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How make European diplomacy more assertive and more efficient ?

from **Maxime Lefebvre,**French diplomat, director of international
relations at ENA.

SUMMARY European "power" is by its very nature "post-national " or "post-modern", based on the exceeding, or in any case the sharing, of State sovereignties. It is deployed through the interstices of an increasingly inter-dependent world, but one which remains in part, Westphalian. Within this context, the European Union seeks to defend interests within a logic of a balance of power and reciprocity, whilst retaining a universal viewpoint. In practice it excels more in the role of "civil power" or "power through the norm" than in "hard power", as is being confirmed in the Libyan crisis. But despite what may appear as weakness, Europe is not without solid assets the post-crisis world. These must be valorised by greater mutualisation of means, through better convergence of national will through more systematic concertation between the bigger countries and through the formulation of a joint vision founded on the definition of shared interests. It is only on these conditions that the creation of a European diplomatic service can represent a real opportunity.

INTRODUCTION Revolutions in the Arab world took Europe by surprise. The authoritarian regimes on which it has based itself for its Mediterranean policy have, in part, collapsed, feeding the sentiment that Europe has been too complacent. And reactions of Member States and of the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, were without common line, going as far as real divergences as to the opportuneness and terms of the intervention in Libya.

What has just happened is typical of the European Union's difficulty in reacting to crises immediately and in coordinated fashion, in short its difficulty in showing a united stand. And yet it should be noted that all the reactions, including that of our American partner, fluctuated in response to these unforeseeable events. Once the situation is stabilised we will have no other choice than to rebuild a European strategy based on the agreements of the "Barcelona Process" (1995), which has evolved into the Union for the Mediterranean (2008), learning the lessons of their insufficiencies.

Actually we are at the heart of a paradox here: giving life to a European need, to a coordination and mutualisation process, to joint, in-depth action undertaken in the long term, but without having available the traditional tools of the Westphalian State, such as those the United States benefits from. By reinforcing the role

of the High Representative, in her job since 1st December 2009, and by creating a joint diplomatic service, the "European External Action Service", which came into being on 1st December 2010, the Lisbon Treaty has crowned a long process which began with European political cooperation (1970) and continued with the launch of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (Maastricht Treaty, 1992) and a European Security and Defence Policy (1999). Despite clear and highly visible difficulties, the challenge is to reinforce and make concrete this ability to undertake joint action in the world, based on a shared analysis of our environment and of the interests to be defended. This is a project that could re-mobilise Europeans, as long as they are able to overcome their internal rivalries and work together to produce a joint stand.

A "POST-MODERN" POWER IN A WORLD THAT REMAINS WESTPHALIAN

The paradox of European power is that it takes all its meaning in a "post-national" [1] or "post-modern" [2] vision, in the sense that it presupposes the exceeding or, in any case, the sharing of national sovereignties, at the very time when the world's major powers, in particular the United States, China, India and Russia, re-

1. Jürgen Habermas

2. Robert Cooper

main attached to the Westphalian paradigm, invented in Europe, that is to say the prevalence of the nation State. In 2003, the American neo-conservative Robert Kagan, in a caricature, set Europe, formed by Venus and Kant against America, who came from Mars and Hobbes – before relativising his judgement two years later by saluting the positive role played by Europe in the Ukrainian crisis.

In reality European power has to navigate between two stumbling blocks. It cannot show itself to be fully cosmopolitan (Kantian), because that would be a naïve, utopian, even unrealistic perspective. And it cannot think security in the categories of the national State either, with "in" and "out", and protection based on the instruments of "hard power" (defence, means of coercion). In fact it has to reconcile both visions: defending common interest in a logic of balance of power and reciprocity [3], as well as hanging on to universal paradigms such as Human Rights, the prevalence of law, multilateralism, collective security, the opening up of trade and regional integration, and thus defend a certain vision of the world. To summarise, the European Union's objective should be to show itself to be more political in a world that is less Westphalian because it is increasingly inter-dependent, such as on the questions of trade, the economy, currency or the environment, or the question of "multilateralist multipolarity" to use the expression of Alvaro de Vasconcelos, director of the European Union's Institute of Security Studies.

The European Union has developed its own doctrine in international relations, which expressed itself in particular in the "European security strategy" adopted in 2003. Starting from an analysis of threats, practically identical to the American analysis (terrorism, proliferation, regional conflicts, failed States, organised crime), Europe has drawn up its own responses: commitment to multilateralism, a "neighbourhood policy" in its geographic environment, and civilian rather than merely military management of crises. Well before the American President Obama, the European Union had outlined a strategy for smart power and a civilian-military "global approach", combining both the tools of soft power (diplomacy, influence, economic aid, "normative power" resulting from the power of European norms once adopted for the single market) and those of hard power (sanctions and military intervention).

However, it must be recognised that the European Union excels more in its role of "civilian power" or "normative power" [4] than in a role of political and military power where it acts, at best, as Washington's understudy. Apart from the quite exceptional case of mediation in the Russian-Georgian conflict, due in reality to the fact that France held the European Council presidency, rather than to the Union as such, it is the United States which negotiated the settlement of the Balkans conflicts, which holds the key to settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that of the Iranian nuclear proliferation crisis and which is the guarantor of security balances in both the Middle East and Asia, as well as of the freedom of world communication routes. The European Union will doubtless never be a "great Westphalian power", guarantor of its own security: for almost all European countries, and even for France, ultimate security still relies on NATO and the United States, and the development of European defence can only happen in complement to NATO. Recognising this American strategic supremacy must not be an admission of failure but rather a realistic view.

It is true that there is a relative decline of Europe, due both to demographic stagnation and the rapid development of the rest of the world. Europe lost the hand on History somewhere between the Second World War when the affirmation of two superpowers was established and 1956 with the Suez crisis. It ceased to be at the centre of the world, after five hundred years of domination over the other continents. And yet it still retains some precious assets: its legal tradition of the rule of law ; democracy ; the rank of leading economic and trading power, ahead of the United States ; aid to development (the European Union and its 27 Member States representing half of world public development aid) ; technological capacities on which competitiveness is based, in particular that of countries like Germany ; and the euro which has become a major pillar in a multipolar international monetary system and which is coming out of the sovereign debts crisis stronger than ever. Alongside these strengths there are also some real vulnerabilities: insufficiency of military means, which represent only 10% of the level of American capacities, yet 40% of their expenditure, energy and raw material dependency and a pessimistic state of mind nourished by demographic developments

3. The European Council of September 2010 enacted the concept of reciprocity in its conclusions on relations with the European Union's "strategic partners".

4. Zaki Laidi, *La norme sans la force. L'énigme de la puissance européenne*, Presses de Sciences Po, 2^e éd., 2008

(see the debates on pensions) and the feeling of "being left behind by history".

HOW CAN EUROPEAN POWER BE DEVELOPED AFTER LISBON?

After setting forth and integrating these reservations, it is legitimate to aspire to the European Union showing itself to be more efficient on the international scene, for it to increase its responsibilities within a transatlantic partnership, affirming its interests and values as best possible faced with emerging or re-emerging powers and encouraging economic and democratic progress and regional integration in its eastern and southern neighbourhood.

How can European power be developed with the new tools offered by the Lisbon Treaty? This must involve three principles which strengthen each other mutually: greater mutualisation, greater will, greater shared vision.

Greater mutualisation

Mutualisation already exists through the external aid distributed by the European budget, thus 1/6 of European aid for development transits through the Union, or the Galileo satellite navigation programme, or the creation of a European diplomatic service which, at term, must comprise a third of diplomats from Member States. But one could imagine pushing such mutualisation even further, particularly in terms of defence [5]. The budget for the new European Defence Agency (EDA) is currently limited to the ridiculous amount of €30 million, whereas NATO's military investments amount to €600 million and the total budget for expenditure on arms by Member States amounts to €200 billion. It should be possible to mutualise a small part of these national expenditures, to launch new joint programmes in weapons research and development, with orders remaining national according to the requirements of each army as is already the case, for example, with the project for the A400M military transport plane. This would be a means by which to achieve economies of scale and to rationalise spending, whilst strengthening the industrial and technological basis for defence in Europe.

The Union's military integration should also be reinforced by creating real capacity for operational planning, independent from NATO, or even setting up a sort of "European army", an old project that dates back to

the European Defence Community of 1950-1952, and which is now defended by the CDU and by the SPD on the other side of the Rhine.

Greater joint political will

There are some areas where the European Union is perfectly well integrated: trading policy, competition policy, use of the European budget, normative negotiations with third countries and, increasingly, questions of Justice, Liberty and Security (JLS). On these topics the European Union is slowly and patiently weaving its web, through the community decision mechanisms in Brussels and the role of external negotiator held by the European Commission, which it now has to share with the High Representative, who is also Vice-President of the Commission.

But there are also subjects in which Europe is not integrated and where the unanimous will of Member States remains essential. For example, there is no joint seat as yet on the IMF. On the questions of economic budgetary recovery, financial assistance or currency parity, nothing can be done without passing by Germany's orthodox positions. And this is truer still in terms of foreign and defence policy, with Member States retaining their autonomy on decision-making and action and remaining still very reticent in terms of the United States with regard to launching autonomous Union military operations. Four truly autonomous EU operations have been carried out since 2003, all of them in Africa; the missions in Macedonia and Bosnia merely took over the relay from NATO.

In the joint formulation of political positions, the 27 Member States generally manage to define compromises, but this takes time and in some cases they are divided on major subjects such as the war in Iraq (2003), recognition of Kosovo (2008), or reaction to the Israeli operation in Gaza (2010).

During the Egyptian revolution, European coordination began with a three-party reaction: declarations by French President Sarkozy, British Prime Minister Cameron and German Chancellor Merkel, increasing to five when Spanish and Italian Prime Minister Zapatero and Berlusconi joined them to demand "orderly transition" to a representative government. It was only later that this position became the position of all 27.

The French President openly justified this manner of short-circuiting the European authorities at the Eu-

5. See. Alain Lamassoure, "What prospect for the European budget? From financial solidarity to budgetary solidarity?" in T. Chopin and M. Foucher (dir.), *Schuman Report on Europe. State of the Union 2011, Paris, Lignes de repères, 2011.*

European Council meeting held on 4th February, "The concept I have of Europe is not that 27 Heads of State and Government have to keep quiet because they are lucky enough to have Mrs Ashton. It's that Mrs Ashton should speak in our collective name and that we can, each one of us, make our own modest contribution whenever necessary. Some European Union countries know some Arab countries better than others."

Again, in the Libyan case, great capitals such as Paris and London took the initiative in cooperation with Washington, Germany being "marginalised" by its absence at the Security Council and its refusal to support the military operation. That did not prevent Europe from supporting a joint position sanctioning Colonel Gaddafi and demanding his departure at the European Council on 11th March, or from preparing the launch of a military-humanitarian operation under the terms of the CFSP, under UN mandate.

But controversy arose within the Union, with the French foreign minister, Alain Juppé, reproaching his partners for seeing Europe merely as a "humanitarian NGO" and in the end NATO has taken operational control of the military intervention in Libya, despite reservations in Paris. In his press conference on 25th March, the French President also appeared to approve of a sharing of roles between the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, confined to the humanitarian aspect, political coordination dealt with by the President of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy, and by heads of State and government, and Franco-British military leadership. What these crises confirm, were such confirmation needed, is that the existence of a sophisticated institutional system in Brussels can do nothing if there is no joint will in the capitals, and particular in the capitals of the largest countries.

France, Germany and the United Kingdom represent 40% of the population of the Union and over half of its GDP. An understanding must be developed between these three States, firstly between Paris and Berlin, which constitute the historical driving force behind European construction. Joint reflection and initiatives are needed in order to re-align national decision-making centres on the Brussels machinery. If this does not happen the machine risks remaining a mere bureaucracy running on empty, like a beautiful Ferrari left in the garage and deprived of fuel.

One could ensure that the main European countries get used to coordinating their reactions and produce compromises with a driving force behind them, working towards a European ambition. One could ensure that instead of arguing about the priorities of the neighbourhood policy, with France defending the Mediterranean and Germany eyeing on the East, Paris and Berlin propose a significant increase to the European Neighbourhood Policy budget (ENP) for the next "financial prospects" 2014-2020 [6]. Or that the three German, British and French diplomatic services work together more, as they did on the Iranian case, in liaison with European institutions (High Representative and President of the European Council).

Could one go so far as to make collaboration between the "P3" and European authorities systematic? Inviting the three heads of State and government to European Union summits with third countries [7]? Meeting in this format with the Dalai Lama, instead of allowing the Chinese authorities a replay of the episode of the Horatii and the Curiatii? Meeting in this same format with the American President in order to revitalise EU/United States summits of which Washington is currently disdainful?

Such practices come up against the principle of equality between all Member States, large or small. But the time has maybe arrived for showing greater realism within European policy. Thus the Finnish Foreign Minister, Alexandre Stubb, openly acknowledges that there can be no efficient joint diplomacy without a commitment on the part of the largest countries.

Greater vision, finally

The Europeans must reflect on their joint interests, develop a strategic perspective and set forth their vision of the world. After the European security strategy in 2003, it would be possible to draw up a real foreign policy strategy in the Union, based on a joint analysis of the post-crisis world, a more inter-dependant world, but also one that is more multipolar, a wide-ranging vision of security, integrating constraints such as cyber crime, piracy, climate change or energy and raw material dependency, making European power tools coherent, combining soft and hard power, a doctrine of humanitarian interventions serving the UN, and the setting of concrete objectives in dealing with major powers, great regions of the world and international institutions (such as, for example, in terms of energy

6. This does not seem likely since Paris and Berlin have decided to support the British position of a freeze on the European budget for the period 2014-2020.

7. The EU is represented at these summits by the President of the European Council (H van Rompuy), the President of the European Commission (J.M. Barroso), the High Representative (C. Ashton), and even some commissioners.

Press conference in Helsinki, 19th May 2010.

security with Russia, social and environmental standards with China or democratic and economic governance norms with neighbourhood countries) [8].

A strategy is not everything, of course, what counts is its application, and that is as true in the United States as it is in Europe. But it would be a step forward, justified by the new integration of European foreign policy into the post-Lisbon system, whereas the 2003 strategy was stamped with the CFSP's seal only. And this would not prevent the drawing up of a separate White Paper for the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), including the reinforcement of objectives and capacities, and implementing innovations provided for in the treaty, such as the joint defence clause, and the possibility of permanent "structured cooperation" in terms of defence. The three big Member States could work towards this joint perspective, in liaison the staff of Catherine Ashton and Herman van Rompuy, in order to submit strong ambitious proposals to their partners.

CONCLUSION Although it is true that the European project always arouses doubts and worries, we must unwearyingly remember the principle that it is based on an acceptance of inter-dependency and solidarity.

One can be in or choose to rest out, as is the case of Switzerland and Norway. But once one is in the boat one must agree to follow the logic of sharing and solidarity, which is extending to every field of policy, through to the end. France agreed to the single currency on German terms, because it understood that the Franc would remain subject to a trial of strength with the Deutschemmark. Germany agreed to solidarity with Greece and Ireland in the end, in order to save the euro and therefore Europe.

The European Union does not dissolve nations or make national interests disappear, rather, it shares them and must aspire to merging them. As summed up by Michel Foucher [9], Europeans must persevere in line with a threefold motto: cultivating self-awareness, developing solidarity and acting as a centre of power. May Member States and the new European diplomatic service work towards a new, joint impetus.

Author : Maxime Lefebvre

French diplomat and director of international relations at ENA. Maxime Lefebvre teaches on European and international questions at Sciences Po and has just published *La politique étrangère européenne* (PUF, "Que sais-je?", 2011).

8. press conference in Helsinki, 19th May 2010.

9. *L'Europe et l'avenir du monde*, Odile Jacob, 2009

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