaning the application of the US ITAR regulations—should remain a concern that does not seem to be shared with the same intensity throughout the EU. One major advance, however, is the European Defence Fund, or EDF. The Commission must ensure that it is not used as a redistribution fund.

This brings me to the operational aspects. A timid CSDP, with fewer operations while conflict is increasing, undermines the European Union's stature and credibility. Here, the Compass could provide some effective measures:

- First, we must look to better accommodate the principle of unanimity. We know the easy way out: national and ad hoc operations, Agenor, Takuba, which France specialises in. However, bypassing the CSDP deprives them of European command, funding, political cover and the possible participation of countries such as Germany that cannot act without a mandate.

Facilitating the use of the CSDP seems feasible: on EU territory, with automatic mutual aid in case of aggression based on Article 42.7 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), in terms of crisis management with the option of proposing a 'turnkey' operation that saves on pre-studies and discussions, or with 'bricks of cooperation' provided by the CSDP to national or ad hoc operations.

Do we need to establish a European Security Council with a perspective of creating a hard core of European defence? Chancellor Angela Merkel imagined it, President Emmanuel Macron ultimately approved it, but that was three years ago, when there was a different American president...

A second avenue consists in improving operations and making them more incentivising. First, we can further the quality of military operations by improving the training provided to foreign forces with the EU Training Missions (EUTM), of which there are three, in Mali, Central African Republic and Somalia. From this viewpoint, the establishment this year of the EPF, the European Peace Facility, which allows for funding the provision of lethal equipment, is real progress.

A crucial point, the speed of force generation: the battlegroups, battalions of 1,500 troops established in 2006 to constitute a permanent military presence, have never been deployed and are often unavailable. Funding through the EPF would be incentivising. Better: as part of the discussions on the Strategic Compass, a small majority of States support the French proposal of a 'first entry force', the core of which could be two big battlegroups, with land, air and maritime components. It would be an occasion for the Compass to reaffirm and clarify the complementarity between the EU and NATO in line with a realistic level of ambition. By finally clearly stating what the European Union must be able to do, we can only increase operational and capability coordination.

Another vector of improvement, the European military command, i.e. the MPCC—the Military Planning and Conduct Capability—placed under the authority of the European Union Military Staff, which would avoid relying on NATO or a Member State to direct a CSDP operation. Currently limited to EUTMs, their role should be extended to command executive missions and receive an OHQ, in other words a military planning staff that covers all military missions. In this perspective, France supports maintaining the unicity of the European Union's military command and the

MPCC—which Germany would like to call into question—to preserve the unity of capability studies.

Finally, it is imperative to overcome the shortfalls of a European intelligence apparatus that is not up to the challenges we face.

Ms Hélène Conway-Mouret, rapporteur. - Before getting into the heart of the subject, I would like to reiterate that, for this report, we used the same process as for our 2019 report on European defence, which consists in consulting our European partners. We did this through videoconferences and questionnaires sent to embassies, nearly all of which responded. This approach allowed us to settle on a certain number of points quite quickly, often in a discouraging way since we realised that European citizens and Member State parliaments were not at all familiar with the Strategic Compass. So, I would like to congratulate the committee for taking on this issue, which has allowed us to study it, understand that many things that happen in Europe are often poorly understood and that, with the Strategic Compass, we have a tool that is both remarkable and unprecedented.

The successive attempts to improve the CSDP, which is now thirty years old, call for us to be realistic when formulating new ambitions. However, 'resilience'—one of the Strategic Compass's four baskets—holds all of the promise for a future project.

Maintaining access to contested strategic spaces, reducing our industrial dependence in security and defence, reinforcing our access to critical technologies and strategic materials, guaranteeing our economic, health and climate security...in a word, resilience is security outside the CSDP.

The European Commission is very active on these issues. We can see a change in dimension since the health crisis. The establishment of DG DEFIS in 2020 demonstrates the EU's new propensity to leverage its economic power for strategic purposes.

This geopolitical Europe also relies on partnership, the Compass's fourth basket. Pertaining to the United States, Joe Biden has reversed most of his predecessor's positions, which were heavily criticised by the European Union, and relations seem calmer. However, we should refrain from simply following along. First, American interests have pivoted to Asia, with a very tense bilateral relationship with China. The European Union, for its part, has a less competitive relationship, notably through the requirement of economic reciprocity. Thus, it is important that we develop our own Indo-Pacific partnership. The partnership with Africa is also of primordial importance, with China seen this time as a rival. Then, there is the partnership with NATO, by far the most problematic, as it has become structural for the Strategic Compass.

We are seeing the great comeback of Atlantic affinities. Joe Biden's election went hand in hand with NATO's reaffirmation of its protection to

European Allies. This was all that was needed for Europeans to lose momentum on strategic autonomy and the CSDP...

Brexit added an argument that tipped the balance in favour of NATO, since the United Kingdom is the Ally with the greatest amount of defence spending—$60 billion—after the United States—$785 billion. This means that EU members belonging to NATO now only represent a fifth of defence spending among Alliance countries, as the NATO Secretary General likes to point out. Furthermore, the health crisis, while drawing attention to resilience, has entailed heavy spending to support the economy that may result in budget adjustments. EU Allies will be happy to count on NATO to allow themselves to forego capabilities and operations. We can add the upcoming German and French elections, which could lead to changes that might weigh on the European Union's mobilisation for security and defence.

All the indicators on the way to strategic autonomy are flashing red. At the same time, coordination with NATO is becoming random.

First, the European Union's geostrategic position is different from NATO and the United States: China is not our ultimate enemy, Russia is still a neighbour, and Turkey's actions impact us directly, unlike for the Americans, for whom it also remains an Ally.

Secondly, nothing says that the NATO umbrella, largely opened once again since Joe Biden's election, will remain impermeable should the Republicans win the next presidential elections, or even midterms in a little over a year. Trumpism remains a major political force.

Thirdly, NATO is currently undergoing a 'great leap forward', under the initiative of its Secretary General. He is promoting a 360° defence strategy that was taken up by the NATO 2030 agenda, which the Allies have just approved. The use of Article 5 in case of a cyberattack is promoted, which deserves clarification since these acts could come from countries where the European Union and the United States do not share the same risks and goals. Furthermore, the agenda considers resilience in its broadest sense, and it goes so far as assigning objectives to Allies and monitoring their achievement!

If all the agenda's prospects come to pass, the resilience that the European Union seeks to orchestrate could be overshadowed by a NATO-led resilience, just as the CSDP barely survives alongside the Alliance. While the immense power of the American army may explain this, nothing would justify it given the European Union's resources.

Fourthly, in the domain of capability, the NATO process is better respected than the EU's, to the detriment of the EDTIB's development. The 2030 agenda provides for the establishment of a NATO fund for innovation that could weaken the European Defence Fund.

Fifthly, the Strategic Compass is being drawn up at the same time as the 'Strategic Concept', another strategic document that NATO is working on. To avoid the latter bleeding onto the former, the reflections and their completion were pushed back so that the Strategic Concept should only be released in summer 2022. But NATO is ramping up its work and reflections, and, according to certain observers, everything is happening as if it were in a race.

Fundamentally, the Strategic Compass has become a risky exercise. We have identified five risks that can overlap.

The first risk, of course, is of a document with a weak scope. The reaffirmation of the Atlantic cover has reduced most Member States' ambitions for the CSDP.

The definitive threat assessment, the one that will be politically approved in the Compass, could focus on the most consensual threats—hybrid and technological—favouring resilience over crisis management. For the CSDP, this would mean losing the two years spent on drafting the Strategic Compass. This half-failure could be relativised - and made presentable - through binding initiatives to improve only non-executive civilian or military missions, which Germany prefers to executive missions.

The second risk is a document solely based on NATO's needs and that would flow directly into the Strategic Concept. The Compass would not offer anything that could duplicate NATO resources or distance itself from NATO's ambitions—whether in terms of the military or resilience. Its main recitals would concern the partnership with NATO. There should be a political dialogue between Josep Borrell and the NATO Secretary General to achieve the necessary coherence between the two exercises while ensuring the autonomy of our approach. But nothing indicates that such a dialogue can take place…

The third risk is a more ambitious document with little effect. Some might be looking to use it as window dressing. In any case, the final document could include interesting opportunities, especially in terms of resilience concerning contested spaces, that should be made permanent. In terms of the CSDP, France's proposal of a first entry force, which my colleague just spoke about, would be significant progress. Supported by Josep Borrell, it could be acceptable, even from an Atlanticist point of view. This is why a mechanism for political monitoring and support should be implemented, in line with one of France's key concerns.

The fourth risk is, in our opinion, of a document with too much detail that could prove counterproductive in a crisis. The pandemic has shown that the EU can find willpower when events require. In a crisis, an overly formal document, especially if it provides for a minimal action capability, would be a straitjacket. This reasoning also applies to relations with NATO, where there must always be potential for adjustments.

The final risk is that France, fearing a Strategic Compass that might tarnish its presidency, does too much. We should refrain from indulging our tendency for statements and promoting concepts, which scare off and upset our partners! But France is listened to, and its assessments are eagerly awaited: it should show respect as it stands by its convictions, explains them, and tries to convince others.

A failure of the Strategic Compass would be very damaging for the CSDP: disillusions in this area delay any possibility of progress for a long time.

Here, we have a sizable regret, which brings us to the methodology: discussions on the Strategic Compass were not extended to the parliaments, depriving the Strategic Compass of a lever of enrichment and depth of audience among European citizens, the lack of which we fear we will regret when it comes to completing the exercise. We also propose that the Strategic Compass be reviewed every five years. It is important that the parliaments are systematically involved.

Mr Cédric Perrin, Chairman. - You call our attention to the need to remain vigilant on the subject and exercise a right to follow up. In this regard, I would like to inform you that the Senate will hold the CFSP/CSDP conference of the Parliamentary portion of the French presidency of the European Union. It will be an occasion for us to return to this issue with our partners.

Mr André Guiol. - The rapporteurs mentioned the problem of the growing power of European defence and NATO. I recently read that, for many American military personnel, the two were incompatible, that it is one or the other. How can we demonstrate that it can be one and the other?

Ms Hélène Conway-Mouret, rapporteur. - In our 2019 report, we recommended writing a white paper and feel that here Europe has the necessary tool for achieving this, on the basis of a joint threat assessment among the 27. Then, there was this unilateral decision by the NATO Secretary General to initiate a very similar process to the Strategic Compass, depriving us of a truly independent exercise by pushing us to insert it into the Atlantic Alliance's much larger process. Furthermore, it has become sort of a race; we can see NATO, which is undergoing a renewal, is now concerned with climate change, resilience—in short, subjects that do not fall within its historical prerogatives.

Mr Ronan Le Gleut, rapporteur. - Let's remember that a certain number of European Union Member States are not members of NATO. The two organisations do not totally overlap. To allow the European Union to adopt a position, we proposed a white paper in our 2019 report—of course the idea was not new, but we highlighted it. So, the existence of this Strategic Compass is good news; it is in line with the recommendations of our commission two years ago, and we can take some pride in it. Just the fact

that this exercise exists, the fact that the intelligence services of the European Union Member States are having discussions towards establishing a shared threat assessment, is a first. This considerable advance fundamentally answers your question: it is indeed one and the other.

Ms Hélène Conway-Mouret, rapporteur. - I would add that one is intended to strengthen the other.

Ms Gisèle Jourda. - You mentioned a subject that is dear to our hearts, both within this committee and in the European Affairs Committee, and that is the European Defence Fund. This is a fundamental component for the European aspect of defence, while it has already been impacted financially. Would it be possible to have clarifications on the risks to this instrument?

Ms Hélène Conway-Mouret, rapporteur. - Indeed, France supported an allocation of €13 billion for the European Defence Fund. We are at €8 billion. But we are satisfied, because it is the first time that the European Union has established such a fund. Within this fund, we count 26 projects that have been subjected to a very inclusive process that encourages the involvement of SMBs from a variety of Member States in a large initial project. It is a good structure that is headed in the right direction. Of course, there is the danger that sprinkling some more money will not support projects that will truly allow the European Union to stay competitive in the industrial field. But the danger that we have just mentioned comes from the fact that NATO wants to be involved in innovation by creating its own fund, which would of course have more funding than the European Defence Fund and risks replacing it. We have fought to ensure that companies from non-EU member countries cannot access the European Defence Fund. The United States in particular spends billions on research and innovation in its own country, and access to the European Defence Fund would allow them to access European taxpayers' money to increase this spending even more. Of course, European companies work for American companies, or are subsidiaries of these companies, which try to enter the European Defence Fund through the backdoor. Nevertheless, this fund exists, it is meant to grow over time, and it represents considerable progress. In our 2019 report, we also proposed the creation of a directorate, which was also established. In all, two of our proposals have prospered...in any case, I don't know whether, in twenty years' time, the European Defence Fund will have been absorbed by NATO; I fear that the situation has become a bit complicated.

Ms Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam. - I think we need to remain modest, collaborations between services in different countries existed well before the work on the Strategic Compass began. Furthermore, many of us here participate in the NATO parliamentary assembly and I, for one, am annoyed at hearing the same old speeches and ideas about the Alliance so often. There is Emmanuel Macron's argument, this almost romantic vision of a Europe that would work on its defence with Russia... I would like to reiterate that, in

the very words of its Secretary General, the Atlantic Alliance is the most successful in the world, that no country has ever left it and that it ensures our defence without ever having encountered the slightest problem in this regard, even if there are tensions on the European Union's borders. A very large number of the European Union's Member States are extremely favourable to NATO, unlike what we may have heard here, whereas others do not want to contribute enough—like they should do—to the European Union's budget, so much so that NATO's protection is particularly welcome. So this anti-NATO rhetoric, which tends to spread, this background music, is becoming quite irritating to those who see what is going on at NATO, the work that is done, all my colleagues present at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly are, I believe, aware of this.

The committee authorises the publication of the information report.

LIST OF EXPERTS CONSULTED

Monday 15 March 2021

- *Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs*: **Mr Philippe BERTOUX**, Director of Strategic Affairs and **Mr David CVACH**, Director of the European Union.

Monday 22 March 2021

- *European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR):* **Ms Tara VARMA**, Director of the Paris Office and Policy Fellow.

Friday 26 March 2021

- **Ms Claire RAULIN**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the Political and Security Committee of the European Union in Brussels (PR PSC).

Tuesday 30 March 2021

- *Ministry of the Armed Forces:* **Ms Alice GUITTON**, Director General of International Relations and Strategy (DGRIS).

Thursday 1 April 2021

- *Ministry of the Armed Forces:* - Armed Forces Staff*:* **General Bruno FOUSSARD**, head of the Euratlantic division.

Friday 09 April 2021

- *Embassy of France in Belgium:* **Ms Claude-France ARNOULD**, advisor for European affairs at IFRI (French Institute of International Relations).

Monday 12 April 2021

- *German Ministry of Defence*: Brigadier General **SCHULZ**, assistant to the political director, **Ms VON SEHERR-THOSS**, head of the EU office, **Ms LINZENMEIER**, France manager within the political division.

- *Embassy of France in Germany:* Adjutant **Steven HERRY,** Assistant to the Defence Attaché.

Friday 16 April 2021

- *European Parliament:* **Mr Arnaud DANJEAN**, Member of the European Parliament.

Monday 03 May 2021

- *European Parliament:* **Ms Nathalie LOISEAU**, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the 'Security and Defence' subcommittee, former Minister of European Affairs.

Thursday 06 May 2021

Mr Frédéric MAURO, Associate Researcher at IRIS in Paris and the GRIP (Information and Research Group on Peace and Security) in Brussels.

Monday 10 May 2021

- *OCDE:* **Mr Didier LENOIR**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the EU to the OCDE.

Wednesday 12 May 2021

Mr Hubert VÉDRINE, former Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Tuesday 18 May 2021

- *Polish Ministry of National Defence:* **Mr Piotr PACHOLSKI**, Director of the Department of International Security Policy.

- *Embassy of France in Poland:* **Mr Frédéric BILLET**, Ambassador of France in Poland, **Colonel Jérôme MALLARD**, Defence Attaché, **Ms Anna CHERNER-DRIEUX**, Political Advisor.

Tuesday 25 May 2021

- *Slovenian Ministry of Defence:* **Mr Uroš ZORKO**, Director of Defence Policy.

- *Embassy of France in Slovenia:* **Lieutenant-Colonel Valérie TRAMEAU-CHABERT**, Defence Attaché, **Ms Samantha BONBAYL**, First Political Advisor.

Monday 31 May 2021

- *Swedish Ministry of Defence:* **Mr Johan LAGERLÖF**, *Deputy Director General MoD*, *Head of Department Security Policy and International Relations*, **Mr Hans PECHAN**, *Deputy Director, Department for Acquisition Research and Development*, **Ms Linnéa PORATHE**, France Case Officer, MoD.

- *Embassy of France in Sweden:* **Colonel Marc HENRY**, Defence Attaché, **Mr Jean TRABAND**, 2nd Advisor, Head of the Press Service.

Monday 14 June 2021

- *European External Action Service (EEAS):* **Mr Hervé BLÉJEAN**, Director General of the EU Military Staff (EUMS)

Monday 21 June 2021

- *Embassy of the United States in France*: **Colonel Allen PEPPER**, Defence Attaché.

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO EMBASSIES

Questionnaire sent to our 26 posts in the European Union:

1. What significance does the Strategic Compass have in the country's public debate?

2. What importance do public authorities place on the Strategic Compass?

3. What expectations do public authorities have for this exercise? *The answer will allow us to understand how the Member State conceives of the Strategic Compass with, on the one hand, its perception of collective threats and, on the other, the guidelines and objectives that it feels the European Union should set in order to respond to them.*

4. Since 2020, have these expectations and significance changed:

   a. due to the election of Joe Biden and the reinforcement of the transatlantic relationship?

   b. due to other geopolitical changes (Turkey, China, etc.)?

   c. due to the health crisis?

   d. due to other circumstances (Brexit, cyber risks, etc.)?