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Comparison of the statements

On 3–4 May 2001, representatives from Poland, Sweden and Austria discussed the current security situation in Europe during a trilateral meeting in Vienna. This paper summarises the main statements and analyses the common points as well as differences the participating states are facing in terms of security.

When comparing the security policies of these states, one has to take into consideration the different legal basis concerning security affairs. Austria has been a permanently neutral state and member of the European Union ever since 1995, Poland joined NATO in 1999 and is one of the candidates for accession to the EU. Finally Sweden, with her traditional foreign policy of nonalignment in peacetime – aiming at neutrality in wartime – has been, like Austria, member of the European Union since 1995. The change of the security environment after the end of the Cold War affects each country in a different way as related to its regional position. In addition, every security policy is determined by the membership to an international organization or alliance. However, with respect to the trilateral project at hand, also security interests of each country as they regard the relationship to the CFSP/ESDP of the European Union have to be looked at.

Changed Security Environment

After the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Iron Curtain, each of the mentioned countries was forced to redefine its security policy. Austria is no longer located at the eastern border of Western Europe, having a third of her borders with eastern bloc states, but in the centre of Europe. The country still is permanently neutral, surrounded by eight neighbours from which four, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary and Italy, are now member states to NATO. During the Cold War, the length of the border to member states of the Warsaw Pact was about 34 percent, to NATO members about 46 percent of its total length; currently, the common border to NATO is about 78 percent or 2.060 kilometres. In case Slovenia and Slovakia join NATO in the next round of enlargement, Austria will be more or less surrounded by NATO states. In addition, after the next step of EU enlargement, Austria will be an inland state to the EU (leaving out Switzerland and the principality of Liechtenstein, which is member of the European Economic Area).

For Poland, which was formerly surrounded by member states of the Warsaw Pact Treaty, the new security environment is mainly determined by Poland's bridge-building function between East and West in terms of both security and economic affairs. As a NATO member, Poland is now a borderland of NATO to the East and, after joining the EU, she will be a borderland of the Union, too. Since 1990, the process of demilitarisation of Central Europe has been constantly in progress. Poland has accepted a reduction of her national armed forces down to a number of some 234.000 soldiers, which is less than half of the former strength of about 500.000

soldiers. Whereas the Polish Armed Forces were formerly only given secondary and auxiliary tasks within the Warsaw Pact, the Polish military now has to meet the alliance's military requirements as an equal member nation of NATO.

The changed security environment has also a great impact on Sweden. Still, the traditional "three forces" in the South, East and West are influencing Sweden's security. Today, these forces are the EU in the South, post-Soviet Russia in the East and the Euro-Atlantic Alliance to the West. Like Poland, Sweden also faces a bridge-building function especially with regard to the Baltic Sea region. This region is unique inasmuch as it gives both NATO and EU a direct border with Russia.

Joining International Organizations

Since the late 1980's, Austria has shown increasing interest to join the first European Community, and later the European Union. This was first of all out of economic reasons, namely to become a member in the European free trade and stability zone. From the moment of membership to the EU on 1 January 1995, the security of Austria has been linked inseparably to the security of the Union by way of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Security risks to Europe are at the same time now risks concerning Austria. Due to the parameters of the new challenges to security, first and foremost the proliferation of WMD and international crime, territorial distance to crisis regions no longer provides sufficient protection. Austria is convinced that European stability is primarily realized through the cooperation of a large number of European countries within the framework of the EU and NATO. It was for this reason also, that Austria signed the PfP Framework Document on 10 February 1995.

As a result to her historical experiences, Poland assumes that European security depends as much on the membership in security organizations as on good bilateral relations. Thus, after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, Poland tried to become a member to NATO and signed numerous bilateral agreements, primarily with all neighbouring states. Moreover, Poland signed the PfP Framework Document as the first of the three countries dealt with on 2 February 1994. Poland strongly believes that NATO has retained its significance as a system of collective defence. This is and should continue to be a stabilizing factor for peace in the Euro-Atlantic region. The efforts to join NATO were based on a broad consent in both the Polish public and polity. Finally, Poland joined the alliance together with the Czech Republic and Hungary on 16 March 1999.

In contrast to Poland, Sweden saw in the CSCE Europe's main security organization. However, considering the CSCE to be Europe's "UN", Sweden's expectations in that field were not met by the historical development due to the restrictions of this organization to measures of cooperative security. Hence, since 1990-91, the European Union has stood at the centre of the Swedish government's expectations. Due to Sweden's particular situation, security matters were not in the foreground of the public debate that preceded the referendum to join the EU in 1994. Together with Austria and Finland, Sweden joined the European Union on 1 January 1995. While the

question of NATO membership is still not at issue in Sweden, the country is moving fast toward closer cooperation and interaction with the alliance in a growing number of fields. As to support its interoperability, Sweden signed the PfP Framework Document on 9 May 1994.

Main Security Interests

Austria has designed a new concept of interests as part of the new Austrian Security and Defence Doctrine. The main security interests of Austria are:

- Guaranteeing the territorial integrity,
- Protecting the constitutional-democratic order,
- Guaranteeing internal security,
- Securing the economic and social basis of the country,
- Guaranteeing a stable political, economic and military environment and
- Promoting European stability.

These security interests are no longer structured merely along national interests – the creation of a stable environment has become the central security objective.

Related to the new National Defence Strategy, which was accepted by the Council of Ministers on 23 May 2000, Poland's major national interests are:

- Independence and inviolability of her territory,
- Human rights, freedom and security of her citizens,
- National heritage and
- Environment protection.

The security of the citizen as well as independence and inviolability of the territory of the Republic of Poland are viewed as critical national interests, which must be enforced imperatively.

Sweden divides her security interests in "European interests", "National interests" and "Regional interests". The region of primary interest for Sweden is the Baltic Sea Region, which includes all the states that have access to the Baltic Sea. First of all, the European Union has a strategic interest in this region especially when it comes to the next round of EU enlargement. Thus, for example as Finland supports Estonia in joining the EU, so does Sweden with the three Baltic states, whereas Denmark supports the Baltic countries in joining NATO. In addition, Lithuania receives special assistance from Poland in joining the alliance. Most notably, Swedish security experts have stated that Baltic NATO membership would be detrimental to Swedish interests. Secondly, Sweden is aware of Russian interests in the region, focusing on two main goals, preventing further erosion of the Russian strategic position in the Baltic Sea and securing the old arrangements as much as possible. Thirdly, Sweden acknowledges the interests the United

States has in the region, particularly regarding Russian nuclear weapons and the status of Kaliningrad.

Security Policy

In spite EU membership and the CFSP, Austria is still a permanently neutral state, looking for an adequate security doctrine. In May 2000, the Austrian government appointed a commission to develop a new Security and Defence Doctrine. The first analytical part of the new doctrine was accepted by the Council of Ministers on 23 January 2001.

The major security objectives of Austria are:

- Prevention of the development of relevant risks and threats to the continent,
- Comprehensive promotion of stability and security,
- Development of efficient civilian and military capacities,
- Safeguarding and deepening of the transatlantic cooperation and
- Fighting transnational crime, terrorism as well as manipulation of technology and information.

The principal direction of Polish security policy is based on the following components: Firstly, to a broad and dynamic military cooperation within NATO and integration in the EU as soon as possible. The political representatives in Poland believe that NATO membership is the best guarantee for peace and thus a precondition for accession to the EU. The current Polish Security Strategy clearly refers to NATO's role as a major factor in preserving political-military stability in Europe. The second component has to be seen in both the reinforcement and enlargement of European arrangements, especially the OSCE. The third direction of Poland's security policy lies in the abovementioned assumption that European security depends as much on the membership in security organization as on good bilateral relations, such as with her neighbouring states Belarus and the Ukraine, the Baltic states, and on Poland's relations with Germany and Great Britain. Logically, these three components are interlocking and complementary.

The new Polish Security Strategy encompasses the following basic security tasks:

- Ensuring a stable Euro-Atlantic security environment,
- Consultations and guarantees of an effective policy of deterrence and defence and
- Participation in conflict prevention and crisis management as well as developing partnership, cooperation and dialogue with other states of the Euro-Atlantic area.

The most recent report from the Swedish Defence Commission is dedicated to a wider concept of security. The major security objectives of Sweden are to ensure freedom of action in every situation and to develop Swedish society as an individual nation.

The direction of Swedish defence policy is:

- Protecting the country from armed aggression,
- Asserting territorial integrity,
- Contributing to peace and security in the surrounding world and
- Strengthening Swedish society in severe peacetime emergencies.

Swedish military thinking is no longer seen as defence against invasion but the use of military forces as protection forces, useable both for national defence and for international operations. The Swedish status of nonalignment is still seen as relevant because of the many specific possibilities that are offered to non-aligned members. These possibilities are mediation, bridge-building as well as support in the field of disarmament. Through the Finnish-Swedish initiative of 1998, the so-called Petersberg-tasks were incorporated into the Amsterdam Treaty, which made the Union also an organ for crisis management and peace support operations – ranging from civilian operations to peace enforcement. A main guideline of Swedish security policy is seen in the fulfilment of NATO standards for PSO and the concept of compatibility. The main task for the Swedish protection forces is no longer national defence on Swedish territory, but beyond.

Relevance of the CFSP/ESDP

In its government program, the new Austrian Federal Government has decided on the participation of Austria in a European Peace, Security and Defence Community. The current policy is mostly based on the redefinition of the national security policy within the framework of the European Union. The most recent step was the offer of 2000 soldiers to the Rapid Reaction Force of the EU, which the EU decided to build up at the European Council of Helsinki in December 1999, posted by the Austrian Defence Minister during the Capability Commitment Conference of the Defence Ministers of the EU and 15 non-EU countries in Brussels on 20-21 November 2000.

For quite some time, Poland has not explicitly supported the development of CFSP structure due to the following reasons: There was the fear of decreasing American engagement in Europe; the fact that ESDI was considered to be a threat to NATO's unity, and that there were no encouraging signals from the EU on the issue of including Poland into the framework of ESDP. Eventually, the change of the Polish opinion on ESDP was caused by the EU policy toward former Yugoslavia during the military intervention in Kosovo. Poland now shows a keen interest in the development of the ESDP as part of the CFSP.

Together with Finland, Sweden was an initiator of implementing the Petersberg-tasks. Crisis management and peace support operations are the main security fields of Sweden's security policy. The decisions taken by the European Council in Nice as well as the strengthening of the Union's military and civil crisis management capabilities were central challenges to the Swedish EU presidency. Sweden's contribution during the Capability Commitment Conference was an offer of 1.500 soldiers to the Rapid Reaction Forces of the EU.

Concluding Remarks

All the countries have developed new national defence doctrines in the recent past or are in the process of doing so. For the neutral states, membership in international organizations was a question of economic prosperity rather than of security. Both neutral states - apart from their contribution to PSO and crisis management - consider mediation and support for international consultation as major roles of their security identities. In contrast, Poland joined the military alliance first in order to meet its security needs and in order to build a platform for joining the European Union. Poland also emphasizes environmental protection as one of her national interests. All the countries, however, consider territorial integrity, civil protection as well as promotion of European stability as their core interests. In this respect, they all regard the development of good transatlantic relations as the perhaps most important factor for European stability.

As the Baltic Sea region contains the risks for major security setbacks, Poland's and Sweden's special interests in the region are quite comprehensive. At the same time, the region also offers possibilities for trade and commerce and could thus be stabilized if all the respective powers cooperate in the region. Another point of stabilizing the Baltic region is Poland's interest of expanding cooperation with the Baltic states in the field of solving environmental problems, developing of economic markets, transportation, communication and cooperation in military affairs.

Each of the concerned states has special expectations with regard to the development of the European Union, a Common Foreign and Security Policy including adequate crisis management measures, which is considered to be a stabilizing factor within Europe and beyond.

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