

## **The role of Germany in the evolving European architecture.**

**1. *The importance of Germany.*** The future role of Germany in Europe - that is, its future position among other states of the continent, its economic policy, its external relations with neighbors and the states further apart, her vision and practice of participation in various international organizations – belong to the key determinants of the international scene in Europe and, to a large degree, in the world. The importance of this issue can be compared only to that of the future role of Russia which is, however, much less predictable than that of Germany.

**2. *The past and the present Germany – how to judge it?*** There are two obvious reasons for attaching such a high value to the future role of Germany in Europe: the first, its successful, albeit painful, unification which made it the economically most powerful state on the continent, enjoying, at the same time, a top place in the European demographic and military rankings and, the second, uncertainty /and therefore –anxiety/ about the way this newly re-established power will be used. The memory or knowledge of Germany's behavior in the first half of this century and before justifies the latter. On the other hand, the realities of today's German democracy and positive engagement in pan-European processes of the last 45 years strongly warrants avoiding any simplified projections of past experiences into the future. Among a multitude of questions, answers to which will be verified only by realities of the years to come, one could pose the following: did the Germans draw the right conclusions from the past? Will the new foreign and security policy of re-united Germany be a continuation of the present policy despite fundamental change in the external and internal circumstances? What policy is going to gain support of the re-united German nation? How much the future role of Germany will depend on its own decisions and how much on the perceptions and decisions of the other nation-states? From these and similar questions it is apparent that the future role of Germany will be defined progressively, that is, over a longer period, as much by the internal social, political and economic developments as by the dynamic and complex external factors, only partially modeled by the Germans themselves.

**3. *Working definition of “structures”.*** The term used in the title of the paper, namely, “the European structures” defies a clear definition. Today's structures of European international links comprise the individual states, their various groupings and their common institutions and organizations. An analysis of a future German role in Europe must relate German interests and attitudes to all the individual elements in question, before it can be permitted to pass a more general judgement. All of the organic elements of the general network of European relations are, however, in a state of transformation, enforced by objective economic, technological, and social processes, energized by the revolutions of 1989-1991. These revolutions brought the end of bi-polar strategic relations between the ideologically motivated groups of states, thus introducing a new and uncertain system of international security. They enabled states to regain the insovereignty, the former Soviet satellites, and to form new independent states, formerly part of larger federations, thus multiplying the number of independent actors in European relations. They caused an eradication of a number of international security and economic organizations, notably the Warsaw Pact and the Comecon, thus creating a structural vacuum in a wide area of Europe. They brought into being new international entities, like the Commonwealth of Independent States, and opened up a prospect of enlargement of already existing organizations, like the EU and NATO. They have created a possibility of freer self-determination by smaller nations and national minorities thus adding new centrifugal forces to the formerly established state-to-state relations. In sum most of these new tendencies worked and still work towards greater

entropy within the international system of Europe and would have probably caused its collapse if not for the countervailing or even preponderant opposite tendencies, influencing the international life. These are linked to a growing economic, technological, social and cultural interdependence of modern societies; increased respect for international and internal rules of law, including the individual and minority human rights; visible progress in the West European integration, acting as a great attracting and organizing force in the Central, East, and South of Europe; a tendency to diminish the value of military force in the inter-state relations, epitomized in the shrinking European military budgets, arms trade, size of virtually all European armies and in the preservation of CFE and CSBM regimes. Germany has been part and parcel, sometimes a source, of all these political developments with, however, a substantial qualitative difference in the international perception of its role in these developments before and after 1990.

**4. *The post-war Germany as a guiding paradigm.*** If one attempts to analyze the projected role of Germany in the evolving European environment the only objective basis for such projection should be the German State's policies and experiences of the last 45 years. Such a paradigm of analysis is doubtlessly disturbed by our memory of Germany prior to 1945 which, in general, might contradict the otherwise established "truths" about its present policies and may give reasons for suspicion and anxiety. We have to, however, recognize the realities of the present German state as a guiding principle for any projections, especially so that we know for sure that both the positive and the nasty German heritage has been taken into due account when the German State was being founded in 1949. Any hidden apprehensions, if one still has them, may justify, at the most, a question of whether the new circumstances, brought about by the unification of Germany, do in any visible measure resuscitate old ghosts, like revisionism, hegemonism, racism, or do they raise a prospect of revision of the today's well established social, political and external foundations of the German state? Even a partially positive answer to such a question would certainly cause alarm inside and outside Germany. If confirmed, it would change drastically the basic paradigm of analysis of the future role of Germany in Europe.

**5. *Primacy of the internal affairs.*** Asking about the future role of Germany in Europe is tantamount to a question about its future foreign and security policy, about its external orientation. When we intend to look a little beyond the immediate horizon of that policy, however, we have to check the tendencies inside the German society, economy, and political life. This will help to make the judgements about the external projections more objective.

**6. *The state of German society.*** The German society has been shaped decisively by the traumas of the Second World War and its aftermath – destruction, depravation, division, and foreign occupation. The reconstruction of the state, then still divided in two parts, and its subsequent economic success in the larger, Western part, has been connected to a thorough de-nazification and de-militarization, first a physical and, later on, a "mental" one. The liberal democratic system and the rule of law has taken root to the extent that a return to an authoritarian system of government is not imaginable, at least not as long as the general affluence and the stability of social order are not undermined. The German society is deeply enmeshed within the larger set of social and political interactions with other nations of the Western democratic community. The nationalistic attitudes of the past were and still are being discredited culturally and socially, contrary to the well justified pride of individual Germans and the whole of society in their economic and technological achievements. Among the West European societies Germans seem to have rather a strong "European" consciousness, helped by their central location and intensive industrial and trade interactions. After several decades of participation in the Western security structures, in which Germans were the main "consumers" of security provided by these structures, their perception of a foreign military presence was and still is positive. The on-going squabbles with EU partners and increasing

desire for a more equitable share in financial burdens of the common EU budgets do not undermine this pro-European German attitude. One of the more complex internal issues in Germany is the presence of large national minorities and foreign guest workers. Out of over 80 million Germans, nearly 6,5 million belong to other national groups, including 1,9 million Turks and Kurds, over 900 thousand Yugoslavs, over 550 thousand Italians, nearly 350 thousand Greeks, and nearly 300 thousand Poles. As long as the economy functioned well this large and varied ethnic composition did not present a particularly difficult problem in the societal interaction. The occasional eruptions of unrest within these ethnic groups were often connected with the external causes /problems in the countries of origin/ and did not have as a target the internal German state system. This situation changed substantially during the last few years of German economic recession, growing unemployment, difficulties with full integration of the Germans from the eastern lands. The xenophobic attitudes are on the rise in today's Germany, as evidenced by a number of violent incidents. The incidents, though persecuted promptly and condemned by the political class, met with indifference from the majority and approval from a minority of German society. This rise of xenophobia gave grounds to increasing activism of neo-nazi groups. As the public polls indicate, about 49% of West Germans and as many as 56% of East Germans see the right-wing extremism as a serious social danger. At the same time the same polls indicate that even more Germans see other issues, like degradation of environment, economic recession, nuclear contamination, internal debt, criminality, as much more dangerous for the state and society. This disquieting development has to be measured, however, against the general strength of the German economy, gradual lessening of psychological and economic hardships linked to the unification of East Germans, and the generally healthy response of German society to outbreaks of neo-nazism and racial or ethnic xenophobia. There is no reason to believe that the mechanisms of the liberal democratic system of Germany are in danger of breaking down. A similarly optimistic opinion might be expressed about the influence of the still numerous groups of Germans, transferred from the former German territories in the East, now belonging to Poland, Czech Republic and Russia. Their Union of deportees /BdV/ still does not recognize the Polish-German border and demands from these three states not only compensation for their lost properties but also full rights to settlement in the abandoned areas. Such demands are contradictory to the formal agreements between Germany and the three aforementioned countries and are appropriately treated by the German governmental and political élites. More importantly, the demands seem not to enjoy a wide support of the German public, as they visibly contravene the much more popular policy of rapprochement with all the neighboring nations. The problem of deportees and their demands may return to the fore once Poland and the Czech Republic enter the EU, thus possibly opening their territories to the free settling of the EU citizens.

**7. *The internal economic issues.*** The German economic potential is the largest and one of the healthiest on the continent. It holds record level of exports, one of the highest levels of gross national product per head, and is based on one of the strongest currencies in the world. The overall affluence of Germans helps to keep relative social peace. The German trade unions, strong as they are, are used to act within the limits of law and order, with the common interests of the state in mind, at least until now. In comparison to the pre-war times, German capital is cosmopolitan in character. Narrow national interests visibly do not guide it; rather it looks for the most promising markets. It tends to commit itself with a long-term perspective, and thus is inextricably linked to expansion to other markets, industrial co-production, and integration. The German economy is therefore closely integrated with those of the EU partners and has strong connections with the rest of the world. Until the early 1990s the German economic strength was unquestioned, even to the point of causing fear in its closest partners involved in the EU integration, of inevitable economic domination. The fear has been further exacerbated by unification with the eastern lands. However, the unification on terms

dictated by ulterior political motives has proved economically hazardous. Its costs reached over 800 billion marks and grow still further. Moreover, several other negative economic factors became apparent. The level of unemployment crossed the 12% mark /over 20% in the eastern lands/; the public debt reached an alarming proportion. In 1997, for the first time after 1949, individual net income has fallen. At the same time the salaries in Germany are among the highest in the world, the number of labor hours a week is the lowest in the world, equally low is the time of exploitation of production machinery. In 1996 Germans invested some 39 billion marks abroad, while foreign investors withdrew some 1,1 billion of marks from Germany. In general, Germany remains the economic great power but problems abound. Since the German economy is the linchpin of the state and social welfare, it is difficult to imagine the consequences of a potential economic crisis, both for Germany and for the outside world. A deep economic crisis is the only plausible factor, which might rock the German social peace and the German positive influence on the European developments. Germany, despite its present economic troubles, remains the single most important economic and trade partner of all the East European states; its exportst in this direction accounts for more than 40% of the entire exports of the EU and is worth over 30 billion ECU. This unique position in the region gives Germany a substantial political leverage, moderated, however, by the awareness of the political consequences of any sign of paternalism or overt dominance exerted on the weaker partners in the East. In sum, the German economy, being export dependent, ties its to the international market and thrives in a cooperative environment.

**8. *The Bundeswher and military policy.*** Notwithstanding the external security policy of Germany, to be discussed later, it is worth looking at the role played by the German armed forces within the society and at the German military policy after the unification. 43 years after its inception the Bundeswehr is unquestionably one of the pillars of the democratic German state, successfully developing the model of soldier-citizen and functioning within the Atlantic alliance. During the last few years the German armed forces were reduced from over 600 thousand to nearly 340 thousand soldiers. The National People's Army officer corps of the former GDR was successfully and thoroughly verified, with over 10 thousand officers and warrant officers remaining in the ranks. Up to now some 250 thousand recruits from the five eastern lands served in the Bundeswehr. The armed forces of Germany are thus unified, with no negative effect on the morale or political attitude of the servicemen. What troubles the political and military leaders of Germany is not so much the "routine" issues of reorganization, modernization, or financing of armed forces, difficult, as they are anywhere in the world. The more specific German problems with the military are: the strong pacifist attitude of the German youth, in part heritage of the anti-militaristic education of the society; a widely spread disinclination for military service, due to the benign international situation around Germany; an appearance of occasional incidents involving the neo-nazi supporters within the army; and a deeply rooted and widespread dislike of Germans for the peace-time military involvement out of the state's boundaries. Despite the aforementioned attitudes and the example of other West European states, including France, the German political elite, mindful of the past experience of Reichswehr and Wehrmacht, is not inclined to create a professional army, preferring to keep it strongly tied to the society and to prevent its independent political role. Any neo-nazi incident in the German armed forces is a serious matter, all the more so because they are more frequent than before the unification. It is also disquieting that the German rightist parties, that is, the Republicans and the National-Democratic German Party /NPD/ formally demanded that their members be accepted in the Bundeswehr without hindrance. However, as the German Minister of Defense said, the number of neo-nazis in the forces amount perhaps to a promille of all servicemen. Their behavior and political views reflect those of the German society, and thus the incidents are not in any particular way characteristic of the armed forces. For example, more a worrying manifestation of the dormant right-wing sympathy in some circles of the German society in

the recent years has been the “historians dispute” /Historikerstreit/, during which some historians tried to revise the established views on the German Nazi past. A much more profound issue, decisive for the future German military involvement in the international military operations, is the legal and political ramifications for military participation of the Bundeswehr in such operations outside Germany. Until 1994 German forces were not allowed to be deployed outside the NATO area, let alone to participate in peacetime operations. This self-imposed restriction was politically useful, but it has established a kind of customary norm, very difficult to change. After the Karlsruhe Constitutional Court’s decision it is up to the German Parliament to decide by simple majority whether the Bundeswehr should be deployed in the UN, CSCE, or WEU peacekeeping and even peace-enforcement missions. So far the German armed forces participated in a number of international peace-keeping operations always, however, with a very careful and restricted definition of their tasks /determining in the Persian Gulf, enforcing of an embargo in the Adriatic, sanitary tasks in Cambodia, protection and support tasks in Bosnia/. It is, however, a very controversial and hotly disputed issue whether Germans should deploy troops on missions going beyond simple peacekeeping operations. After unification the majority of the German public opinion seems to express a more pronounced wish to be more active in the international peace activities. To a large extent such an attitude is in consonance with the growing tendency to build up a European defense identity, an important element of the deepening European integration. The new inclination to accept an active role in the international military operations, as long as they are presented in the European, transatlantic or the UN context should not raise objections or fears in Europe.

**9. *The new thinking on foreign and security policy.*** The post-war foreign and security policy of Germany demonstrates a remarkable consistency and adherence to the principles, established in the formative stages of the Federal Republic, of the so called “Westbindung”, full commitment to the West, through mutual security guarantees, economic cooperation and political alliance. It is of vital importance that after the reunification and the new strategic situation to the east of Germany, its political élites have strongly vowed to continue the traditional line. The question is, however, whether this long-lasting commitment to the West, epitomized in its special relations with the EU and NATO, as well as with France and the United States, will withstand the challenges, created by its new power status. An indication of the thinking of the German society and its political elite about the national foreign and security policy in the new circumstances is illustrated by the results of a poll conducted by the Liberal Institute of the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung and Intratest Burke Berlin, published in FAZ on April 1, 1996. It is worth noting that the poll was undertaken to define German “vital national interests”, a term treated so far with the utmost reluctance. The poll’s main findings show that both the wide public and the political élites are inward-looking, defining, as the most important problems of Germany, the domestic social and economic issues, with the exception of European integration, which is also a defined German vital priority for the future. The developments in and around Europe were not, however, neglected. Asked about the top vital interests in the international environment the respondents listed East-Central Europe, France, Russia, and the United States. Among the foreign policy priorities, European integration, war in the former Yugoslavia and stability in the East Europe, including Russia, were indicated. The tendency in the general public was to give more emphasis to the dangers of proliferation, nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism and illegal immigration. The elite circles remain visibly strongly committed to European integration and favor subordinating German national interests if the integration process demands it. Interestingly, the public was of the opinion that Germany should be more assertive in defending the German national interests in that process. Even more indicative, Germans believe their country to be destined and well prepared to assume a leading role in further EU integration, especially in its economic, monetary and social areas. NATO has been supported by an overwhelming, 92%

majority of respondents, and deemed vastly more competent in defense and security matters than the EU. The enlargement of NATO and the EU was strongly supported. A similar support was expressed for the continued presence of the US military forces in Europe, mainly to secure the joint engagement of the Americans and Europeans in any future crises in and around Europe. An interesting outcome, that is, 29% of the elite vote was produced in response to a question whether the US presence is needed to balance the German potential and to alleviate the fears of other European states related to this potential. Russia is not seen for the time being as a direct military threat /17% of positive votes/ though the poll indicates that the Germans are rather pessimistic about the outcome of the Russian reforms. A great majority of participants in the poll believe that Germany should assume a much greater role on the international scene, including humanitarian and peacekeeping missions. An opinion on the acceptability of the German participation in combat, that is, peace-enforcing missions was drastically split between the élites and the public, with 72% of the leading political circles supporting such a role in contrast to 22% support in the general public. The best commentary to the poll's result is the title provided by the editors of FAZ to that report: "Kein Kult der Zurückhaltung mehr". The objective value of the poll's results need not be taken as an indication of the future official policy of the German governments but, nevertheless, it is clear that Germans went a long way towards adapting to the new political realities of Europe and to the new role their country may play.

**10. On the readiness for international responsibilities.** The Germans are clearly leaving behind the time of self-restriction and of searching for a definition of their new international position and role. They seem to be ready to accept the fact of their increased influence on the European and world scene; it is however more questionable whether their international partners are prepared to favor this change. Much depends on the vision or strategy Germans might have or try to implement in pursuing their new role, on their ability to harmonize their national egoistic interests with those of other nations, on their readiness to take decisions together with other states and to be mutually responsible for their consequences. These issues are understood well by Germans, though opinions differ on the maturity of the German political class and society to meet all those demands. As Gregor Schoellgen writes in his "Angst vor der Macht. Die Deutschen und ihre Aussenpolitik" /Ullstein 1993/, that the Germans lost the habit of accepting international responsibilities. On the other hand, President Roman Herzog, speaking on the occasion of the 40-year anniversary of the German Foreign Policy Association in March 1995 urged Germans to use to the full their new moral and economic influence as well as their military potential in defense of international peace and stability. According to him Germans cannot any more use their checkbook instead of directly participating in politically and physically hazardous activities. It seems that the evolving international structures tend to favor Germany as a subject of international relations: on end to the ideological rivalry and thus to the dictate of rigid hierarchy based on military power brings forward a rivalry based on economic prosperity; all main actors – the US, Russia, Japan, China, the European Union – stress the cooperative means in their relations instead of the military balance of power /deterrence/.

**11. Germany, the UN and the global issues.** Germany has a global reach and interests but lacks the attributes of a great power - nuclear weapons and a seat in the UN Security Council. As Japan and, to a lesser extent, some other nations, Germany wants to obtain the status of a permanent member of the Security Council, preferably alone or, in case of successful integration of the EU into a solidified political entity, through the EU. This may not occur for some years to come but, perhaps, the publicity about the effort is even more important than its result. In the pursuit of this objective, Germany is supported by its new friends from Eastern Europe while visibly not much encouraged by France or Great Britain. Be it as it may, Germany supports the UN financially more than any other European member-state, actively

participates in the reform of the Organization, and favors the establishment of the effective UN machinery for peace-keeping /although it does not participate in the creation of the SHIRBRIG, that is, stand-by peace-keeping units/. As to the other attribute of great power status, namely the possession of nuclear weapons, Germany is under strict obligation, assumed in 1949 and reiterated in the two-plus-four agreement on reunification, not to seek these weapons. The strength of this commitment in the future depends on the German confidence in the US nuclear umbrella and the character of the future strategic military relations in the world, the state of nuclear non-proliferation regime included. It is improbable, however, that even in the worst case Germans would be willing to obtain the weapons unilaterally. Rather, seeing Americans withdraw their nuclear security guarantees, Germans would resort to the same solution as Konrad Adenauer did in 1956 – seek a share in the French or a joint West European nuclear deterrent. Today, as in most of its history, Germany has few specific global ambitions. Perhaps the most pronounced is its support for liberal global trade conditions, thus for the WTO. But, as Klaus Kinkel wrote in 1995 /IHT 30 March 1995/: “the trading requirements of the EU and the US, each other’s principal partner, extend beyond the framework of the WTO; also needed are early warning of trade conflicts; liberalization of investments, especially in telecommunications and information technology; and coordination on matters such as competition, copyright and rules of origin. The economic policy agenda should be inspired by the vision of a trans-Atlantic free trade zone.” The idea of a contract between the EU and NAFTA has been pursued by the Germans until recently and, although rebuffed by other major EU states, will certainly not disappear from their view. It is safe to conclude that despite their growing global reach Germans are, at the same time, conscious that they cannot compete alone with the existing and the future great economic centers – the US, Japan, or China. They may be the most powerful economic power on the European continent, but in order to be effective globally in the pursuit of their national interests their potential is insufficient; they have to work in the framework of a larger European grouping. Germans may become a world economic and consequently political power only together with the rest of Europe.

**12. *The European Union.*** It is already a cliché to say that Germany’s early accession to the Western institutions, to NATO and the EU, provided the political and economic framework necessary for developing its prosperity and democratic stability. Taking into account the position of Germany during the Maastricht and Amsterdam Intergovernmental Conferences, its behavior at a number of summit EU meetings, particularly in Copenhagen 1993, and its subsequent activities, Germany is staunchly pushing for a deeper integration of the EU and its enlargement. Germany does not envisage a continental, centralist European state, but rather Europe united /only some Germans brave the term “federated”/ in all its diversity, respecting the identity of nations and cultural peculiarities of the regions. The working principle of subsidiarity of decision-making should permit to strike a right balance between the authority of the Union, the nations, the regions, and the local communities. The leading political forces of Germany opt for intensifying of integration on all three fronts: economic, political, and security. Seeing, however, the divergence of opinions and actual economic difficulties in the implementation of such an ambitious agenda on the part of several European partners, Germans accept and pursue the idea of the pragmatic difference among the member states, with Germany and France, plus a few other best prepared states to form a core of community. The unified Germany is visibly more energetic in pursuance of the more far reaching plans. The German government of today is determined to keep the deadline for the introduction of the European Monetary Union /EMU/, set for 1 January 1999, and for the Euro to be a common currency by 2002, despite the fact that the German public opinion is less enthusiastic. Six years after Maastricht 90% of Germans believe the EMU itinerary will be realized, but - according to Gallup - less than 40% /in 1992 only 30%/ are happy about it, fearing that the Euro will be less stable than the mark and will bring rather negative results.

Only a few EU countries are assured of being able to meet the EU convergence criteria, but Germany stays assured that the difference in the status of various EU partners in relation to EMU would be a strong impulse for healthier economic policies. Assuming such a leading role in the EMU clearly helps in fortifying Germany's position in the other areas of European integration. After EMU, the next major economic and political issue for the EU will be the liberalization of the agricultural market, in other words, the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. The German farmers as a group are no less dependent on the EU subsidies than those from the other EU countries. According to the official German estimates, the CAP reform, indispensable on its own and, additionally, because of the prospect of further enlargement of the Union to the East, will bring in the next 20 years a drastic reduction in the number of German farms. Of the 540 thousand farms only about 180 thousand have a chance to survive, and out of 1,5 million farmers only 300 thousand may count on continuing the profession. Such a drastic change will have to reverberate on the political scene. German farmers will undoubtedly not be alone in fighting the reform of the CAP and the enlargement of the EU. So far, however, Germany is the most vocal promoter of the enlargement of the EU to the East. The German economic and political interests in Eastern Europe have strong roots, dating for centuries. The central location of Germany, its economic wealth, but also a purposeful policy, enabled Germany to become the most important trading partner for all states of the region, providing, in general, for one third of their turnover. The German support for the earliest possible inclusion of its Eastern neighbors, and later on, the other states of the region, is based on the concept of stability transfer. Objectively, the strengthening of democracy, well being and stability along the eastern borders seems a very prudent policy, serving the best of German national interests. It also permits to reap benefits, stemming from the proximity of new markets, cheap labor and a number of natural resources. The dominant economic position will certainly produce a political influence, both in the region and, in consequence, in the general European framework. As this influence is to be wrapped in the larger mechanisms of European integration, the countries of the region do not have any second thoughts on this prospect of a new edition of Mitteleuropa. Both the strong links to the German economy and their utility in the process of integration with the EU serve the national interests of East Europeans. The integration will, in the eyes of Germans and East Europeans alike, dissipate otherwise dangerous or troubling forces of potential German nationalism and hegemonism. The German involvement in East European developments will certainly not come at the expense of Germany's Westbindung; in such a case Germany would lose much of its attraction to the East. At the same time, the inclusion of the East European states, notwithstanding its complexity, will preclude the unchecked role of Germany as a unilateral organizer of the whole area. Being so deeply involved in facilitating the entry of the East Central Europeans into the EU, and expecting to gain politically and economically from it, Germans notice the disturbing fact that the inclusion of these weaker economies will slow down the deepening of the Union's integration, at least in the purely economic area. On the other hand, if the enlargement will tend to create different tiers of commitments and responsibilities, Germany, the strongest partner, will have a much more visible role to play. Moreover, the integration of new members, so closely associated with Germany, may strengthen its hand in the battles for a Common Foreign and Security Policy and, eventually, the European Political Union. According to many in Germany, the EMU should not end up with the Central European Bank and Euro. To be a success, and not cause widespread social problems, the EMU should be connected with measures of macroeconomic synchronization of national economies. This, in turn, requires greater political and functional unity. One of the elements of a wider political cooperation towards creation of a common foreign and security policy is, obviously, the growing role of the Western European Union. Germany opted for the inclusion of WEU into the framework of the EU, in this way making the political union full and irreversible. The implementation of this option, for the time being, has been put aside at

the insistence of other partners. Until the transformation of the WEU into a real, effective military pillar of the EU is possible, Germany will focus its attention on NATO. This in no way detracts from its insistence on enlarging the European responsibility for defense matters on the continent. In the German eyes the strengthening of the WEU and its adaptation to the role of a NATO defense pillar is not to replace the transatlantic link but, to the contrary, to strengthen it. Only when Europe is ready and able to take upon itself more responsibility and a bigger share of the financial burden, can it count on further US commitment to Europe. Thus, at present and in the foreseeable future, Germany endorses the formulation of a common defense policy along the lines drawn by NATO and concretizing it by further development of the operational potential of the WEU, so that it could play a double role as the future armed component of the EU and as a pillar of NATO. The CJTF concept, enabling the WEU to use NATO assets and resources corresponds well with such a policy. In Germany's view the European tactical-operational units should also be subordinated to both NATO and WEU. This will also avoid creating parallel command structures for the exclusive needs of Europe. In no way does Germany consider viable or rational to eclipse NATO with any form of individual European Defense Identity.

**13. NATO.** Germany sees NATO as the most effective mechanism for guaranteeing security and stability in Europe, constituting strong security link between Europe and the North American states. Germany's agenda for NATO is pronounced clearly: gradual enlargement to the East; internal reform, adaptation to the changed circumstances in Europe; change of NATO's strategic concept towards the accommodation of new tasks of stability promotion and conflict prevention, without, however, undermining its core defense function; strong cooperative relations with all European states remaining outside the alliance. Germany is and will continue to be in the future, in consonance with its vital interests and the concept of stability transfer expressed above, the leading promoter of extending NATO as far to the East as is warranted by the democratic, economic, and political maturity of its future members. This vision presents a dilemma, however, as it contradicts avowed Russian interests and policy, which are taken very seriously by the Germans. For this reason the declared German policy on NATO enlargement to the East, to include such countries as the three Baltic republics or even the Ukraine, may never be pursued in practice. Germany supports and often leads the security dialogue and military cooperation between NATO and Russia, hoping that it will be possible in the future to persuade the Russians into trustworthy military relations. The particular German concern over Russian policy often makes the Germans go further in accommodating the Russians than would other NATO states; this may lead in the future to friction between the allies. For the Germans, the enlargement of NATO should not be a separate strategic objective, but a part of a larger effort in building an overall security architecture in Europe. Thus, the extension of NATO to the East is not seen by Germans solely as a creation of a buffer between them and Russia, but as the establishment of a stable area in the whole region, enabling a peaceful development of all states through integration and cooperation. In this way, the harmonic co-existence with the whole of Eastern Europe, including Russia and Ukraine is deemed indispensable for Germany to build the future European equilibrium with Germany in the middle. This doctrinal concept is to be effected by active bilateral and multilateral links with all states of the region and by the mechanism of the Partnership for Peace. The latter provides sufficient flexibility to serve both the key objectives of stability transfer, namely cooperation and integration, while, at the same time, permitting to differentiate between forms of cooperation without discrimination of any state.

**14. OSCE.** The further development of the OSCE is fully in consonance with the German desire to build stable relations on the continent. The OSCE is seen as a regional arrangement under the UN Charter provisions, particularly useful in developing new codes of states' conduct, in promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the rights of the

minorities. Germans support its development into an international organization, able to assume operational tasks, like early warning about impending conflicts, conflict prevention and crisis management, including peacekeeping. Seeing its limitations, Germans are willing to supply the OSCE with stronger organizational and financial resources. Acting as an underlying structure of cooperation and dialogue for the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, the OSCE is not and will not, however, be taken by the Germans as in any way absorbing the functions of the existing alliances, like NATO or WEU.

**15. Relations with the USA.** German and US relations constituted the cornerstone of the Atlantic alliance and were often called “special”. Americans strongly supported the reunification of Germany and as recently as 1994 the American President called for an increased role of Germany in the European, transatlantic and world affairs. Germans, coming out slowly from their “reluctant power syndrome”, were at first not too enthusiastic to heed that call. This attitude belongs to the past. Germany as a state works hard to preserve the American presence, political and military, in Europe; Germany as a society expresses mixed feelings of joy by the end of the extensive military presence on the one hand, and of dismay at seeing foreign military bases closed and jobs lost on the other. At present, the German and the American security policy on Europe are in unison, notwithstanding secondary issues connected with views on NATO command system reform or operation in Bosnia/Herzegovina. Both countries cooperate particularly closely on issues connected with NATO enlargement, Partnership for Peace, relations with Russia. Both countries have reached a full understanding that the further integration of the EU and activation of the WEU is in the interest of the US, as long as it is not directed at weakening of NATO or the transatlantic links. It may also be assumed that in case the deepening of the integration of the EU would fail, Germany would easily become the main partner of the US in Europe. This bright picture may not last, however. Germany may be swayed by pressures from France to adopt a less pro-American stance, for example on transatlantic links or the role of the WEU. Germans have also much more at stake in relations with Russia, since they are increasingly more involved in the area sensitive to Russian political and military concerns. Here much depends on the course of events in Russia – the deeper the democratic and economic reforms, the less harmonized may be the Western policy towards it. One of the potential points of friction between Germany and the US may become their military industrial and trade policy. The far-reaching consolidation of American military industry and the specific US conditions of military procurement processes make it very difficult to enter this market for German products. Conversely, growing efforts on part of Germany and France to create a more unified European defense industry will make it difficult for the American producers.

**16. Relations with France.** The Franco-German relations remain the cornerstone of European integration and West European security cohesion. The relations have had always a competitive features, as France –a nuclear power, with occupational rights in Berlin and Germany, and the seat in the UN Security Council – tried to dominate politically, and Germany gained a dominant economic position. The “equilibrium of bomb and the mark” worked well and, with some exceptions of recent date, still works. The two instances when strains of importance occurred in this relationship were the President Mitterand’s ambivalence about the reunification of Germany and the unpleasant breakdown of a common strategy for European integration as in 1993-94.. Both were overcome and did not rupture the historic reconciliation. Both indicate, however, that the reunification of Germany caused a shift in the inner balance of bilateral relations and changed the geopolitical perspectives of the two partners. Germany presses for the economic rationalization of the EU functions, construed predominantly according to a political agenda. Being stronger economically, it is visibly less afraid of the social and political consequence of such a move. Germany has strong reservations about the administrative and legal construction of the Union, especially on the

role of the Union's Commission; it insists on a concomitant, or closely timed, deepening and enlargement of the EU to the East. Germany also demanded to locate the Central European Bank in Frankfurt. France has a quite different position on these matters, partially for substantive reasons, partially because it is afraid that as a result of the changes proposed by Germany, it will lose its equal status. These types of differences will certainly continue, though they will not be permitted to rock the EU as both partners are fully aware of the disastrous consequences this might have, and still their mutual interests are by far greater than the substance of the disagreement. One cannot, however, avoid the suspicion that, over time, it is the German vision of economic integration that will prevail in the end. France is afraid of the change in the priorities of German external policy. It is already a fact that the German trade with Eastern Europe will soon reach the level of trade with France. As Francois Combes of "Liberation" wrote in April 1994: "...in 1999 the famous Paris-Bonn axis - on which, according to the logic of Yalta, the European construction was built and which, for the first time in its history roused Germany to an Atlantic destiny - will have a counterbalance to the European East". In order to strengthen the cohesion between the two countries, in 1997 a Franco-German common defense concept was announced. The concept consists of four objectives: the definition of common goals for the security and defense policies of both states; common analysis of their security environment; a joint approach to military strategy and to the missions of their armed forces; and increased military and armaments cooperation." The agreement also notes that French and German "security interests are increasingly inseparable. It commits both countries to "actively contribute to the preservation of peace and international security", which implies "the possession of military forces that are rapidly available and rapidly deployable within Europe as well as without". Interestingly, the two countries agreed also to "a dialogue over nuclear deterrence in connection with European defense policies. ... This does not concern possession or having access" to French nuclear weapons. The announcement of the common defense concept might have a great political meaning for the future, but it cannot be overlooked, however, that the document is short on specifics and introduces a number of ideas known already from the past.

**17. Relations with Russia.** The reunification of Germany changed dramatically the nature of its relations with Russia. The divided Germany, with Russia being one of four great powers responsible for the "German question" and the one with a dominant position in GDR, had to accept an informal *droit de regard* over West German policy. The Federal Republic had been thus very sensitive to Soviet interests. The situation changed in the opposite direction: the Soviet Union ceased to exist, the Russian Federation lost its influence, while Germany is reunited and more powerful than ever after the war. The underlying principle of today's German policy in relation to Russia is to help in its democratic and economic development, so as to assure stability on this intrinsically unstable giant. Germans remember the decisive role played by Russia /Gorbachev/ in the process of unification. The extensive financial assistance of Germany for the withdrawing of Russian forces met with approval of the general public. Germany is and still will be anxious about the prospect of the old Russian imperialism re-appearing, though in a new disguise. Such an eventuality may threaten the entire East European area, with which Germany develops deep and extensive interests. One of the more widespread fears, connected with Russia, is the prospect of nuclear contamination from the old-fashioned Russian nuclear reactors. It is thus natural that Germany will use its influence and economic potential to help. During the recent years Germany has positioned herself as an exponent of Russian interest in the West, although never to the detriment of the allies or the East European countries. This role of "Russian advocate" is even more likely to be pursued by Germany in the future. If the bilateral relations will be as good as they are today, Germany would reap wide economic and trade benefits from its involvement in the Russian economy. So far, however, the German investment in Russia is only a fraction of that in Eastern Europe. Looking into the future a number of potential disagreements and even conflicts are

theoretically possible between Germany and Russia. First and foremost the two countries are at odds over NATO enlargement. While the inclusion of the first three East European countries into NATO seem not to be a major hurdle in the German-Russian relations, the subsequent rounds of NATO enlargement, to which Germany is formally committed, will certainly meet much harder opposition from Russia. It may be assumed that when confronted with a tough Russian stance over inclusion of the Baltic states or, less likely, Ukraine, the Germans would probable opt for a “Russia first” policy, trying to alleviate the disappointment of the East European partners by other means. It is worth noting that Russia is the most outspoken supporter of Germany’s new assertive and independent role in the European and even world politics. Notwithstanding the objective value of German involvement in any international matter and being mindful of the German maturity, such an situation must also be seen in a negative light, as a Russian reminiscence of the times of Rapallo.

**18. Relations with Poland.** According to Konrad Adenauer the German road to democracy and a rightful place in Europe had to involve a reconciliation with three nations: France, Israel, and Poland. The first two of these historical tasks are about to be completed, the third, that is, the reconciliation with Poland begun only a few years ago. The German-Polish relations are much more burdened by recent history than the French-German ones. Much harsher war-time occupation, German territorial losses, forceful displacement of large populations, large German minority in Poland, and the long-lasting insistence of Germany not to recognize the existing state borders, to name only the most conspicuous causes of tension and distrust, precluded any progress in bilateral relations for a long time. Moreover, France and Germany developed similar social and economic system and belonged to the same alliance, while Poland belonged to the opposite military and economic block. Over 46 years, until the final agreement on border and friendly relations was concluded, the confrontational policies petrified the social animosities and unpleasant stereotypes. The on-going efforts to reconcile the two nations are unprecedented; they involve all layers of the two societies and all fields of political, cultural, social, economic, and military life. German systematic and intensive assistance to Poland’s road to NATO and the EU, large investments of German capital, extensive trade, every-day presence of millions of German shoppers in the border regions, all this helped to change radically the Polish and the German attitudes vis-à-vis each other. Both countries are interested in the integration of the East European states with the EU and NATO and both act unilaterally, bilaterally and in a wider international context to improve the stability of the region. Despite an enormous disproportion of economic potentials, Germany accepted Poland as its strategic partner in Eastern Europe, Russia notwithstanding. The trade turnover with Poland is now bigger than that with Russia. Germany invested several billion marks in Poland, and established more than 20 thousand joint ventures, despite the still lingering reticence of Poles to accept German permanent presence on the market. Of particular importance is the Polish-German cooperation in the military domain. Often, it precedes any formal or political arrangements, and is executed on all levels of command. German soldiers participate in the military exercises in Poland; Polish officers are frequent students in the German educational centers. Large number of units established partnership links. Together with Denmark a joint North-East Corps, subordinated to NATO and to be operational in 1999, is being readied, with headquarters in Szczecin. Despite this generally very positive picture, some social and political circles in Poland are afraid of the return of the German influence. They argue that the prospective integration of Poland with Germany through the EU may bring: germanization of large Western-most areas of Poland; mass re-emigration of Germans into Silesia, Pomerania and Eastern Prussia; massive sell-out of the Polish land and large economic sectors to German capital; regional separatism, linked to the activities of the German minorities, supported by the EU regional policy. Though the official German policy is more than friendly to the Polish reforms and wishes of integration, on several occasions, involving actual economic interests, Germany

proved to be less cooperative. The experience of the present-day interactions and attitudes expressed on both sides indicates that for the Poles Germany is, on the one hand, the main element of hopes for quick civil, economic and technological progress and, on the other hand, still a source of anxiety and fear. For Germany, close relations with Poland, the largest state in the region, are instrumental in building stability, prosperity, and influence in the whole of Eastern Europe. Parallel basic interests, concerning, among other matters, the enlargement of NATO and EU/WEU, preservation of good relations with Russia, assistance to Ukraine's reforms, support for the Baltic states, make the rapprochement of the countries one of the most stable building block of the evolving European interstate infrastructure, with an obvious leadership role of Germany.

### ***19. Summing up.***

- Germany after re-unification and after the fundamental change of European relations in the aftermath of the cold-war will become a major power of Europe, much more active, assertive in pursuance of its vital interests;
- German connections with the West will not lessen or suffer from its growing involvement in "transfer of stability" to Eastern Europe through integration and cooperation; it does not intend or be able to "play" one influence against the other, but will rather build a large circle of friendly and closely interrelated countries, with it in the middle;
- Germany is and will remain a leading member of both NATO and the EU, having strong interest in their reform towards greater efficiency and enlargement to the East;
- German transatlantic and European agendas are mutually supportive, as their objective is to preserve the political and strategic commitment of the USA to Europe;
- It can only be beneficial to Germany to work parallel with Russia and the Eastern European states on the preservation of regional stability and on economic development;
- German ascendancy to the new role in Europe raises apprehensions in some quarters, because of historic memories of nations. However, the historic comparisons are not justified and are misleading; Germany is a strong democracy and liberal society. The power of the state's bureaucracy is not centralized in hands of the federal government, because many state functions are executed at the level of lands and local authorities. Germany is strongly integrated into the EU and NATO, thus a large portion of its freedom of action in economic and security matters is delegated to these international organizations. Moreover, German economic power and its purely national control is fairly well diluted by the existence of transnational corporations;
- Germany is ready more than ever to assume international commitments, related to the preservation of peace, including active military participation;
- In sum, Germany is becoming a "normal" state, not any more an economic giant and political dwarf, reluctant to influence its environment. It is increasingly assertive and guided by its egoistic interests but more than any other major state in Europe mindful of the unique chance for creating an economically, politically, and militarily unified Europe, in which this centrally located state would certainly reap the largest benefits.

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