

Report

The European Union's action on the international scene: lost cause or last chance?

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One of the most frequently criticised faults of the European Union over the last few years has been the perceived weakness of its external action.

The renewal of the Union's leadership offers an opportunity to make significant improvements. The present document outlines a series of measures which would contribute to such improvements. They could be implemented rapidly, on the basis of the existing treaty provisions.

This document has been submitted on 24 September to President Tusk, President Juncker and Mrs Mogherini.

Introduction

The Union's leadership has been renewed: new President of the European Council, new Commission, new High Representative. The aim of this analysis is to suggest to President Tusk, President Juncker and Mrs Mogherini some improvements in what is often seen as one of the principal failings of the European Union: its external action. This memorandum does not seek to propose policies, let alone an external policy for the Union, but to analyse the driving forces and mechanisms which could help facilitate the definition and implementation of such policies. This analysis is designed to be a realistic one: even if the Union does not enjoy all the characteristics of a national power, it does have some of the competences and attributes of one. Unsatisfactory as it might be, the treaty is the basis on which future developments have to be based, and implemented in a more efficient way than has been the case so far. It is easy to criticise the Member States, and see them as an impediment to common action. But those same Member States will remain, and continue to be, important players on the international scene.

I. Assessment

What should have been, what should be the Union's external action? Articles 21 and 22 of the Treaty give an explicit definition. According to the Treaty, the Union's external action, the strength and coherence of this action, should stem from the synthesis, and combined implementation, of all useful means of action provided by the "Community" and by the Member States. This synthesis should therefore, in the final analysis, have been crafted and decided by the European Council, for the Council represents the highest Council - and is therefore in a position to decide which common instruments should be used. It also brings together the Heads of State and Governments with their national competences: in other words, the people who have the authority to commit strictly national instruments of action.

These means of action are considerable – it would be a tedious task to compile a list. Europe is a potential, or virtual power. It stands at the forefront of international affairs, thanks to the volume of its external trade, its cooperation with other States, its development assistance, its financial centres, its participation to the development of science and technology, its history and its experience in world affairs, its economic and cultural assets. There are two drawbacks, though. The first drawback is diminishing military budgets - or precisely, more than their absolute levels, the great discrepancies between the budgets of different Member States, their imperfect use and the lack of complementarity between European defence policies. The consequence of all this is the sneaking impression that Europe has resigned itself to soft power, and notably to economic soft power. The second consequence is the poor use of those of the Union's resources that are allocated to large scale foreign policy actions. In spite of its recent increase, the European budget allocated to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) remains meagre; but the most serious issue is the lack of coordination and complementarity between the member States' own means, and the large resources (nearly € 6 bn) of the European budget allotted to cooperation with non-EU countries.

These means of action are therefore at the Union's disposal only in principle and on paper. They are not "pooled"; they are not even managed in a coordinated manner; they are deployed separately, and sometimes in contradiction to each other, by the various players. Besides, national actions are rarely conducted on a collective basis. The collective aspect is more often than not marginal or even purely symbolic (e.g. the common action in the Libyan affair).

As a result, the picture is a contradictory one.

- On the plus side, the Union's role in stabilising the Western Balkans comes to mind. However, these developments (imperfect in themselves) could be the result of those countries' resolve to join the European Union, just as much as that of the Union's various actions. Secondly, we should remember that in the 2000s-2010s, twenty common actions have been led: these common actions, of limited term and scope, were successful, but have had not been followed by any single common action worthy of the name since 2009. Finally, the Union's role in the negotiations with Iran has proved to be useful; maybe because the High Representative could base her actions on guidelines devised by only three Member States.

- There have been less positive things too. For example, the Union's role in the Middle-East has dwindled into insignificance. It has been paralysed by internal disagreements and reduced to following in the wake of the United States. The European Union's influence has been that of role model and distributor of aid. But the major failure of the Union was the management of the most serious crises, which blatantly exposed its disagreements and contradictions. The only major crisis which was correctly managed was the Georgian crisis in 2008. But the 2003 Iraq affair left a deep wound. Despite some last-minute face saving, the Union tore itself apart over Libya. Ukrainian policy gives an impression of improvisation, hesitation, and spatchcocked compromises.

The picture is not totally bleak. But public opinion mostly remembers the failures and the limitations of the Union's external action. The prevailing impression is that, when it comes down to it, the Union has only two instruments, which it sometimes does, and sometimes does not, use as wisely as it could: sanctions and enlargement. The latter is an «internal» policy of the Union, with external positive effects, that is to say, the stabilisation of candidate countries. But there have been other consequences which have proved less palatable within the Union and less easily accepted. Between these two instruments, public opinion only sees a sea of disagreements, ramshackle compromises and powerlessness. This largely negative sentiment is strengthened by the impression that there is a yawning and growing gap between what Europe could do, and what it actually does, and the vague impression that "Brussels" is more of an arena for arguing over differing European national interests than it is a centre of European power. To put it in a nutshell, Europe does indeed carry weight, but has little muscle.

II. Causes

There is no use looking for a single cause for the relative weakness of Europe. The causes are multiple, political, legal and instrumental. A strong external action should rest on four pillars: the will to act for the defence and protection of Europe's interests; the acceptance of this action by all Member States, or at least by a critical number of them, that is to say, the existence of a consensus and of an active solidarity; the capacity to decide, which involves leadership and a chain of command; the implementation of the necessary means of action.

A. The will to act

The primary origin of Europe's weakness naturally lies in the lack of what is aptly called "political will", a collective incapability to determine precisely what is the common interest and then to defend it. The treaty allows action: it does not require it. Nor does it determine the content of policies. Although all European players claim they want a strong Europe, most of them have

declined to provide the necessary ways or means of achieving it. So do they actually want it, do they all want it?

Those Member States who have customarily been the most active in foreign policy have tended to use the common policy framework to get support for their own policies, to gain the benefit of the means and instruments of the Union and to secure a European label for their action. But either out of conviction, or because they wanted their view of the correct course and priorities to prevail, they did not really accept the consequences of a common policy, namely the sharing of power and the requirement sometimes to give the common interest precedence over their national interests. When the so called large Member States use the European forum to get the support of some rather than others, or even of some against others, and they often do it, they do more to foment a struggle for influence within Europe than to making Europe's influence felt in the world. By so doing, and for example, by consistently preferring the unanimity rule, which gives every Member State identical rights, whatever their commitment and interests might be, they have effectively given up their actual influence.

The less active Member States have used the CFSP to prevent the "Greats" from stealing the show, to enjoy a right of speech and to voice their interests, and at least to be represented in the discussions about major international affairs: such objectives are only right and normal. But all too often, they have also weakened the system: you cannot be willing to participate in the decision-making process if you are not willing to help provide the means of action, as some of them do; you cannot work towards the making of a truly European policy if you simply appear to be the voice of third parties; you cannot make other Member States which enjoy the instruments of sovereignty, or believe they do, rally to a common position, if you do everything to cut this position down to the lowest common denominator, which is all too often close to zero.

B. A lack of a decision-making centre and chain of command

The Union's action is relatively effective when the various interests concur, or at least when they do not diverge. But as soon as the common interest becomes less clear, action is only possible if there is a decision centre, a mechanism to produce proposals and decisions, and pull member States out of their daily routine. This mechanism does not exist.

The High Representative controls the European External Action Service (EEAS), but enjoys a very limited budget. In purely political affairs, the High Representative does not have decision-making powers since such powers are bestowed on the Council. Admittedly, since she enjoys both the position of High Representative and that of President of the Council, she is in charge of the implementation of policies. But meaningful decisions still need to be made in the first place. Finally, her position suffers from a design flaw: how can one be, at the same time, and convincingly so, a member of the Commission, a replacement for Solana as a High Representative, and the President of the Foreign Affairs Council? How can one be constantly in touch with all Member States, establish the necessary contacts with third parties, and take part in international meetings?

The Foreign Affairs Council also suffers from structural limitations. External action is less and less often the private turf of foreign ministries. These ministries are an important part, but only a part, of a power structure which is in the hands of the Heads of State and Government, in all Member States. The treaty pays no heed to this reality, although experience provides plenty of evidence for it: on all important matters (the intervention in Iraq, the Georgian or Ukrainian affairs, the Libyan intervention etc.), the real power of Member States can be found at Number 10 Downing Street, at the Elysée Palace, at the German chancellery, etc. The Foreign Affairs

Council is sometimes used as an advisory body by the European Council, and sometimes serves as an instrument for management. But 28 representatives close to the seat of power meeting together cannot turn the Foreign Affairs Council into a real power: as a decision-making body it does not measure up to the scale of power which Europe needs to exercise. It is, by virtue of the treaty, a Council for the CFSP, a council which built its territory on the fringes of the Union's external action, and to some extent, at its expense.

Heads of State and Government have never really trusted the EEAS or the High Representative. They have considered the new structure as a dismemberment of foreign ministries, which can sometimes be used by national ministers, but never as a vehicle for the integration of policies, or even for the preparation of their decisions.

It is true that since the Lisbon Treaty came into effect, they have approved pages of conclusions, sometimes without even reading them. This has been done with the sole aim of avoiding awkwardness rather than with the hope or intention of defining a united policy. Since the Lisbon Treaty, the European Council has never had any real discussion about the consequences of enlargement, about relations with the USA or Russia, or the so-called strategic partnerships with India or China. It has never really analysed the whys and wherefores of the so-called neighbourhood policy. The only real discussions have taken place when sanctions were considered (against Iran, Libya, Syria, or more recently, against Russia), as these have been the occasions when divergences among the Member States' interests have visibly and publicly come into view. But even on these occasions, strategy is only tackled by proxy, through marginal issues. Have we weighed the consequences of the western intervention in Libya carefully enough? Have we evaluated the share of responsibilities borne by the European Union and its ambiguous and ill-conceived neighbourhood policy in the development of the Ukrainian conflict?

These discussions have not taken place because the structure is not suitable for their preparation. They have not taken place because Member States, and chiefly the most important among them, use the meetings as a stage to push their national pawns, rather than to participate in a common reflection. They have not taken place, finally, because there are some sore issues, themes which everybody believes are better left unaddressed. For example, how can a "strategic partnership" with India be designed, when the Union does not have any agreed position concerning the reform of the United Nations or on the possible conclusion of a nuclear cooperation treaty - when the Union is not, in itself, an important player on the Indian subcontinent - these three themes being "strategic" issues for India? In these conditions, how can we seriously be surprised when the Indians call Berlin, London or Paris first? Is the Union, in itself, a strategic partner for other States?

We have to admit that there are exceptions. The settlement of the Georgian affair in 2008 is an example. But the decisions were taken outside, or despite, the European structure. They were more of a diplomatic coup than a jointly elaborated policy.

C. Foreign policy beyond the institutional framework

The Maastricht Treaty tried to organise the integration of the means and procedures for external action by organising a sort of complementarity between what we may call the Community method and the intergovernmental method. The Amsterdam Treaty pursued the same objective by providing the Council, with the creation of the High Representative, with a useful instrument for the coordination of the action of the Member States in what remains their area of competence. On this basis, the first crisis management structures were set up, and proved to be quite efficient. These first steps bore the promise of further progress.

The Lisbon Treaty weakened this balance. It had been hoped that the fusion of various offices, which seemed to be complementary but were in fact heterogeneous (the Commission, the secretariat of the Council, the Member States), would trigger a better integration of their duties, and implicitly, that the new External Action Service would slowly replace national administrations. Such was not the case. Proponents of the so-called intergovernmental method did all they could to retain the competences of Member States, and to keep foreign policy away from the “poisons of the Brussels system”. Supporters of the so-called Community method, backed by the Commission and the Parliament, worked to protect the competences and means of the Union from the “intergovernmental virus”. Moreover, the treaty gave birth to a specific, parallel diplomatic structure, largely disconnected from national diplomacies, and in effect, standing more as a 29th minister of foreign affairs than as a European rallying figure. The connection between “Brussels” and member States is now weaker than ever.

The High Representative should have been Vice-President of the Commission: since the Lisbon Treaty came into effect, this has been no more than a title. Those who drafted the Lisbon Treaty had the ambition to build the European Service as a part of both the Commission and the Council: the European Service is not integrated with either; it is floating in the air, like an orphan planet in the institutional space system. Far from implementing the integrationist approach initially introduced by the treaties, the actual day-to-day practice has wandered further and further away from those origins. Foreign and security policy today, is nothing more than the “political cooperation” of the early days, deliberately set up outside the institutions and devoid of any decision-making capacity.

D. Design flaws

The External Action Service should have been a structure where information is centralised, and the action of the Community or national players coordinated. When fulfilling this role, the Service proves relatively effective: for example, the coordination of European representation in non-EU countries has often been improved by the action of the Union’s delegations. But the EEAS suffers from a design flaw : it has been modelled on traditional Ministries of Foreign Affairs -which it cannot be-, and was designed with so much consideration for contradictory concerns, that it emerged as an absurd, overstaffed body, with too many directorate-generals, so-called decision centres, parallel channels, and so little clear hierarchy, and simply no chain of command. Instead of using existing services (within the Council’s General Secretariat and even more so, within the Commission) to act as liaisons, ensure services and actions are complementary and properly coordinated, the EEAS has more or less duplicated all of these services.

III. The Ten Commandments: ten actions that should be taken

We propose a series of actions that can be taken immediately - none of which involve a modification of the existing treaties. It is true that the treaty is imperfect - all the more so as European players have refused to stick to it, or just gave up trying. Much progress can be, and must be, made without changing the legal basis for action. The following proposals merely recommend a fair enforcement of the treaty, and suggest measures leading to a much-needed integration.

1. National interests and common interests: “The Union shall define and pursue common policies and actions (...), in order to safeguard its values, fundamental interests, security, independence and integrity”.

No strong foreign policy action can be taken as long as common interests are not identified and agreed. Today, such an analysis is never undertaken, or never beyond the level of empty, all-purpose talk about the values that need to be defended, stability in the neighbourhood, the necessity of democratisation, the benefits of cooperation, etc. In many fields, on many issues, the Member States’ interests and positions do not coincide, and sometimes even conflict. That is all too natural and normal. It is useless and often misleading to consider these interests as “national egoisms”. A worthwhile analysis must not overlook these specific interests. On the contrary, it must show that beyond these particular interests, it is possible to implement policies which not only satisfy the interests of all parties, but even better meet those interests. In short, common interest is not assumed: it has to be shaped. This supposes a precise and concrete corresponding analysis. It also means that all useful sources of information (the Commission, Member States etc.), covering all fields and all issues, must be accessed in order to lead this analysis.

The June 2014 European Council, for example, decided that the Union’s energy dependence on Russia had to be reduced. Such an announcement can only become a policy when all conditions and all consequences have been identified, and agreed. What sources of energy can replace Russian imports, and what is the timetable to such independence? What should Member States, even those which apparently have low dependence on Russian gas, do to seek alternative energy sources be it coal, nuclear power, shale gas? Depending on the various answers to that question, what would the consequences of such measures be on the environment or on the performance of the European economy? What changes need to be made to European regulations and what are the new, necessary financial means in the European budget? What would be the consequences of such a “reduction” on the relationship between Europe and Russia, but also between Europe and the other natural gas producers (Iran and Qatar principally), and on the relationships between Russia and the rest of the world, notably, with China? As long as such an analysis has not been fully made and agreed, the conclusions of the June 2014 European Council will remain a sign and a warning, but will not constitute a policy.

It falls to the EEAS to organise and lead this analysis. But a simple review of the questions at stake proves that the EEAS cannot do this on its own, separated from the national and Community services, alone with the Foreign Council, without any serious commitment from the Heads of State or Government. The primary objective of the EEAS must be to secure such a capacity to organise and coordinate analysis. It has to be reorganised to stand as a sort of European equivalent to the American National Security Council, lying at the heart of a joint organisation shared by the Commission and the Council, with close ties to national services.

2. A European Council to “identify the strategic interests and objectives of the Union”.

More often than not, external policy-related themes are tackled by the European Council only when “crises” occur, as we mentioned earlier. They never, so to speak, trigger in-depth discussions. All too often, these discussions are more about dropping three words, and adding five, to a draft set of conclusions, which will sooner or later vanish into oblivion. There has not been in the last ten years any real discussion about truly strategic matters.

When a discussion takes place, it comes too late, and proves to be too superficial. For ten years, we have been waiting for the Heads of State and Government to show some interest in the relationship with Russia, to run an in-depth analysis of the various interests, hopes, fears, actions, reactions. The Ukrainian affair would certainly have appeared in a different light, and could have been taken care of with a more visible attention to European interest, rather than a succession of impulsive reactions to ill-foreseen events. A drafting compromise is not the same thing as a «strategic orientation».

The President of the European Council should prepare and organise, for example on a twice-yearly basis, a discussion within the European Council on an important issue. To prepare does not necessarily mean to draft and approve resolutions. On the contrary, it would be better that early discussions not lead to the drafting of conclusions, but help bring forth open and in-depth exchanges. Heads of State and Governments will only agree to include their own national policies within a common framework if they build this common framework themselves: such would be the condition for a better integration of policies. They will not do it if their participation is limited to the ratification of ambiguous texts and the approval of a list of sanctions.

3. A President of the European Council who does indeed, “at his level and in that capacity, ensure the external representation of the Union on issues concerning its common foreign and security policy”.

The President of the European Council has never had the role he should have had in external relations. According to article 22 of the Treaty, he is responsible, at his level, for all issues related to foreign policy, and therefore should have been the main, or even the sole, spokesperson for the European Union in international summit meetings; however, others have always attempted to usurp this role. As the President of the European Council, he may propose the agenda for Council meetings, prepare the work of the Council, and lead its deliberations. Still, other European institutions have been reluctant to allow him to participate in preliminary discussions, and to consult him on possible major issues.

This situation, in conflict with the treaty, has to be solved as new figures are now appointed to lead the European institutions. The President of the European Council must indeed preside over the Union’s delegation during international summit meetings, on the basis of guidelines issued by the European Council. He must be as completely and intensively informed and involved as possible in all preparatory work that may require an intervention of Heads of State or Government. This would mean that the President of the European Council must be able to rely on competent services to prepare these meetings, rather than simply being handed, two days before these events start, large excerpts of Wikipedia pages. And, as was done, *mutatis mutandis*, for the crisis of the Euro, the President of the European Council should be in touch with the main decision-makers – here, namely, the President of the Commission and the High Representative – to propose positions, procedures and agendas, so that he can sit at the top of a “chain of command” that is yet to be built.

4. A Foreign Affairs Council which “frames the common foreign and security policy and takes the decisions necessary for defining and implementing it”.

The Foreign Affairs Council has lost much of its muscle. It suffers from being separated from the General Affairs Council, which itself has lost much of its momentum. Foreign Ministers have mostly lost touch with European affairs since they are no longer members of the European Council. They have mostly lost touch with major international issues. Finally, the fact that the High Representative now presides over the Council has transformed its work into a sort of routine, which is all about the mechanical proofreading of conclusions and declarations.

National Ministers, or at least some of them, on their own or in small groups, pursue national policies bearing no direct connection with what none of them anyway considers as a truly common stand. Other ministers claim they lack information and are not really encouraged to get engaged. As far as he is concerned, the High Representative keeps doing her job without being always informed of the actions taken by such and such Member State.

The situation whereby everybody thinks he is entitled to play his own part, or alternatively, whereby any “common” action is exclusively in the hands of the High Representative, is a greatly impoverishing one. Of course, the High Representative must remain the sole authority responsible for the implementation of a decision or policy. But the High Representative cannot be everywhere, at every moment. She could decide, with the Council’s agreement, to mandate one or several Ministers to undertake specific missions. The chosen Minister would then act under the authority of the High representative as an authorised representative of the Union, with the help of the Union’s services, chiefly the EEAS. But he would also be supported by competent national services. Such a solution would give back an element of dynamism to the Council.

5. A more frequent use of qualified majority, as provided for by the treaty: “By way of derogation from paragraph 1, the Council acts by a qualified majority...”.

The treaty (article 31) lists the circumstances in which qualified majority can be used to vote on foreign policy issues. The provision has only been used on a very exceptional basis, and sometimes this reluctance was justified. But a decision could, for example, be taken, under the terms of article 31 of the treaty, to entrust a group of Member States more committed to common action, for example, to decide in the Council’s name on management and enforcement measures. Such a procedure would match the delegation procedure used by the Commission. It would allow for a significant reduction in the present limitations on enforcement measures, and at the same time bring forth greater and more useful involvement from the Council members.

6. Defence: implement the dispositions of the treaty.

The cooperation between Member States in the field of defence has taken several forms. Many military operations and civilian missions were carried out between 2000 and 2009; they have since then become scarcer, because of a lack of agreement on policies, and because of diminishing military budgets and means of defence in all European countries. Perhaps the budget allocated to military operations, which according to article 41 § 2, cannot be sourced from the Union’s budget and does not depend on budget policies set forth by the Union, could be modernised. Perhaps, the enforcement of two provisions in the treaty should be considered. The first provision can be found in article 42, § 7, which despite all the nuances and careful wording, represents a sort of security guarantee: what is the meaning of this provision, what are the consequences, what enforcement measures does it call for? The other provision is found in articles 42 and 46 of the

treaty, namely, the implementation of a permanent structured cooperation. These two articles did not provide Member States with a possibility; they laid down an obligation, which should have been fulfilled as soon as the treaty was implemented. None of these provisions requires immediate additional expenses. Actually enforcing the treaty would be a major step forward.

7. Rank priorities.

The Union's external action is by definition a global one. But the Union's own interests are diverse, and the allotted means are very uneven. In many a case, the Union remains in the shadow of Member States: this is true vis-à-vis, not only the United Nations, but also several large countries like the USA, Canada, Russia etc. In other countries, the Union is able to make its influence felt more effectively, either because not all Member States are represented there, or because the interests at stake are mostly economic and commercial ones. But there are other parts of the world where the Union plays the main part. The North of Africa is certainly one of these places. Geographical proximity, history, demographic density, the multiple interests at stake (energy, the environment, migration, security, economic development, etc.) all give the Union a special responsibility. The Western Balkans is another example. Common interests are plain to see, means of action are diversified and considerable. The future of this region depends on decisions (European perspective, etc.) which will be jointly taken by all 28 member States. A real common policy for these two regions, which would include all aspects and all means of action, should be defined. It would be developed under the auspices of the EEAS, on the basis of specific mandates given by the European Council.

The definition of thematic priorities is also necessary: the Union must not try to do everything; taking care of every issue means being mediocre everywhere. Energy has certainly been a priority for a long time. The definition and implementation of an aid policy to deal with refugees could be the second priority for the European Council.

8. A High Representative who does effectively “contribute through his or her proposals towards the preparation of the common foreign and security policy”.

Because of the weakness and shortcomings in the basic framework, much depends on the personality of the High Representative. He or she has to enjoy enough personal authority to fulfil completely both of his or her duties, as a Vice-President of the Commission and as President of the Foreign Affairs Council. This dual role should enable the High Representative to be, as part of a much-needed chain of command, the necessary link between those who enjoy the means (the Commission and Member States) and those who make the decisions (the European Council). It falls on Mrs Mogherini to create this function. The clear responsibility must be allocated, means must be provided, by all the players, by the Commission, by the Council and by the Member States so that she can succeed.

9. The High representative as a true Vice-President of the Commission.

Until now, the High Representative has been the Vice-President of the Commission only in name. Much more often, or almost exclusively in fact, has she been in charge of “political cooperation”. President Juncker has designed a new organisation to remedy this situation. The High Representative must stand as a cornerstone within the Commission so as to help European foreign policy take into account the diverse sectoral policies, and conversely, help these very policies better fit into the framework of a true external policy. The establishment of such necessarily automatic and regular connections to help coordination and common endeavour, must also be undertaken in all fields related to external action (trade, development, enlargement,

emergency aid) but also when dealing with all policies which may be of decisive importance for the Union's external action (energy, immigration, etc.).

10. Rebuild an external action service.

The new High Representative will inherit a badly organised, and in many respects simply disorganised, service. Its structure should be simplified, a clear hierarchical chain of command going down from the Secretary General should be established, the number of directorate-generals and general directions reduced, true crisis-management services (general staff, situation centre, etc.) reconstituted. The creation of the EEAS in 2010 was subject to considerations based on origin – administrative origin, national origin – to a fault, as almost every Member State insisted on being “represented” in this service, to the detriment of its efficiency. Is this inevitable? All we can say is that these considerations were not such a big issue when the organisation of other administrative services, at least as important as the EEAS, was decided – be they the European central bank or the Council's general Secretariat, for example – and that they were not allowed to get in the way of operational effectiveness.

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None of the proposals that we bring to your attention is revolutionary; they are all the direct consequence of an admittedly imperfect treaty, which has not even been correctly enforced. The next few years will represent a make-or-break time: to keep going along in the wrong way would not only condemn the CFSP but also jeopardise the future of Europe as a global force. In current circumstances, it is impossible to try and put a new institutional framework in place. The only way forward it is to put in place a realistic and pragmatic programme of reconstruction.