

# FINLAND, SWEDEN & NATO Did Trump Change Everything?



SO, WHAT SHOULD  
WE WEAR TODAY?



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**FINLAND, SWEDEN & NATO**  
Did Trump Change Everything?

*Edited by Jaan Siitonen*

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## PREFACE

FOR MOST EUROPEAN countries, membership both in the EU and NATO go hand-in-hand. The total population of the European Union is some 508 million, yet only 31 million or 6% of EU citizens live in a non-NATO country<sup>1</sup>. These countries are Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta and Sweden.

For Europeans and Americans to better understand this minority, we wanted to produce the publication: **“Finland, Sweden & NATO – Did Trump Change Everything?”**. We also want to examine, whether or not Donald Trump’s first year as the President of the United States has affected the NATO debate in Finland and Sweden.

Both Finland and Sweden joined the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) in 1994 and have actively participated in NATO-led military exercises and crisis management operations ever since. The ideology of neutrality lives on today in both countries even though both Finland and Sweden today officially consider themselves non-aligned. However, it is also important to understand that the cases of Finland and Sweden are quite different. During the Cold War, both Finland and Sweden were neutral countries but geographical reality and the experiences in the Second World War resulted in different practices of this neutrality.

Since the end of the Cold War, there has periodically been a lively debate on whether Finland and Sweden should join the defence alliance or not. Currently the NATO debate is active in Finland due to the presidential elections in January 2018. However, the debate easily gets side-tracked and many politicians do not necessary want to proclaim their stance on NATO publicly. It is easier for them to take refuge in, for example, the

1 European Union: Facts and figures, [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/figures/living\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/figures/living_en)

referendum-argument: “Let the people decide”.

In Finland during the Cold War, NATO was a taboo subject. The case of Finland is analysed in the first Chapter by **Anna Kronlund**. She is an expert in U.S. institutions, and in her chapter she also analyses the so-called “Trump Doctrine”.

During the Cold War, Swedish politicians talked publicly about neutrality, although a small inner-circle of Swedish politicians had made deals with the United States in case of military crisis. Sweden’s double policy is discussed in the second chapter by **Magnus Christiansson**.

What about the deepening defence cooperation in the European Union? Is European Union defence cooperation enough to ensure the security of Finland and Sweden? The future of European defence cooperation is discussed in the third chapter by researcher **Karlijn Jans**.

What do Americans think about Finnish and Swedish non-alignment? In the fourth chapter Managing Director for the Center for Transatlantic Relations **Andras Simonyi** writes about the American perspective. Usually the debate revolves around how Finland and Sweden would benefit from NATO membership. Simonyi, however, analyses how NATO would benefit should the respective countries join the Alliance.

Are the European leaders doing enough developing the common security and defence policies? In the last chapter ALDE-group’s Vice-President, MEP, **Nils Torvalds** discusses why it is important to talk about Finland and Sweden in the corridors of Brussels and why the debate regarding NATO in these countries should interest the policymakers in Europe.

There are many people to thank who have made this publication possible. I would like to thank the authors who shared their expertise. My gratitude also goes out to the staff at the European Liberal Forum and my colleagues at the Svenska Bild-

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The authors are presented in more detail on the next pages. Each author is solely responsible for his or her contribution.

Helsinki, November 20th 2017

Jaan Siitonen

Editor

Svenska Bildningsförbundet in Finland

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



**Anna Kronlund** works as a Post-Doctoral Researcher at the John Morton Center for North American Studies at the University of Turku. In her doctoral dissertation, “Parliamentary Oversight of the Exceptional Situations in a Presidential System Debating the Reassertion of the Constitutional Powers of the U.S. Congress” (2013), she examined debates on congressional powers in respect to presidential powers in exceptional situations. Her current research project is about the environmental policy of the Trump administration and its implications. Her research interests include U.S. Congress and foreign policy, U.S. political decision-making, culture-, war- and emergency power debates and the U.S.-Finland relationship. Her recent publications include a FIIA working paper (99, 2017) entitled “Republican government in the United States: Its Implications for U.S. foreign policy.”



**Magnus Christiansson** was an associate lecturer at the Swedish Defence University in Stockholm 2000–2014. His research interests are transatlantic security, Baltic Sea security and civil–military relations. Previous contributions include “Defence planning beyond rationalism: the third offset strategy as a case of metagovernance” *Defence Studies* (2017); “Pooling, Sharing and Specializing – NATO and International Defense Cooperation” in Hallams, Ratti and Zyla (eds.), *NATO beyond 9/11. The Transformation of the Atlantic Alliance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). He is currently writing his doctoral dissertation.



**Karlijn Jans** is a strategic analyst at The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies. She holds a Master's degree in European Studies specialising in German politics from King's College London and a Master's degree in European and International Law from Maastricht University. Her geographical expertise includes Europe and the transatlantic sphere. Ms. Jans further specialised in defence and security policies while studying as a visiting student at the Netherlands Defence Academy.



**András Simonyi** is Managing Director of the Center for Transatlantic Relations at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Washington D.C. Ambassador Simonyi joined CTR following a successful career in multilateral and bilateral diplomacy, international non-governmental and governmental organizations, and in the private sector. He has held some of the highest positions in the Hungarian diplomatic service including Hungarian Ambassador to NATO and to the United States, and he served as the country's first permanent representative to the Alliance. His focus is on transatlantic security and business, democratic transition and human rights. Ambassador Simonyi is also an expert in Nordic affairs and editor of the book *Nordic Ways*.



**Nils Torvalds** is Vice-President of the ALDE group in the European Parliament and has been an MEP since 2012. Before politics, Torvalds had a long career as a journalist and has worked as a foreign reporter in many capitals such as Washington D.C. and Moscow. He retired as a journalist from the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE in 2008. Torvalds has written several books on Russia and world politics in general.



**Jaan Siitonen** (editor) has been working as Political Advisor at the Svenska Bildnings-förbundet since 2015. Previously, he worked as a Visiting Fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations in Washington D.C. Siitonen has a Master's degree in political science and graduated from the University of Helsinki in 2016.

## ABOUT SVENSKA BILDNINGSFÖRBUNDET

SVENSKA BILDNINGSFÖRBUNDET WAS formed in 1973 by the Swedish People's Party together with its Women's and Youth Leagues. The initial goal of SBF was to organise local workshops and provide training for candidates and campaign staff in fields relating to the mission of the party.

Today the role of Svenska bildningsförbundet has grown and it has matured into an organisation that provides political support in a wider sense. SBF wants to drive the conversation in society by creating spaces where political and societal matters are being discussed from a liberal point of view. SBF is also active in the global arena with its high-class international internship programme for young professionals.

As a strong advocate of liberal solutions to today's societal challenges, Svenska bildningsförbundet hosts seminars, both short weekday-evening seminars and more comprehensive full-day seminars on a wide range of topics.

## ABOUT THE EUROPEAN LIBERAL FORUM

THE EUROPEAN LIBERAL FORUM (ELF) is the foundation of the European Liberal Democrats, the ALDE Party. A core aspect of our work consists in issuing publications on Liberalism and European public policy issues. We also provide a space for the discussion of European politics, and offer training for liberal-minded citizens. Our aim is to promote active citizenship in all of this.

Our foundation is made up of a number of European think tanks, political foundations and institutes. The diversity of our membership provides us with a wealth of knowledge and is a

constant source of innovation. In turn, we provide our members with the opportunity to cooperate on European projects under the ELF umbrella.

We work throughout Europe as well as in the EU Neighbourhood countries. The youthful and dynamic nature of ELF allows us to be at the forefront in promoting active citizenship, getting the citizen involved with European issues and building an open, Liberal Europe.

# CHAPTER I: DEBATE OVER EVOLVING PARTNERSHIP

ANNA KRONLUND

## INTRODUCTION

THE ELECTION OF President Donald Trump has raised questions about United States commitments to the rules-based order – to international norms, institutions and agreements. The overall uncertainty has characterised the discussions on where the U.S. is heading in its foreign policy and how it sees the value of multilateral cooperation and institutions. President Trump has criticised the international system, considering it to be economically disadvantageous to the U.S. However, President Trump’s argument for fairer burden-sharing in financial terms is not a completely new idea. For example, the 2% GDP minimum spending requirement for defence by NATO member countries was mentioned in the Wales Summit Declaration of 2014. Much of the recent discussion has focused on how committed the U.S. is to international cooperation. In an op-ed column, National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster and chief economic advisor Gary D. Cohn outlined how President Trump started his foreign visit to the Middle East and Europe “with a clear-eyed outlook that the world is not a ‘global community’ but an arena where nations, non-governmental actors and businesses engage and compete for advantage”.<sup>2</sup>

Instead of a multilateral order, the policy of the Trump administration seems to emphasise bilateral relations (at least in some policy areas), national sovereignty and the art of “deal-

2 See H.R. McMaster and Gary D. Cohn. “America First Doesn’t Mean America Alone”. Op-ed. *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 May 2017. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/america-first-doesnt-mean-america-alone-1496187426>.

making” in foreign relations. In his speech to the United Nation’s General Assembly (UNGA), President Trump reminded the audience about the United States’ previous and current commitments, but also emphasised state sovereignty and transactional cooperation, stressing “outcomes instead of ideologies”. By using the concept of “policy of principled realism” based on “shared goals, values and interests”, President Trump offered a view of his “foreign policy philosophy”.<sup>3</sup>

As an example of the importance of bilateral relations and efforts to build them, President Sauli Niinistö’s visit to the White House could be mentioned. In its aftermath, it has been argued that the relationship between Finland and the U.S. is closer than ever ranging from cultural, economic and security issues and topics. In the press meeting with President Niinistö, President Trump noted that Finland and the U.S. share common values.

Recently, the government of Finland has published reports on defence and foreign and security policy, outlining its visions, objectives and operating environment. Both documents mention that the U.S. is an “important partner” (*tärkeä kumppani*) for Finland. In regard to the previous and ongoing cooperation in the realm of security, a couple of issues could be mentioned. In 2016, Finland and the U.S. signed a declaration of intent to enhance and increase collaboration and cooperation between the two countries.<sup>4</sup> Finland cooperates with NATO in the frameworks of the Partnership for Peace programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Finland also contributes to international crisis management operations such as the U.S.-led operation in

3 Remarks by the President Trump to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. 19 September 2017.

4 See “Statement of Intent on bilateral defence cooperation between Finland and US” at [http://www.defmin.fi/en/topical/press\\_releases/2016/statement\\_of\\_intent\\_on\\_bilateral\\_defence\\_cooperation\\_between\\_finland\\_and\\_us.8013.news](http://www.defmin.fi/en/topical/press_releases/2016/statement_of_intent_on_bilateral_defence_cooperation_between_finland_and_us.8013.news).

Iraq (OIR) and the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan (RS).<sup>5</sup> It also, for example, recently trained in the Baltic Sea with Sweden and the United States as a part of the Aurora17 exercise organised in Sweden.

This paper draws on the discussions between the current U.S. government and the Republican Party in regard to U.S. international engagements. How is the role of international organisations such as NATO viewed in the U.S.? How significant is NATO considered by the Trump administration? And how do these views have an effect on the willingness of Finland to become officially dependent in terms of defence (and partly politically)? The paper also looks at domestic discussion in Finland about transatlantic relations and their future.

## PRINCIPLED REALISM AS A GUIDE TO U.S. FOREIGN POLICY UNDER THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY

DURING THE ELECTION campaign and after President Donald Trump was elected, the commitment of the U.S. to international norms, institutions and international agreements has raised discussion. At that time, candidate Donald Trump called NATO “obsolete”. He questioned free-trade agreements and the level of U.S. engagement in international organisations. President Trump pulled the U.S. out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership free-trade agreement and announced U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord if it could not negotiate better terms. It was recently reported that the U.S. is also withdrawing from UNESCO.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, President Trump has announced that he will not continue to ratify the Iran

5 See more in detail about Finns in crisis management tasks <http://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/international-activities/international-crisis-management>.

6 The question of U.S. commitment to UNESCO has been on the table before. See, e.g., Senator Marco Rubio's press release on the issue (12 October 2017).

Nuclear deal, leaving to Congress the decision on how to proceed.<sup>7</sup> The Trump administration seems to still be searching for its foreign policy. At the time that this was written, the new government has not yet published its first national security strategy document, which would provide some guidance.<sup>8</sup>

President Trump himself has framed his foreign policy in terms of “principled realism.”<sup>9</sup> He used this description in his speech to the Arab Islamic American Summit in May 2017: “For our part, America is committed to adjusting our strategies to meet evolving threats and new facts. We will discard those strategies that have not worked—and will apply new approaches informed by experience and judgment. We are adopting a Principled Realism, rooted in common values and shared interests.”

In his speech about U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia in August 2017, President Trump explained how this guides his foreign policy:

*But we will no longer use American military might to construct democracies in faraway lands, or try to rebuild other countries in our own image. Those days are now over. Instead, we will work with allies and partners to protect our shared interests. We are not asking others to change their way of life, but to pursue common goals that allow our children to live better and safer lives. This principled realism will guide our decisions moving forward.*

7 Mark Landler & David E. Sanger. “Trump to Force Congress to Act on Iran Nuclear Deal”. *The New York Times*, 5 October 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/05/world/middleeast/trump-iran-nuclear-deal.html>.

8 For an analysis of what the NSS could look like, see, e.g., Tarun Chhabra. Brookings Report: “Crafting Trump’s first National Security Strategy: What it could be—and why it not might matter anyway”. 13 September 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/crafting-trumps-first-national-security-strategy-what-it-could-be-and-why-it-might-not-matter-anyway/>.

9 The conception of “principled realism” has also been used before. For example, Paul Johnson, a contributor to *Forbes*, referred to it in 2005 in relation to George W. Bush’s presidency. See “Principled Realism: Good for Both Parties”. (*Forbes*, 18 April 2005.) <https://www.forbes.com/forbes/2005/0418/037.html>.

President Trump returned to this theme in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2017. He argued “We want harmony and friendship, not conflict and strife. We are guided by outcomes, not ideology. We have a policy of principled realism, rooted in shared goals, interests, and values.”<sup>10</sup>

According to commentators, the speech that the president gave at the UNGA provided a description of the Trump doctrine – a genre of “big-power nationalism” – that he and his advisors have also called “America First”. The speech differed from the Obama presidency’s emphasis on human rights and climate change, or President Obama’s focus on international organisations and his apprehension regarding restrictions of U.S. military power. However, while the focus on nationalism was in accord with President Trump’s campaign theme, the speech presented an assertive view of the role of the U.S. in the world that was somewhat different than some of the earlier campaign talk, hinting at “a more isolationist path”.<sup>11</sup>

President Trump’s idea of foreign policy has also been described as transactional, when viewed from the perspective of

10 President Trump’s speech to Arab Islamic American Summit, 21 May 2017. Remarks by President Trump on the Strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia, 21 August 2017. Remarks by President Trump to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 19 September 2017. Speeches accessed via <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-and-remarks>.

11 See the analysis by Noah Bierman & David Lauter. “In U.N. speech, Trump defines his foreign policy doctrine as sovereignty for major powers”. *Los Angeles Times*, 19 September 2017. See also an analysis by Ishaan Tharoor, who has claimed that the international agenda of the President is not pragmatic or principled but “has always been guided as ideology first”. *The Washington Post*, 20 September 2017. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/09/20/trumps-principled-realism-is-an-incoherent-mess/?utm\\_term=.5b28be8c37ba](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/09/20/trumps-principled-realism-is-an-incoherent-mess/?utm_term=.5b28be8c37ba).

cost and effectiveness.<sup>12</sup> In two op-eds, McMaster and Cohn have commented on U.S. foreign policy. The other was titled “America First does not mean America alone”. In practice, it translates to a “commitment to protecting and advancing ... vital interests while also fostering cooperation and strengthening relationship with ... allies and partners”.

The three principles of this policy are:

1. The primary interests of the U.S. in the safety and security of its people,
2. Guaranteeing economic prosperity, and
3. Strong alliances and economically successful partners.

In another op-ed, McMaster and Cohn summarised the approach of President Trump as a search for “areas of agreement and cooperation”, whilst at the same time “protecting America’s interests”.<sup>13</sup>

The ideas appearing in President Trump’s speeches could be distinguished as national sovereignty, the power of the people, and the U.S. role in the world with certain conditions, to mention but a few aspects. The President uses phrases such as “America must put its own citizens first”, “Our government’s first duty

12 See, e.g., Leon Hadar. “The Limits of Trump’s Transactional Foreign Policy”. *The National Interest*, 2 January 2017. <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-limits-trumps-transactional-foreign-policy-18898?page=2>. In his speech at the UNGA, President Trump noted: “The United States will forever be a great friend to the world and to its allies. But we can no longer be taken advantage of, or enter into a one-sided deal where the United States gets nothing in return. As long as I hold this office, I will defend America’s interests above all else.” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-72nd-session-united-nations-general-assembly/>.

13 McMaster and Cohn, 2017. See also Gary D. Cohn and H.R. McMaster. “The Trump Vision for America Abroad”. Op-ed. *The New York Times*, 13 July 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/13/opinion/the-trump-vision-for-america-abroad.html>.

is to its people, to our citizens” and “I will defend America’s interests above all else”.<sup>14</sup>

In the 2016 elections, as previously, both culture and identity had a role to play. The Brookings Report from 2017 titled “Building ‘Situations of Strength’: A National Security Strategy for the United States” explains how in 2016 the American people voted for a candidate who had a critical attitude towards the international order and its integral parts. While foreign policy did not play a dominant role in the election, “President Trump’s victory demonstrates that many Americans believe they are not beneficiaries of the existing order”.<sup>15</sup> The question floating around has been how much change President Donald Trump’s policies will actually bring. In his well-known book *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (2001), Walter Russel Mead writes that “American thinking about foreign policy has been relatively stable over the centuries”.<sup>16</sup> Inasmuch as public and elite opinion are taken into account, a long-term bipartisan view has supported the central commitment to an active leadership role by the U.S. when at the same time the nation in its entirety has followed “opinion leaders” in Congress and the administration.<sup>17</sup>

14 See President Trump’s joint address to Congress and his speech at the UNGA. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-joint-address-congress/>. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-72nd-session-united-nations-general-assembly/>.

15 Derek Chollet, Eric Edelman, Michéle Flournoy, Stephen J. Hadley, Martin Indyk, Bruce Jones, Robert Kagan, Kristen Silverberg, Jake Sullivan, and Thomas Wright. *Brookings Report 2017*, 2. [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/fp\\_201702\\_ofc\\_report\\_web.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/fp_201702_ofc_report_web.pdf).

16 Walter Russel Mead. *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*. New York and London: Routledge, 2001, xvi.

17 Kari Möttölä. “Present at the (re)creation? Words and deeds in an emerging Trump foreign policy and the consequences for European security”. In Mika Aaltola and Bart Gaens (ed.), *Managing Unpredictability: Transatlantic relations in the Trump era*. FIIA Report 51 (2017), 50.

While there is long-term continuity, as argued by Mead, changes do occur at least on a small scale. For example, since the Obama presidency the focus has been on hard rather than soft power. President Trump does not consider soft power as the main organising value for his international policies<sup>18</sup>. He himself noted during his speech on his Afghanistan strategy: “Under my administration, many billions of dollars more is being spent on our military. And this includes vast amounts being spent on our nuclear arsenal and missile defense.” An agreement for USD 700 billion of funding for the U.S. military was announced (requiring full congressional approval, however). President Trump has previously also suggested decreasing funding for diplomatic instruments such as the Department of State and the UN. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has introduced his plan to redesign the State Department and make its diplomacy more effective.<sup>19</sup> The effort to cut the diplomatic instruments has, however, encountered opposition among the Republicans and Democrats.<sup>20</sup>

In his book, Mead labelled the four schools of US foreign policy as “Wilsonian”, “Hamiltonian”, “Jacksonian” and “Jeffersonian”. Mead discusses Trump in the context of Jacksonians, who see the U.S. government’s role as taking care of the security and economic well-being of the American people at home. In the current situation, Jacksonians are distrustful of U.S. commitments to global politics and the liberal order. This is not out of

18 See Leo Michel. “US ‘Soft Power’ and the Trump Administration: Disturbing Signs”. FIIA Comment 15/2007. <https://www.fia.fi/en/publication/us-soft-power-and-the-trump-administration>.

19 Remarks by President Trump on the strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia, 21 August 2017. Tracy Wilkinson. “Tillerson trims State Department staff and vows to make diplomacy more effective”. *Los Angeles Times*, 14 September 2017. <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-fg-pol-state-department-plan-20170915-story.html>.

20 Patricia Zengerle. “Senators Blast State Department over Cuts”. *Reuters*, 17 November 2017. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-diplomacy-senate/seNATOrs-blast-state-department-over-cuts-idUSKBN1DE268>.

a desire to have some replaceable outlook, but more that they lack trust in the persons formulating foreign policy. Mead also points out that for the first time since Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration U.S. foreign policy "debates this fundamental".<sup>21</sup>

## SEPARATION OF POWERS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

IN THE UNITED States, conducting foreign policy is the realm of the president. He or she has more leeway in foreign than domestic politics. U.S. Congress does not have such a visible or direct role in U.S. foreign policy-making, but it still has an effect.<sup>22</sup> Mead has written how there is a specific continuity in American foreign policy in the longer perspective but that the foreign policy of the U.S. "does not proceed out of a single, unified worldview". Diverse views on the definition of "national interest" can even be found at the centre of the political processes. The basis of American foreign policy is in rivalling and conflicting values and voices. Mead describes it as a "symphony" rather than a "solo".<sup>23</sup>

Some of the Republican Senators have commented vocally on the direction of U.S. foreign policy. Recently, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker was reported as saying that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Secretary of Defence

21 See Walter Russel Mead. "The Jacksonian Revolt. American Populism and the Liberal Order". Comment. *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2017 issue. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-01-20/jacksonian-revolt>.

22 Constitutionally established, the Senate gives it "advice and consent" to the ratification of treaties. In spring 2017, the US Senate voted 97-2 to admit Montenegro to NATO. Andrew Hanna. "Senate votes overwhelmingly to admit Montenegro to NATO". *Politico*, 28 March 2017. <http://www.politico.com/story/2017/03/senate-approves-montenegro-nato-treaty-236606>.

23 Mead 2001, 52–54.

James Mattis and Chief of Staff John Kelly “are those people that help separate our country from chaos”.<sup>24</sup>

The current situation, in which the Republicans are the majority in both houses of Congress and in the White House is favourable in terms of advancing their agenda.<sup>25</sup> While the tensions among the Republicans have already been visible in many policy issues, such as healthcare reform and relations with Russia, just to give a few examples, it could be that Congress is less likely to impose additional restrictions on the president and be more willing to further his policies than in times of party division. Despite the current situation of unified government, Jordan Tama has written how opposition and support for the president’s foreign policy will not necessarily be turned directly into party positions.<sup>26</sup> A recent bipartisan example that can be mentioned is the sanctions legislation passed by a veto-proof majority.<sup>27</sup>

According to research, foreign policy so far has been less polarised in the U.S. than domestic politics. Foreign policy decisions are often characterised by 1) different views within the party, producing conflicting bipartisan congressional coalitions, or 2) legislators in both parties joining together to contest the president’s policies. Recent scholarly literature actually shows that Congress restricts the president in many foreign policy

24 Sophie Tatum. “Corker: Tillerson, Mattis and Kelly ‘separate our country from chaos.” *CNN*, 6 October 2017. <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/04/politics/bob-corker-mattis-tillerson-kelly/index.html>.

25 See Anna Kronlund. “The United Government in the US. The implications for foreign policy”. FIIA Working Paper 99 (2017). [http://www.fiaa.fi/en/publication/708/republican\\_government\\_in\\_the\\_united\\_states/](http://www.fiaa.fi/en/publication/708/republican_government_in_the_united_states/).

26 Jordan Tama. “Presidential-Congressional Relations in Foreign Policy”. In James A. Thurber and Jordan Tama (ed.), *Rivals for Power. Presidential-Congressional Relations*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017, 230.

27 See “Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act”, passed by the Senate (98-2) and in the House (419-3). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/3364/all-actions?overview=closed&q=%7B%22roll-call-vote%22%3A%22all%22%7D>.

issues, such as “the development of weapons of mass destruction, the funding of international institutions, diplomatic agreements, human rights, international trade, counter-terrorism, the civil-military relationship and sanctions”.<sup>28</sup> The decision of President Obama to seek congressional authorisation for the use of military force has been used as an example of congressional influence in military affairs.<sup>29</sup>

### TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS IN A STATE OF FLUX?

TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS HAVE somewhat been in a state of disarray in recent months. After the G7 meeting in May 2017, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, for example, said that Europeans will have to do things by themselves from now on, but added that it would be in friendship with the U.S, Great Britain and other neighbours. “But we need to know that we must fight for our own future and destiny as Europeans”, Merkel was reported to have said.<sup>30</sup> As argued, the political discord between the European Union and the U.S. is not only a result of the change of course in President Trump’s foreign policy. It also stems from the fact that the Trump presidency has more clearly illustrated that many Americans support another kind of foreign policy and do not share similar values with Europe. Domestic interests now mark the foreign policy of the U.S.<sup>31</sup> This is not the only time, however, that there has been a “rupture in the relationship”. The war in Iraq by President George W. Bush’s administration

28 See the references of literature in Tama 2017, 220–222.

29 Douglas L. Kriner. Obama’s Authorization Paradox: Syria and Congress’s Continued Relevance in Military Affairs. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 44, no 2 (June), 2014, 309–327.

30 Quoted in *CNN*, May 29 2017. <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/05/28/politics/angela-merkel-donald-trump-g7/index.html>.

31 See Teija Tiilikainen. Pääkirjoitus. *Ulkopolitiikka*, 3/2017. [http://www.ulkopoliitika.fi/artikkeli/1694/haavoittuva\\_lansi/](http://www.ulkopoliitika.fi/artikkeli/1694/haavoittuva_lansi/).

was opposed by many European countries and their leaders. In addition, John Ikenberry argues how the first years of the 21st century highlighted many differences across the Atlantic on cultural and social issues besides politics, ranging from foreign policy to global warming and transnational justice. As described by Ikenberry, the issues that keep the “Atlantic order” together are economic integration, common values, military alliance and linkages of diplomatic and political governance. The order is also characterised by the ideas of capitalism, democracy and the heritage of a shared civilisation.<sup>32</sup> It is now questionable whether there is more than just cooperation in military affairs, when the values of President Trump’s administration and those of Europe do not necessarily coincide.

### THE ROLE OF ALLIES AND PARTNERS?

THE UNITED STATES’ defence and security relationship with Europe took a new step during the Barack Obama presidency. From the establishment of NATO in 1949 to the two presidential terms of George W. Bush, the United States applied a “two-track” approach in dealing with defence and security issues with Europe, as pointed out by Leo Michel. One track linked European allies and the U.S. through NATO cooperation. The other track concerned bilateral agreement with allies and was strengthened by a vast array of informal agreements. The Obama presidency meant adding an additional step, a “U.S.-EU track”,

32 G. John Ikenberry. “Explaining Crisis and Change in Atlantic Relations. An Introduction”. In Jeffrey Anderson, G. John Ikenberry, and Thomas Risse (ed.), *The End of the West?* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008, 1, 8.

to transatlantic security and defence relations.<sup>33</sup> European Union and NATO cooperation in defence and security policy was furthered again after the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, when the parties committed to the Joint Declaration.<sup>34</sup>

One item causing headlines has been Trump's view on NATO, in particular that NATO member countries should do more, especially in budgetary terms. Trump has raised the issue of the 2% of GDP spending requirement on many occasions. The point is not unprecedented, as the requirement was actually already included in the accord of the 2014 Wales Summit. When asked about the issue in early January, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Senator Bob Corker stated:

*But with NATO, there is an issue there. And we have countries that we've had a relationship with for a long time that are not contributing the amount that they're supposed to contribute to NATO ... Madeleine Albright has been before our committee complaining about it. I complain about it every year. And finally, there's a president that's making a big deal out of that. I actually think that's a healthy thing, as long as we continue to understand the strong importance of the NATO alliance, and what it means to our own security. What it means to world's security.<sup>35</sup>*

33 Leo Michel. "Transatlantic defence and security relations under the Donald Trump administration: a new paradigm?" In Mika Aaltola and Bart Gaens (ed.), *Managing Unpredictability: Transatlantic relations in the Trump era*. FIIA Report 51 (2017), 130. For more on the U.S. strengthening bilateral relations with EU in the realm of defence and security cooperation, see Michel 2017, 136–137.

34 See the statement by President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. [http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133163.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm).

35 Susan Glasser. "Sen. Bob Corker: The Full Transcript". *Politico*, 13 February 2017. Available at <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/02/sen-bob-corker-the-full-transcript-214767>.

At regular intervals, U.S. leaders have urged Europeans and Canada to increase their defence capabilities.<sup>36</sup> It remains to be seen how NATO will develop during the Trump presidency.

The debate on NATO under Trump has also revolved around the U.S. commitment to Article 5 of the treaty, covering collective defence. Is the Trump administration fully committed to the article?<sup>37</sup> There is a certain historical background to the wording of the article. To many Americans, the First and Second World Wars proved “the folly of isolationism”, but not all agreed. When President Harry S. Truman negotiated the treaty with Europeans and Canadians, he tried at the same time tried to convince a group of senators that the treaty would not oblige direct military intervention if there were an armed attack against a member country. Therefore, Article 5 was carefully written. It means that allies are required “to assist” an attacked member with action “as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force”.<sup>38</sup>

Another point of discussion has been the allies and alliances. In May 2017, McMaster and Cohn argued that President Trump’s visit to the Middle East and Europe “represented a strategic shift” for the U.S. According to them, “America First” means the reassurance of the U.S. role abroad. Diplomatic, military and economic means are adopted to increase American security, advance its prosperity and expand American impact.<sup>39</sup> In his

36 See Leo Michel. “Bilateral Defence treaties with the United States: Not an alternative to NATO”. FIIA Comment 19/2016. [http://www.fiaa.fi/en/publication/618/bilateral\\_defence\\_treaties\\_with\\_the\\_united\\_states/](http://www.fiaa.fi/en/publication/618/bilateral_defence_treaties_with_the_united_states/).

37 President Trump has referred to the U.S. commitments in his speech in Poland, for example, by saying: “the United States has demonstrated not merely with words but with its actions that we stand firmly behind Article 5, the mutual defense commitment”. Remarks by the President Trump to the People of Poland, 6 July 2017. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/07/06/remarks-president-trump-people-poland-july-6-2017>.

38 Michel 2017, 131.

39 McMaster & Cohn 2017.

speech in September 2017, Secretary of Defence James Mattis shared his view of how the Department of Defence is currently reaching for “three lines of effort”. The three lines mentioned by Mattis are: 1) “building a more lethal joint force”; 2) the “effort to strengthen international alliances and partnerships;” and 3) “to reform the business practices of the departments inside”. Mattis explained his view on the importance of allies as follows: “Because history is compelling on this point, that nations with allies thrive and those without allies decline. It’s that simple.” He also referred to an example of current joint cooperation, the “defeat ISIS campaign”, which brings together 69 nations and four international organisations: the Arab League, NATO, Interpol and the EU. Mattis also pointed out that the procedures, processes and organisations of the U.S. must be “allied-friendly”. He further directed the audience to consider that the number of the aircraft carriers of one nation does not necessarily correlate with the fact that it produces most of the good ideas.<sup>40</sup>

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FINLAND AND THE UNITED STATES

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN Finland and the U.S. is conducted bilaterally and in the framework of the EU. In his visit to Washington, D.C. in August 2017, President Sauli Niinistö met with President Donald Trump. In an interview after the bilateral meeting, President Niinistö noted that security was the main topic discussed at the meeting. After his visit, Niinistö outlined the relations between the two countries as follows: “Today the

40 See the speech of the Secretary of Defense at Air Force Association, Air, Space, and Cyber Conference, 20 September 2017. <https://www.defense.gov/News/Speeches/Speech-View/Article/1318960/air-force-association-2017-air-space-and-cyber-conference/>.

bond between Finland and the United States is closer than ever.”<sup>41</sup> President Niinistö also met with Senators Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), Chris Coons (D-Delaware) and Ben Cardin (D-Maryland).<sup>42</sup> President Niinistö welcomed Secretary of Defence James Mattis when he visited Finland in November 2017. While in Finland, Mattis also participated in the working meeting of the Northern Group defence ministers.<sup>43</sup>

Cooperation between Finland and the U.S. covers cultural, economic, educational and security and defence aspects. Collaboration between the two countries also takes place in such arenas as the Arctic Council, which Finland currently chairs (following the U.S.). Another issue that could be mentioned is the recently established European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in Helsinki (Hybrid CoE). Its aim is not only to benefit the 15 participant countries but also to invite the EU and NATO to join its activities.<sup>44</sup> There has also been new research cooperation between Finland and the U.S. The newly established Cyber Research Institute in Oulu is a collaborative effort with the U.S. National Science Foundation.<sup>45</sup>

As of November 14, it was announced that the President Trump has nominated Robert Frank Pence to be the U.S. ambas-

41 The President of the Republic of Finland. “President Niinistö in Washington: Security the top theme of talks”. <http://tpk.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=365693&nodeid=44809&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>. See also The White House, 28 August 2017. “Remarks by President Trump and President Niinistö of Finland at a Joint Press Conference”. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/08/28/remarks-president-trump-and-president-niinist%C3%B6-finland-joint-press>.

42 The President of the Republic of Finland, 17.9.2017. <http://tpk.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=366446&nodeid=44809&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>.

43 Press Release, “The US Secretary of Defense James Mattis to visit Helsinki on 6 to 7 November 2017”. [http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset\\_publisher/yhdysvaltain-puolustusministeri-james-mattis-vierailee-helsingissa-6-7-11-2017](http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/yhdysvaltain-puolustusministeri-james-mattis-vierailee-helsingissa-6-7-11-2017).

44 See more about the Centre at <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/>.

45 See, “Preserving collaboration brings cyber research centre to University of Oulu”. <http://www oulu.fi/university/node/48379>.

sador to Finland. The nomination falls into the political appointee categorisation. The nomination needs to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. According to American Foreign Service Association, the total of ambassadorial appointments by the Trump administration is 57 (as of 9 November 2017). Overall, there are still several unfilled positions in the State Department.<sup>46</sup>

## FINLAND AS A MILITARILY NON-ALIGNED

THE STRATEGIC CHOICES of a country are guided not only by geography and its geopolitical environment but also its historical experiences.<sup>47</sup> Before becoming independent in 1917, Finland had been part of Sweden and Russia. In the mid-20th century, Finland fought two wars with Russia, with which it shares a border of 1,340 kilometres: the Winter War (1939) and the Continuation War (1941–1944). The armistice agreement was signed with Russia in 1944, and afterwards the Paris Peace Agreement was ratified in 1947. Finland maintained its independence, but the agreement imposed limitations on Finland’s sovereignty, including conditions for the number of troops and armaments. As a result of the wars, Finland also paid reparations and had to give up some of its territory.

As a follow-up in 1948, Finland signed the “Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance” (Ystävyys, Yhteistyö ja Avunanto -sopimus) with the Soviet Union, which defined the relationship of the countries for years to come. Finland never considered the agreement to be a military agreement and the military requirement for cooperation was restricted to a very spe-

46 See the data provided by the Partnership for Public Service. <https://ourpublicservice.org/issues/presidential-transition/political-appointee-tracker.php>. See the statistics provided by the American Foreign Service Association at <http://www.afsa.org/appointments-donald-j-trump#f>.

47 Arvio Suomen mahdollisen NATO-jäsenyyden vaikutuksista. Ulkoasiainministeriö 2016, 8.

cific case.<sup>48</sup> The agreement was replaced in 1992 with a treaty with Russia that did not include any condition of mutual assistance.

During the Cold War, after Finland joined the United Nations in 1955 and the return of Porkkala Island, which had been leased to the Soviet Union as a military base, Finland adopted a policy of “neutrality”. The so-called “Paasikivi-Kekkonen” doctrine, named after two Finnish presidents, indicated the foreign policy of Finland after the wars. It was based on two ideas: nonalignment/neutrality and good relations with its Eastern neighbour. The background to the neutrality policy was the geographical situation and the Cold War.<sup>49</sup> The neutrality policy of Finland at the time has also been termed “Finlandisation”, meaning that a smaller state carefully maintains neutrality in order not to cause trouble with a superpower next door. This concept has since acquired somewhat negative connotations.

It is said that the policy of neutrality become somewhat empty when Finland joined the EU in 1995. EU membership was not, however, contradictory to the policy of being militarily non-aligned or maintaining good relations with Russia.<sup>50</sup> Previously Finland had joined the European Free Trade Association as an associate member in 1961, and it had signed a free trade treaty with the EC in 1972.

Despite the close diplomatic connections with the leading NATO countries, Finland established official relations with NATO only after the Cold War.<sup>51</sup> In 1992, Finland joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council as an observer. The opening of the NATO debate in Finland took place in 1991–1992. The debate was not politicised, however, because the parties did

48 Ibid., 8–9.

49 Tuomas Forsberg. *NATO Kirja*. Helsinki: Ajatus-kirjat, 2002, 1.

50 Forsberg 2002, 18–19.

51 Arvio Suomen mahdollisen NATO-jäsenyyden vaikutuksista 2016, 10.

not want to appraise the membership. In Finland, the question of NATO membership has usually been considered in terms of security, but this has only been one theme. The others have concerned the political influence of Finland and its identity.<sup>52</sup> The decision of Finland to join the Partnership for Peace programme in 1994 was based on three issues, according to analysts: 1) Finland wanted to be part of the peace-keeping framework; 2) Finland valued the development of the military capabilities needed in peace-keeping; and 3) the decision was guided by a willingness to follow the relationship between Russia, NATO and the Eastern European countries. The official NATO policy of Finland has been written into the government's policies and reports on defence and security policies from 1995 onwards, after Finland became a part of the Partnership for Peace programme (PfP).<sup>53</sup>

Finland works in cooperation with all the partners and organisations that, on their behalf, advance the security of Europe, including NATO, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and Nordic cooperation.<sup>54</sup> It has been argued that for a small country such as Finland, being located far away from the centre of the Western world, it is good to be part of the organisations enhancing the certain values of rule of law, human rights, and democracy. These organisations are those that also provide Finland with security.<sup>55</sup>

Why then has Finland not joined NATO? After the Cold War, the NATO policy for Finland was guided by “maintaining

52 Forsberg 2002, 265, 267.

53 Juha Karvinen and Juha-Antero Puistola. *NATO ja Suomi*. Helsinki: Auditorium, 2015, 207–208.

54 Arvio Suomen mahdollisen NATO-jäsenyyden vaikutuksista 2016, 5.

55 Pauli Järvenpää. “Argumentteja Suomen NATO-jäsenyyden puolesta”. In Fred Blombergs (ed.), *Suomen Turvallisuuspoliittisen Ratkaisun Lähtökohtia*. Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulun julkaisusarja 1: tutkimuksia numero 4. Tampere: Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu, 2016, 14. [http://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/124431/Blombergs\\_verkkoversio\\_2016-2.pdf](http://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/124431/Blombergs_verkkoversio_2016-2.pdf).

the NATO-option”, meaning that Finland will not seek membership under the current conditions but does not rule it out either.<sup>56</sup> The question of NATO membership was discussed in the mid-1990s in the defence council led by the president and prime Minister. The conclusion was, as brought up by Tuomas Forsberg in his book on NATO (2002), that Finland could become a member if certain things happened: NATO becoming a crisis management institution and Russia acquiring a positive view about cooperation and becoming a part of it. It was also argued that Finland would not be in the right reference group at the time among members joining the alliance. In the early 2000s, the “security situation” had not changed, indicating that there was no “reason” to apply for membership. While the discussions have revolved around the same themes and issues on NATO, there have been some changes of emphasis as argued by Forsberg. The first phase of the discussion was more theoretical about whether membership would realistically be an option in the first place. The second phase meant an actual discussion about the enlargement of NATO. At the same time, the uncertainty of Russia and its changing policy raised some concerns in Finland. In the debate at the time, the role of NATO as a defence alliance was topical. Those with a positive view of the alliance argued that Finland should apply for membership when the “weather was good”. Next, the third phase of the discussion took place when NATO enlargement actually happened. The discussion moved from threat analysis to a question of Finland’s influence in the international setting.<sup>57</sup>

The latter phases of the discussion have been characterised by the timing of applying for membership and whether the door

56 Forsberg 2002, 244.

57 See more in detail in Forsberg 2002, 260, 266–267.

is actually open for Finland to join.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, as a group of experts have been pondering in a recent report ordered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, one could ask what it actually means to apply and what would the effects of possible membership might be. According to the author of the *Politico* article, “Wary of Russia, Finns take another look at NATO”, Finns would now be ready to have the debate on NATO.<sup>59</sup> The article refers to some of the recent statements by current and recent politicians and diplomats about membership. In the first debate among the candidates of the Finnish presidential elections, which was organised by the Finnish Business and Policy Forum (EVA) and revolved around security and foreign policy, the question of NATO was considered, but mainly from the perspective of whether there would need to be a referendum on membership.

## FINLAND AS A PARTNER IN DEFENCE AND SECURITY POLICY

AN OUTLINE OF Finnish security and defence policy was recently included in the government’s reports on foreign and security policy (2016) and on defence policy (2017). The government’s report on foreign and security policy was released in June 2016 before the Brexit referendum and the U.S. presidential election. The question of the report’s timing was brought up. In May 2017, Parliament considered Prime Minister Juha Sipilä’s announce-

58 In a recent op-ed published in a Finnish newspaper, it was asked why in Finland the NATO “option is discussed” when the country clearly does not have one. The writer is referring to the meaning of the word ‘option’ and whether the NATO countries would actually approve Finland as a member. Matti Wiberg points out how the discussion of NATO in Finland lacks specificity, for example, in respect to the analysis of costs and benefits. See Matti Wiberg. “NATO-keskustelussa pitäisi päästä asiaan”. *Turun Sanomat*, alio, 9.11.2017.

59 Reid Standish. *Politico*, 30 October 2017. <https://www.politico.eu/article/finland-russia-nato-wary-finns-take-another-look/>.

ment (pääministerin ilmoitus) of how security and foreign policy and the operating environment of the EU have changed. The committee on Foreign Affairs had asked for it earlier.<sup>60</sup>

The report defines the emphasis of Finnish defence and security policies with a timeline of the mid-2020s. These include, for example, strengthening the EU as a security community, deepening cooperation with Sweden and other countries, deepening cooperation with the U.S., relations with Russia, other bilateral relations, developing the relationship with NATO, the future of the Arctic region, and sustainable development in foreign and security policy.<sup>61</sup> Finland's position, as stated in the defence policy report, is that while Finland is non-militarily aligned<sup>62</sup> (sotilasliittoon kuulumaton maa), in practice it is a partnership country of NATO and the "door is kept open" for the possibility of applying for NATO membership.<sup>63</sup>

Finland has been part of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme from 1994 onwards. Finland has taken part in crisis management operations carried out by NATO.<sup>64</sup> It has also participated in exercises organised by NATO and it has managed

60 See the discussion "Brexit, Trump ja Suomi" at <https://areena.yle.fi/1-3847349>.

The chairman of the committee Matti Vanhanen noted in Parliament that because of the changes, Prime Minister Sipilä should return to the issue later on.

[https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/PoytakirjaAsiakohta/Sivut/PTK\\_139+2016+5.aspx](https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/PoytakirjaAsiakohta/Sivut/PTK_139+2016+5.aspx).

61 See Valtioneuvoston ulko- ja turvallisuuspoliittinen selonteko, 2016. Valtioneuvoston Kanslian julkaisusarja 7/2016. [https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/JulkaisuMetatieto/Documents/VNS\\_6+2016.pdf](https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/JulkaisuMetatieto/Documents/VNS_6+2016.pdf).

62 See Valtioneuvoston puolustusselonteko, 2017. Valtioneuvoston julkaisusarja 5/2017. <https://www.eduskunta.fi/valtiopaivaasiakirjat/VNS+3/2017>.

63 "Suomi on sotilasliittoon kuulumaton maa, joka toteuttaa käytännönläheistä kumppanuutta NATO:n kanssa ja ylläpitää edelleen mahdollisuutta hakea NATO-jäsenyyttä" (Ibid., 13).

64 Since 2015, the International Centre of Finnish Defence Forces (FINCENT) has coordinated crisis management training with NATO and its partner countries. See <http://www.finlandNATO.org/public/default.aspx?contentid=75622>.

multinational exercises. Finland also takes part in the activities of the NATO Response Force.<sup>65</sup>

NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) brings together the allied countries and their partners. It is the framework for NATO's cooperation with partner countries in the EURO-Atlantic area and is the forum for bilateral relationships between NATO and partner countries taking part in the PfP. Finland has been part of the EAPC since its inception in 1997. Finland was invited to join NATO's "Enhanced Opportunities Partner" programme at the Wales Summit in 2014.<sup>66</sup>

"Almost a member, but not quite", has been used to describe the relationship between Finland (and Sweden) and NATO.<sup>67</sup> The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland prepared a report entitled "Review of the impacts of Finland's possible NATO membership", which was published in 2016.<sup>68</sup> In Finland, the NATO debate has revolved around Article 5, primarily because

65 See Finland and NATO at <http://www.finlandNATO.org/public/default.aspx?contentid=101587&nodeid=31554&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>. See also The Finnish Defence Force. International Activities. <http://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/international-crisis-management/NATO-response-force>.

66 See more about Finland and NATO at <http://www.finlandNATO.org/public/default.aspx?nodeid=31554&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

67 See Hans Binnendijk, Debra L. Kagan and Andras Simonyi. "NATO Enlargement and Enhanced Partnership: The Nordic Case". In Daniel S. Hamilton, Andras Simonyi, Debra L. Kagan (ed.), *Advancing U.S. Nordic-Baltic Security Cooperation: Adapting Partnership to a New Security Environment*. Washington D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2014. See also Juha Pyykönen. "Nordic Partners of NATO: How similar are Finland and Sweden with NATO cooperation?" FIIA Report 48 (2016).

68 Mats Bergquist, Francois Heisbourg, Rene Nyberg and Teija Tiilikainen. "Arvio Suomen mahdollisen NATO jäsenyyden vaikutuksista". <http://www.finlandNATO.org/public/download.aspx?ID=157406&GUID={8D6158F6-B7E5-483C-9455-F66D76ACC1FB}>. In addition, the topic has been considered by other scholars. See, e.g., a recent publication titled *Suomen turvallisuuspoliittisen ratkaisun lähtökohdat* edited by Freds Bloomberg, which concentrates on analysing what kind of impact external factors have on the security environment of Finland. Available at: <http://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/124431>.

of the prospect of military assistance in crisis situations. The fact that Finland would also be obliged to act in times of crisis has also been seen as a negative factor of NATO membership.<sup>69</sup> *The Advisory Board of Defence Information* has regularly published data on the opinions of Finns on security and foreign policy and national security and defence. The question of NATO membership has been included in the questionnaire for the past 12 years. The polling indicates that about a quarter of respondents “believe that Finland should seek NATO membership”, while 61% disagree. According to the findings, the support of Finns for military non-alignment has grown slightly but approval/disapproval of NATO membership has stayed the same.<sup>70</sup>

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

TWISTS AND TURNS have filled the headlines in recent months. Uncertainty and mixed messages complicate the picture. While Trump’s foreign policy is still taking shape, some themes can be distinguished, such as a focus on hard rather than soft power, emphasis on national sovereignty, withdrawal from some parts of the international community, and an emphasis on bilateralism rather than multilateralism (at least in some policy areas), to mention but a few. Questions to ponder are whether there is a change in the big picture or in continuity when thinking in broader terms.

The lack of U.S. commitment in practice means that there

69 See Björn Whlroos. “Miksi liittyä Natoon?” *Ulkopolitiikka*, 3/2017. Available at [http://www.ulkopoliitikka.fi/artikkeli/1690/miksi\\_liittyta\\_Natoon/](http://www.ulkopoliitikka.fi/artikkeli/1690/miksi_liittyta_Natoon/).

70 See the exact figures and the formulation of questions at [http://www.defmin.fi/en/tasks\\_and\\_activities/media\\_and\\_communications/the\\_advisory\\_board\\_for\\_defence\\_information\\_abdi/bulletins\\_and\\_reports/finns\\_opinions\\_on\\_foreign\\_and\\_security\\_policy\\_national\\_defence\\_and\\_security.8091.news](http://www.defmin.fi/en/tasks_and_activities/media_and_communications/the_advisory_board_for_defence_information_abdi/bulletins_and_reports/finns_opinions_on_foreign_and_security_policy_national_defence_and_security.8091.news). The report and bulletin are from December 2016.

is room for other actors, whether it be in regard to climate and trade policies or security in Europe. Maintaining and connecting to institutional norms, institutions and agreements have been seen as beneficial from the perspective of a small country such as Finland. The current situation can result in new openings or further already existing ones. One example that could be mentioned is the development of the EU's security policy role, which has also been seen as "encouraging" in Finland.<sup>71</sup> Cooperation can also be taken to new forums, as the newly established Hybrid CoE indicates. Another example of soft power is related to Nordic cooperation. Prime ministers of the Nordic countries recently launched "Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges", aiming to promote UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The five Nordic prime ministers, for example, issued a statement confirming their stance on the promise "to future generations" after the U.S. announced it would be leaving the Paris Climate Accord.<sup>72</sup> Transatlantic relations seem to be in a state of flux and it remains to be seen in which direction they will further develop.

71 Speech by President Sauli Niinistö at the Ambassador Seminar on 22 August 2017. <http://www.tpk.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=365465&nodeid=44810&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

72 "Nordic prime ministers respond to Trump". *Nordic Co-operation*. <http://www.norden.org/en/news-and-events/news/nordic-prime-ministers-respond-to-trump>



CHAPTER II: THE NATO QUESTION IN  
SWEDEN UNDER THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY  
- MILITARY NON-ALIGNMENT BETWEEN  
POWER POLITICS AND FEMINIST FOREIGN  
POLICY  
MAGNUS CHRISTIANSSON

INTRODUCTION: THE LONG FAREWELL TO NEUTRALITY

ONE OF THE striking differences between the Nordic countries is that they came to draw completely different conclusions from their WWII experiences. Although Denmark, Norway and Iceland differed concerning the plausibility of national military defence against invasions, they all recognised that organised support from the West was necessary for security. Finland concluded that foreign assistance could never be taken for granted. Sweden drew the conclusion that neutrality was possible, but that it required pragmatism, or opportunism as a cynic might describe it. Largely these lessons became part of further reinforced national mythologies and the institutional settings of the respective countries in the Cold War period. As it turned out, war experience and not the many cultural and societal similarities in the Nordic countries was a defining factor for security policy doctrine.<sup>73</sup>

73 There is extensive literature on Nordic security after the end of WWII. For a short overview of the region, see Johan Jørgen Holst, "The Patterns of Nordic Security" *Dædalus* Vol. 113, No. 2 1984; Nils Andrén, "Prospects for the Nordic Security Pattern" *Cooperation and Conflict: Nordic Journal of International Studies* 8:181 1978; and Ciro Elliott Zoppo, "The Issues of Nordic Security: The Dynamics of East-West Politics, Emerging Technologies, and Definitions of National Defence" in Ciro Elliott Zoppo (ed.), *Nordic Security at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992).

The Swedish conclusion about the merits of neutrality was, however, seriously challenged during the Cold War period. The strategic analysis was based on the assumption of a 'Nordic balance', where Swedish neutrality was essential for stability and the status quo for Finland. The emerging security doctrine was non-alignment in peace for the purpose of neutrality in war, and its utility ultimately rested on the respect of the superpowers for Sweden's non-involvement in the event of conflict. However, as the tensions between East and West increased during the first period of the Cold War, Northern Europe became more interesting as a strategic flank in a potential superpower confrontation, and this created a simultaneous logic for strategic cooperation, particularly on the Scandinavian Peninsula. The realities of power politics were impossible to ignore.<sup>74</sup> Neutrality would be pointless if the Soviet Union were victorious in aggression in the Scandinavian theatre.

This created strategic pressure for a double policy during the Cold War period. On the one hand, the idea of neutrality was publicly praised as doctrine while, on the other hand, a number of secret military initiatives proved to undermine the official logic of neutrality.<sup>75</sup> Why would the Soviet Union respect neutrality if Sweden prepared to support the West in war? Not only did the double policy widen the gap between the identity of the Swedish public and the actual actions of its government but, more importantly, it made neutrality an unlikely position in the eyes of the

74 See for example Gerald Aalders, *Swedish Neutrality and the Cold War 1945–1949* (Amsterdam: Nijmegen University, 1989); Paul M. Cole, *Neutralité du jour: The Conduct of Swedish Security Policy since 1945* (Ann Arbor: Johns Hopkins University, 1990); and Nils André, "On the meaning and uses of neutrality" *Cooperation and Conflict: Nordic Journal of International Studies* XXVI, 1991.

75 For accounts of the double policy, see Robert Dalsjö, *Life-Line Lost. The Rise and Fall of 'Neutral' Sweden's Secret Reserve Option of Help from the West* (Stockholm: Santérus, 2006) and Robert Dalsjö, "The hidden rationality of Sweden's policy of neutrality during the Cold War" *Cold War History* Vol. 14, No. 2 2014.

superpowers. Although all countries may exhibit gaps between the rhetoric and practice of its security policy, in the Swedish case it became almost absurd. Exercising an ‘independent voice’ in world affairs, Prime Minister Olof Palme criticised the U.S. use of B-52s in the Vietnam War, while at the same time Sweden prepared to host B-52 planes for recovery basing in the event of war with the Soviet Union. On a rhetorical level, Sweden could decide itself what its security policy entailed, whereas the power realities of the Cold War completely ignored this level.

The end of the Cold War is often described as the starting point for a major shift in Sweden’s security policy. Sweden became Europeanised and internationalised, and this has been a gradual process, regardless of the parties in government. The policy of neutrality was cultivated during the post-WWII hegemony of social democracy, but it is interesting to note that the long farewell to neutrality was embraced also by the Social Democrats. The centre-right government under Carl Bildt 1991-1994 started the reform process and, following EU membership in 1995, policy was adjusted to military non-alignment, which reflected participation in the European supranational project. After 2004 and the emergence of the doctrine of EU solidarity, Sweden scrapped neutrality as an alternative. In 2009, Sweden declared a unilateral policy of solidarity with the EU and Nordic countries, a policy built on expectations of mutual help among the Nordic countries.<sup>76</sup>

While it is true that EU membership made neutrality impossible, it is interesting to note that the basic components of the double policy has remained. To this day, in the Swedish debate there is significant difference between military non-alignment

76 For a short overview of this policy development, see Justyna Gotkowska, *Sitting on the Fence: Swedish Defence Policy and the Baltic Sea Region* Centre for Eastern Studies Point of View No. 33 April 2013.

and neutrality. There is space for double policy because there is no consensus on what the declaration of solidarity really entails in practice: does it mean that Sweden would support its neighbours militarily in the event of Russian aggression? The political parties that support NATO membership (the Moderate party, the Liberal party, the Centre party and the Christian Democrats) argue that military non-alignment is a meaningless term, as the solidarity doctrine explicitly states that Sweden will take a stand (diplomatically and militarily) for its EU and Nordic neighbours. The traditionalists in the Swedish debate (the Social Democrats, the Left party and the Green party) argue that it is still possible to get the major powers to respect Swedish non-involvement in a Baltic Sea conflict, and that military non-alignment has a rationale.

However, the contemporary setting for a double policy is indeed different. During the social democratic hegemony, the double policy was fully known only to a tight circle of politicians and officials. One must remember that, during the period of Social Democratic government 1946-1976, Sweden had two prime ministers, and only six politicians took turns to be foreign- and defence ministers.<sup>77</sup> In other words, there was one circle of decision-makers, but two policies. Under the current Social Democrat government, there are two ministries with separate agendas. While the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is hopeful concerning the Swedish 'independent voice' in world affairs, the Ministry of Defence develops close cooperation with Western powers that could prove useful in the event of war. The process of abandoning neutrality is complete, while the struggle for what this implies for

77 Prime ministers: Tage Erlander 1946-1969, Olof Palme 1969-1976. Ministers for defence: Allan Vought 1945-1951, Torsten Nilsson 1951-1957, Sven Andersson 1957-1973, Eric Holmqvist 1973-1976. Ministers for foreign affairs: Östen Undén 1945-1962, Torsten Nilsson 1962-1971, Krister Wickman 1971-1973, Sven Andersson 1973-1976.

Swedish security policy still rages within government as well as in the public debate. This is a debate dictated more by emotions and national myths than calculation of national interests. The net effect is that Sweden continues to integrate with international structures, while its population still enjoys the façades of the Potemkin village built during the Cold War double policy.

### SWEDEN AND NATO: A COMPLICATED AFFAIR

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND of double policy is fundamental to understanding Sweden's current relationship with NATO. The present intimate partnership and largely frictionless association is indeed in stark contrast to the attitude during the Cold War. The most sacred part of the double policy was that it could never be as much as hinted at in public, as that would risk the credibility of neutrality. Officially, any overt involvement with the Western Alliance was strictly forbidden, to the point that Sweden never fully recognised the normative difference between the collective defence of democracy and the Warsaw Pact control of the satellite states in Eastern Europe. In other words, the full potential of the 'independent voice' was realised in foreign affairs concerning Africa, Latin America and Asia, but not the Soviet Union. Although a small circle of insiders understood how dependent Sweden de facto was on NATO in the event of war, any discussion concerning Western reinforcements in such an eventuality was stigmatised, particularly in the latter period of the Cold War. During the Cold War, proponents of Swedish NATO membership were largely marginalised anti-Communists with far-right sympathies.

This is perhaps the most damaging effect and legacy of the double policy: that it quelled strategic analysis in the name of credible neutrality. What started as a somewhat reasonable

balance of power argument concerning the status of Finland and Baltic Sea region security, slowly became an official liturgy that was false and arguably dangerous for Swedish interests. The price of double policy is that Swedish citizens have largely come to believe that neutrality was a success story, and that it was a natural condition for a small state in Northern Europe. If military non-alignment has been so successful, why become a member of a military pact?

After the end of the Cold War, Sweden embraced the development of a transformed NATO. Sweden joined Partnership for Peace (PfP) in 1994 and even recommended that other states become members of the Alliance. Active participation and adjustment to NATO slowly became standard practice for the armed forces. Partnership has had a peculiar function in Sweden's security policy: it has offered access to participation in interventions and military transformation, while upholding the identity of Sweden as a militarily non-aligned country. Thus, partnership was never a temporary status while preparing for membership, but the perfect option for a country that did not want to have a membership debate. It allowed the government to 'kick the can down the road', and not openly discuss the profound myths that had been part of its previous policy. This has disconnected many politicians from the fundamental understanding of the strategic implications of partnership and interoperability. For example, many Swedish politicians would not understand why active participation in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Libya might imply future membership. This complication never affected Sweden's relationship with NATO: most of its contributions were appreciated and represented more than the U.S. could have expected from a non-member state. For sure, Sweden did not (officially) get access to Allied intelligence in the operations, but the partnership mainly served both parties during the 1990s and post-9/11.

Accordingly, close cooperation and active participation in NATO operations did not influence public opinion in Sweden in favour of membership. This is why development of an intimate relationship and adaptation of the armed forces never changed the Swedish attitude concerning membership. Thus, every time the rather apparent contradictions of Swedish security policy were pointed out, the Social Democrats and centre-right parties both quelled the debate by referring to the lack of public opinion and political consensus. Politicians were spinning the NATO issue in a circle: public opinion has not changed, so we will not change public opinion. In retrospect, this represents a strategic mistake of the first order by the Swedish government. Everyone forgot the most fundamental question for a small state: who will we team up with if there is war in our neighbourhood?

However, a great complication of partnership started to emerge in the changing security climate in Europe after the Russian aggression on Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. These events triggered a strategic shock, although the road to war had actually already revealed a number of warning signs. As the partnership had granted sufficient access while allowing the national myth of neutrality to remain untouched, there had not been any pressure for a membership debate. Almost overnight these conditions changed: in the face of the Russian threat, Sweden as a partner country lacked access to credible planning for collective defence and it was desperately short on military capabilities to ensure a deterrence regime on its own. Although Sweden and Finland were included in the Enhanced Opportunity Programme (alongside Australia, Georgia and Jordan) at the Wales Summit, a fundamental problem for the credibility of Swedish security policy became more obvious. Thus, public opinion shifted in favour of NATO membership and re-armament. This process conformed to two out of three conditions for Swedish

membership in NATO: an identified Russian threat in public opinion, and an identified cost of being outside the Alliance.<sup>78</sup>

Interestingly, the Swedish political landscape started to shift.<sup>79</sup> Following the election of the Social Democrat and Green party coalition government in 2014, the centre-right opposition united in favour of Swedish NATO-membership. As of 2015, the security policy doctrine is a contested issue between the government and opposition in Sweden. Thus, the final condition for Swedish membership, support from the Social Democrats, is not fulfilled. There have not been any serious attempts to start a debate among the Social Democrats, and neither is the issue important for its members. The vast majority of the party are completely embedded in the mythology of neutrality. To complicate matters even more, the growing support for the right-wing populist party in Parliament has made a robust coalition government in favour of membership even more unlikely.

Alternatively, there have been proponents for a referendum concerning NATO membership. Even if most supporters of Swedish NATO membership tend to dislike the idea of a referendum, it might be difficult to avoid one if the membership question is not part of the election platforms in future parliamentary elections. There is active opposition among the Social Democrats and the Left party against further Swedish cooperation with NATO, and they will most likely try to pour cold water on the idea. Furthermore, as pointed out by some opponents of

78 For an analysis of the criteria for Swedish membership, see Magnus Christiansson, "Solidarity and Sovereignty – The Two-Dimensional Game of Swedish Security Policy" *Baltic Security and Defence Review* Vol. 12, No. 2 2010.

79 Two important inquiries that highly influenced the political debate among defence intellectuals include the "Bertelman report" and the "Bringéus report", see Ministry of Defence, *International Defence Cooperation. Efficiency, Solidarity, Sovereignty* Report from the Inquiry of Sweden's Defence Cooperation Fö:2013B (Stockholm, 2014), and Statens Offentliga Utredningar, *Säkerhet i en ny tid* Betänkande av Utredningen om Sveriges försvars- och säkerhetspolitiska samarbeten SOU 2016:57.

Swedish NATO membership, the result of a referendum is risky: it could close doors in the future and is difficult to coordinate with Finland.

### ENTER TRUMP: POWER POLITICS, FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY AND THE NATO ISSUE IN SWEDEN

THE ENDURING IMPORTANCE of double policy is essential for understanding the NATO question in Sweden today. When Donald Trump entered the stage at the New York Hilton Midtown to give his victory speech in the presidential campaign in November 2016, it is a gross understatement to conclude that it was bad news for the Swedish government. The progressive government of Sweden probably represents everything that Donald Trump dislikes: feminism, big government, multilateralism and environmentalism. For its part, Stockholm feared catastrophe because of the “America First” policy of Trump, and that it would destroy more than a decade of good relationships with Washington.

Following the invasion of Crimea, in 2014 the newly elected Social Democrat and Green party coalition government continued and reinforced a process of re-armament and reforms to strengthen defence. The Russian aggression in Ukraine marked the rebirth of power politics in Europe, and Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist committed whole-heartedly to the ambition of having broad parliamentary support for the re-armament policy. In fact, the appointment of Peter Hultqvist is probably a more significant factor for Swedish security than the election of Donald Trump. Furthermore, Hultqvist has become something of a ‘Sun King’ in the Swedish establishment: nothing of major importance to defence escapes him.

During 2015, a pattern emerged concerning defence policy featuring three significant steps. Firstly, Hultqvist committed

to breaking the pattern of stagnating defence budgets and to (modestly) increase military capabilities. Although Swedish capabilities remain limited, the country is now aiming for re-armament over the next decade. Secondly, he undercut the public debate about Swedish membership in NATO. Hultqvist has openly stated that he is a personal guarantor for continued non-membership. Finally, he has developed a string of bilateral cooperative partnerships, including with Poland, the UK, Denmark, and not least Finland. The most precious bilateral partnership is with the U.S. As the security situation has deteriorated in the Baltic Sea region, key U.S. officials and military dignitaries have started regularly to add Stockholm to their travelling schedule for Europe.

This 'Kinder Egg' philosophy of small state realism underpins what has been called the 'Hultqvist doctrine'. In other words, Sweden could successfully strengthen its own deterrence capabilities, rely *de facto* on bilateral support from the U.S. in a Baltic Sea region crisis, and avoid the turmoil of a NATO membership debate. It was rather telling that Hultqvist was a staunch supporter of increased military cooperation with Finland in 2015 and of the parliamentary passing of the Host Nation Support agreement with NATO in 2016. Arguably, the Trump presidency complicates this doctrine. Although the U.S. President is currently surrounded by 'grown-ups' in all key positions of the administration (McMaster as National Security Advisor, Kelly as White House Chief of Staff, Tillerson as Secretary of State and Mattis as Secretary of Defense), there are still doubts about the administration's support for multilateral institutions. In this sense, the Hultqvist doctrine is in line with the realist sceptics of NATO, which emphasises a focus on capabilities: why have an internal struggle for NATO membership, when one may develop close bilateral ties to the one country that can actually provide deterrence? However, as pointed out by supporters of NATO

membership, it is hardly a better option only to have a bilateral relationship with a reckless president. European countries having bilateralism as an alternative to NATO would eventually undermine the transatlantic link.

The first major national military exercise in Sweden in decades, 'Aurora', was carried out in September 2017. This event featured key participation by U.S. and Finnish units and, although it was not a NATO exercise, it rehearsed the stationing of Allied reinforcements in Sweden under a simulated Russian attack. While Sweden has clearly re-focused its defence efforts and has some interesting niche capabilities, it will remain a limited military actor in the region for many years to come. Hultqvist and his entourage at the Ministry of Defence are certainly aware of this.

The effect of the Hultqvist doctrine is that it further institutionalises dependence on foreign support in war under military non-alignment. Not many analysts understand the logic of military non-alignment when actively preparing for war with other states but, given the background of double policy, it makes perfect sense. The contradictions are so apparent that even the traditionalists in the Swedish debate have become worried that Hultqvist is actually preparing for Sweden to end up with a *fait accompli* for membership. In this narrative, Finland is only used as a tool to get rid of military non-alignment. The recurring calls for a formal Swedish-Finnish defence pact, in order to solidify the credibility of the defence cooperation, would simultaneously be the end of military non-alignment. The traditionalists fear that Hultqvist is a closet supporter of Swedish membership.

The great hope for the traditionalists, on the other hand, is Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström. When appointed, she initiated the 'feminist foreign policy', which included a focus on a Swedish seat in the UN Security Council (UNSC), international aid and development as well as women's rights

and disarmament in world politics. The feminist foreign policy is a reincarnation of the 'independent' foreign policy from the 1970s and 1980s, which was only one side of the double policy. The independent foreign policy is underpinned by two idealist assumptions: that small states may form and influence the international system, and that they can broker deals and find solutions to conflicts in international politics. It has, however, proved somewhat difficult to combine these roles. When Sweden recognised Palestine as a state in 2014, Israeli officials refused to meet with Wallström in 2015. When Sweden condemned Saudi Arabia for the medieval treatment of blogger Raif Badawi, Saudi blocked Wallström from addressing the Arab League in 2015.<sup>80</sup> For a period, Sweden managed to manoeuvre into the unlikely position of simultaneously being condemned by Israel and the Arab world. It is tempting to conclude that small states may be activists or peace brokers, but can hardly do both things at the same time. As is the case for Hultqvist, the Trump presidency is also a challenge for Wallström, but for the opposite reason: Swedish foreign policy wants to be a counterweight to almost everything that the current U.S. administration stands for.

In any case, the flagship project for Wallström was to run for non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council in 2016. Again, this strongly echoes idealist assumptions in world affairs, as UNSC has no substantial role in the event of war in the Baltic Sea region. The successful Swedish campaign was built explicitly on the idea of an 'independent voice' in world politics, but it is worth remembering that in the end NATO competitors, Italy and the Netherlands, were also given terms in the council.

80 "Saudis block Swedish minister's speech at Arab League", March 9<sup>th</sup> 2015, Reuters. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-sweden-saudi/saudis-block-swedish-ministers-speech-at-arab-league-idUSKBNOM50ZS20150309>

Typically, following the election results, Wallström announced that “Sweden is back in the world!”

The UN activism illustrates the current inherent tensions in Swedish policy. Faithful to its activist impulses, the government prioritised arms control and appointed the first Special Ambassador for disarmament in 25 years. It strongly supported the Humanitarian Initiative that led to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017. The aim of the initiative is to make nuclear weapons illegal, and to reinforce the norm of non-use of nuclear weapons. For NATO countries, this is a sensitive question and U.S. no less regards a nuclear ban treaty as counterproductive to nuclear proliferation efforts and defence cooperation. The fact that no Nordic country, not even Finland, took part in the treaty negotiations did not discourage the independent voice of Sweden. As Margot Wallström concluded in spring 2017 regarding the negotiations: “Sweden has always participated in multilateral negotiations related to disarmament. We see no reason not to do so this time.”<sup>81</sup> In other words, the interests of partner countries were of lesser interest to the independent voice of Sweden.

Furthermore, after Sweden had voted in favour of the nuclear ban treaty, there was clear diplomatic signalling from several NATO countries, as well as Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, regarding possible negative consequences for the partnership. Again, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs ignored these signals, and several NATO countries were simply informed that signing the nuclear ban treaty would have no impact on the relationship with NATO. This is an echo of the official side of Cold War policy, in which Sweden decided for itself what was conformable with neutrality.

81 Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs at the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, 1 March 2017.

The issue culminated in late August 2017, when John Mattis wrote a letter to Peter Hultqvist about the consequences of a Swedish signing of the treaty. Although the content of the letter is classified, it is fair to assume that it was a sharp U.S. warning, as the Swedish government soon announced that it would not sign and that it would instead carry out “an investigation to highlight all the consequences of the convention”<sup>82</sup>.

This episode illustrates the inherent tensions of the current double policy. On the one hand, a foreign policy that emphasises an independent voice, on the other hand a defence policy built on NATO reinforcements in the event of war. The question a foreign observer must ask is how independent Sweden really is, as its fighter aircraft pose in formation together with B-52s from Strategic Air Command in the recurring BALTOPS exercises. For sure, images like these undermine any credibility of remaining outside in the eyes of Russian military staff. It is tempting to conclude that not many outsiders believe in the Potemkin village of military non-alignment any more, and that it only serves domestic purposes. However, as the episode about the nuclear ban treaty exemplifies, this façade is not entirely convincing for the Swedish public in the new context of double policy. While the tight circle of political leaders managed to deal with contradictions in a schizophrenic way during the Cold War, the tensions between foreign- and defence policy are currently creating clashes that are visible beyond government offices. Not only are the processes and departmental infighting exposed in public, but it also creates an area of weakness that may be exploited by the Kremlin. Currently there seems to be détente between the feminist foreign policy and the Hultqvist doctrine, but who knows what will happen in the event of a

82 Utrikesdepartementet, Gemensamt uttalande från utrikesminister Margot Wallström och försvarsminister Peter Hultqvist, 4 september 2017.

foreign policy crisis in the Baltic Sea region? The current double policy is a much more fragile construct than its Cold War predecessor.

### CONCLUSIONS: THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD FOR SWEDISH NATO MEMBERSHIP

THE PREVIOUS ACCOUNT tries to make sense of the fact that, despite its long-standing and important entanglement with Western powers, Sweden is not about to file any membership application to NATO. We may conclude that there is a struggle in government and in the political debate about the meaning of solidarity in the Baltic Sea region that is far from decided. Depending on the outcome of this struggle, we may expect the membership issue to move or stagnate over the coming year. What will be the result of this struggle, and which factors are of importance?

One crucial factor for change is a new leadership for the Social Democrats, as their endorsement of membership is the final piece of the puzzle. Unfortunately, one may almost be forced to use “Kremlinology” to keep full track of this factor. However, for a number of reasons a new Social Democrat leadership with pro-NATO membership sympathies seems somewhat far-fetched. Firstly, the Social Democrats are not prepared in any way for an informed NATO debate. It is difficult to envision a congressional debate about NATO, simply because there is such a lack of fundamental knowledge about the organisation and its character. In any case, Swedish non-membership is used as an instrument for the policies of social democracy. Secondly, while there are certainly differences between different generations of Social Democrats, the legacy from leaders like Tage Erlander and Olof Palme is one of the truly unifying aspects. Thus, it is

very unlikely that Social Democrats, although deeply divided on many other issues, would erupt in conflict over party history and an identity that they all share. Finally, if the Social Democrats are forced into political soul-searching, for example because of a bad election result à la *Parti Socialiste* or SPD, it is difficult to see why this process would start with a policy area that is of less importance to the electorate. In other words, a new Social Democrat leadership open to NATO membership would tend to exist only in the daydreams of centre-right sympathizers.

Another alternative would be for the old Social Democrat leadership to shift policy. The spectacular U-turn made by the party's leadership regarding the Swedish EU membership question in 1990–1991 is sometimes used as an analogy. However, one must remember that the price for this U-turn was a referendum, which was a way of solving the problem of party cohesion in the face of such a divisive question. Thus, even if the party leadership would like to make a U-turn, the membership issue would end up as an uncertain and highly controversial question in a referendum. Alternatively, the party leadership could include the first steps of scrapping military non-alignment as part of its election platform in the next general election in 2018. The advantage would be that it would be possible to get legitimacy for a policy shift in a general election. As of October 2017, there are no signs of this among Social Democrats. The problem of avoiding a referendum will most likely persist after 2018. While the four centre-right parties in Parliament are in favour of membership, it will be difficult to form a new government with a clear majority for membership and, in any case, any exclusion in such an important question in the election campaign would trigger fierce demands for a referendum among left-wing Social Democrats.

Thus, the most likely future development is a continued double policy. Sweden and Finland will continue to deepen their

defence cooperation, while the Swedish government continues to either quell the debate or passively contemplate the issue. If this process leads to a Swedish-Finnish defence pact and Sweden restores its credibility after the nuclear ban episode, the next government will have moved closer to NATO membership. This represents an incremental, if somewhat hypocritical policy. However, this policy may also trigger neutralist impulses in both Stockholm and Finland, as if this pact were a substitute for membership.

Importantly, one may ask the question of whether Swedish and Finnish politicians are ready to become bedfellows and to rely completely on each other, outside a framework of the major powers. To mention just one incident, the Swedish circus around the nuclear ban has been noted in Helsinki. This is the tragedy of the Hultqvist doctrine: it may be that Sweden and Finland outside NATO are cornered together in the Baltic Sea region when the music stops and winter is coming.

I started this chapter with the reflection that war experience was crucial for the security policies of the Nordic states after WWII. War is the father of all, as Heraclitus put it. Perhaps the sad truth is that the next time the strategic configuration changes in the Baltic Sea region, it will be because of the experience of a war.



## CHAPTER III: THE EU AS A SECURITY PROVIDER IN THE TRUMP ERA

KARLIJN JANS

### INTRODUCTION

*“European citizens see security as the number one thing that Europe should provide to them, so it’s time to propose this.”*<sup>83</sup>

– Elżbieta Bienkowska, European Commissioner Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

One issue European citizens seem to rally behind is the need for common defence and security and the potential of the European Union (EU) as a security provider. A recent survey amongst EU citizens found three-quarters of respondents (75%) in favour of a common defence and security policy among EU Member States.<sup>84</sup> More specifically, the survey showed that more than half of all respondents (55%) are in favour of creating an EU army. A changing security situation in the ‘ring of instability’ forming on Europe’s borders, in conjunction with declining defence budgets across the board in Europe and as a result the lack of (military) capabilities to deal with a plethora of threats and challenges, is leaving many member states of the Union scrambling to deal with a plethora of (new) threats.

2016 and 2017 finally saw a response by European leaders in taking action aimed at the dealing changing security situation. Brexit and Trump’s foreign policy taking cue of ‘America First’,

83 Gabriela Baczynska, Robin Emmott. “Trump and Brexit Give Momentum to EU Defence Push,” June 7, 2017. <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKBN18Y057>.

84 European Commission, and Directorate-General for Communication. “Special Eurobarometer 461 Designing Europe’s Future: Security and Defence,” April 2017. <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2173>. P.12. For Sweden 59% and Finland 68% are in favour of CSDP.

also in his approach to his security allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and EU, seemed to have been the needed push to make European leader realise the urgency of the matter. As Juncker stated in his speech in June of this year: “by stepping up [EU member states’] efforts on defence, and by doing so together, the Member States of the Union will strengthen the ties that bind the Allies within NATO.”<sup>85</sup> A large group of EU members have announced increases in their defence budgets in the next years, halting the relentless budget cuts to Europe’s armed forces. A movement in Europe’s political leadership in seriously rethinking defence spending and contributions to Europe’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), in Brussels and the member states capitals, is to be detected. As German Defence Minister stated: “that is what the Americans expect us to do.”<sup>86</sup> Defence has been made a priority in the frequent Brussels meetings, concrete policy proposals and actions dealing with strengthening defence in Europe have been proposed and discussed and the political endorsement of such plans signalled in a shift in Europeans taking defence of their continent seriously.

Did Trump change everything for European defence and security or is it just business as usual? This paper focuses on the efforts that are being made towards European defence cooperation since 2016. In particular, it examines specific initiatives that are being taken at the EU and member state level dealing with capability development, defence reviews and cutting red tape. The changing military posture of the Russia Federation and presence of hybrid threats towards the Baltic States, security in

85 “European Commission - PRESS RELEASES - Press Release - Speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the Defence and Security Conference Prague: In Defence of Europe,” June 2017. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-17-1581\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-17-1581_en.htm).

86 “German Minister, in Lithuania, Backs European ‘Defence Union.’” Accessed October 29, 2017. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-europe-defence-germany-lithuania/german-minister-in-lithuania-backs-european-defence-union-idUKKCN11E1H0>.

the Baltic Sea area has become more relevant than ever and has affected Sweden's and Finland's latest security policies and politics and its cooperation with its security partners. In this context and as non-NATO member states, Finland and Sweden have both reviewed their security and defence policies. Regarding the EU as a cornerstone of their policies, both countries have an interest in developments on the EU level regarding European defence cooperation. This paper examines both countries interest in the latest developments. Additionally, following the NATO Warsaw Summit and the implementation of the EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union<sup>87</sup>, EU-NATO cooperation has taken flight, recognising the need for closer co-operation having implications for non-NATO members Sweden and Finland. Given the developments on a wide range of issues, it is imperative to look at the importance and feasibility of the different initiatives. It is important not to lose the momentum for enhancing European defence cooperation, regarding it as a tool for making the continent more agile and strengthens its resolve.

87 "A Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union - EU Global Strategy - European Commission." EU Global Strategy, June 2016. /globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-foreign-and-security-policy-european-union.

## THE EU AS A SECURITY PROVIDER FOR SWEDEN AND FINLAND?

IT IS FAIR to say that the EU has perhaps become even more important to for the defence of both countries than ever. For both Finland and Sweden, members of the EU, there is no immediate (military) threat but the risk of becoming involved in a regional crisis and the need to act are seen in both countries as the biggest challenges.<sup>88</sup> Both countries possess some (strategically) important areas in the Baltic Sea such as the Gotland Island and the Åland Islands, in this regard both countries have to consider their defence and security strategies and needed capabilities vis-à-vis regional security challenges.

The changing security situation in the region and in the world has made Finland and Sweden rethink their security strategies, and both countries have renewed or updated their defence and security strategies. The EU is the central frame of reference of Finland's and Sweden's foreign and security policy strategy documents and is regarded as an important security community to both.<sup>89,90</sup> Sweden's implementation of its security strategy of 2009, has become more relevant and speaks of the importance of international cooperation in order to be able to cope with the security challenges. Considering its position of non-alignment

88 Government Offices of Sweden, the Prime Minister's Office. "National Security Strategy," January 2017. <http://www.government.se/4aa5de/contentassets/0e04164d7eed462aa511ab03c890372e/national-security-strategy.pdf>. P.17 and "Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy," June 17, 2016. /public/default.aspx?contentid=348060&contentlan=2&culture=en-US

89 Government Offices of Sweden, the Prime Minister's Office. "National Security Strategy," January 2017. <http://www.government.se/4aa5de/contentassets/0e04164d7eed462aa511ab03c890372e/national-security-strategy.pdf>. P. 16

90 "Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy," June 17, 2016. /public/default.aspx?contentid=348060&contentlan=2&culture=en-US. P. 12

towards NATO, the doctrine “builds on a delicate balancing act between deepened international defence cooperation while staying outside NATO.”<sup>91</sup> Earlier this year, a new National Security Strategy was published elaborating on the wide spectrum of security interests and risks and, while being a broad and abstract document, it is clear on Sweden’s strong security interest in the EU’s role as a security provider and plans to further strengthen the EU as a foreign and security policy actor. Sweden recognises the reality that in defence and security (or in a time of crisis) there is not a single EU member, especially the smaller ones that can afford to maintain a full-spectrum of military capabilities on their own: “only through cooperation with others is it possible to educate, train and exercise high-quality military capabilities.”<sup>92 93</sup>

Finland expects the EU to add concrete value to the management of its multiple threats.<sup>94</sup> For example, 80% of products coming to Finland travel through the Baltic Sea, it is with that dependent on its access to the Baltic Sea and therefore also from an economic perspective dependent on international cooperation through international (security) fora, such as the EU.<sup>95</sup> The Finnish government and political leadership have repeatedly

91 Wieslander, Anna, A Brusque Swedish Awakening: Adopting Security Policy to Baltic Sea Challenges. In: Andris Sprūds, Māris Andžāns. “Security in the Baltic Sea Region: Realities and Prospects: The Riga Conference Papers 2017.” Accessed October 27, 2017. <http://liia.lv/en/publications/security-in-the-baltic-sea-region-realities-and-prospects-the-riga-conference-papers-2017-643>. P. 92

92 Karlijn Jans. “The Netherlands and Germany as European Defense Pioneers.” *Huffington Post* (blog), February 20, 2016. [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/young-professionals-in-foreign-policy/the-netherlands-and-germa\\_b\\_9283072.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/young-professionals-in-foreign-policy/the-netherlands-and-germa_b_9283072.html).

93 the Inquiry on Sweden’s International, and Defence Cooperation. “International Defence Cooperation Efficiency, Solidarity, Sovereignty,” 2014. <https://www.icds.ee/fileadmin/media/icds.ee/failid/Bertelman2014.pdf>.

94 Teija Tiilikainen. “United We Stand | Friends of Europe,” September 27, 2017. <http://www.friendsofeurope.org/publication/united-we-stand>.

95 “Itämeri 2017 Strategia.” Satamaliitto, February 17, 2017. <https://www.satamaliitto.fi/fin/ajankohtaista/lausunnot/2017/02/ita-meri-2017-strategia/>.

stated the importance it gives to the EU as a security provider. Finnish President Niinistö recently stated:

*“The EU is hardly a true union if it does not play its part in ensuring the security of its own citizens [...] We need to strike the right balance, be ambitious but also see the value of inclusiveness. We are a Union and this should be reflected also in the field of security.”*<sup>96</sup>

In its recently published Defence Policy Report, the Finnish government reinstated the importance of EU defence cooperation and its support of the EU’s initiatives on enhancing this cooperation: “Finland purposefully promotes the development of defence cooperation within the European Union and the development of its defence policy. This will strengthen the foundation of the European defence capability and the Union as a security community and a global actor.”<sup>97</sup> It is fair to say that any development or initiative taken on the EU level regarding European defence cooperation in strengthening European defence, will be monitored in Stockholm and Helsinki with a large degree of interest. Both countries have pledged political support for current initiatives and it is expected that new initiatives, serving national security interests, can count on support from these northern EU members.

96 “Speech by President of the Republic of Finland Sauli Niinistö at the Lennart Meri Conference in Tallinn on 13 May 2017 - The President of the Republic of Finland: Speeches.” Accessed October 28, 2017. <http://tpk.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=361865&nodeid=44810&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>.

97 Prime Minister’s Office Finland. “Government’s Defence Report,” July 2017. [http://www.defmin.fi/files/3688/J07\\_2017\\_Governments\\_Defence\\_Report\\_Eng\\_PLM\\_160217.pdf](http://www.defmin.fi/files/3688/J07_2017_Governments_Defence_Report_Eng_PLM_160217.pdf). P. 6

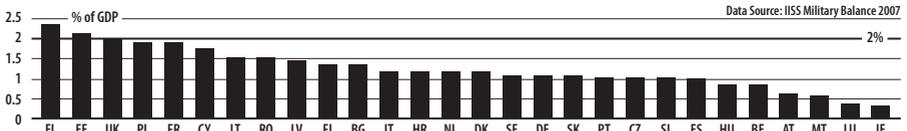
## MOVING AHEAD ON EUROPEAN DEFENCE COOPERATION AND A COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

ALTHOUGH MANY EUROPEAN member states have decided to, at minimum, halt further cuts in their national defence budgets, the long track record of uncoordinated, diminishing defence budgets (including to national defence R&D (Research and Development) and R&T (Research and Technology) budgets) have left their mark, and the consequent shortfalls in European military capabilities (and duplication of efforts) are an uncomfortable reality, still in 2017. As a result, not a single EU member state, not even the larger ones, can afford or maintain a full spectrum of defence capabilities that can deal with the plethora of (global) challenges. A recent RAND Corporation study found that in case of a crisis in the Baltics, Germany, the United Kingdom (UK) and France would have to make a serious effort to muster and sustain heavy brigades, straining their armed forces significantly.<sup>98</sup>

Apart from Greece, Estonia and the UK, none of the EU members have reached (or maintained) the 2% defence spending target set by NATO, as a metric to measure sufficient defence spending to deal with the challenges (which has also been accepted by other EU member states that are not members of NATO, such as Sweden and Finland).<sup>99</sup>

98 Shurkin, Michael. "The Abilities of the British, French, and German Armies to Generate and Sustain Armored Brigades in the Baltics." Product Page, 2017. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1629.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1629.html).

99 NATO. "Wales Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Wales." NATO, September 5, 2014. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).



Methodological note: ISS data are converted into euro using annual average exchange rates from the Statistical Data Warehouse of the European Central Bank. For the international comparison, the five-year perspective is also based on the annual average inflation rates for the 18-countries eurozone (prior to Lithuania adopting the euro) from the European Commission.

Figure 1. European defence 2016<sup>100</sup>

The figures on defence spending illustrate that ‘meaner and leaner’ actually means only leaner, and the leaner the defence, the more dependent it is on cooperation with others.<sup>101</sup> In comparison, the EU member states combined spend €227 billion on defence per year, with an average of 1.34% of its GDP.<sup>102</sup> The U.S. on the other hand spends €545 billion on defence per year, with an average of 3.3% of its GDP, 1.3% above the NATO spending pledge. This spending pledge, however, is just a metric and does not necessarily indicate the value of output, meaning on what military capabilities and capacities the money is spent.

To illustrate the point of combating capability (development) duplication and the need to work in a coordinated manner towards increasing interoperability between member states’ capabilities, one can look at the number of weapon systems maintained by EU members to see what that money is spent on. Currently, EU member states combined maintain 17 types of main battle tanks, compared to one main battle tank maintained by

100 Zoe Stanley-Lockman. “European Defence 2016 - EUISS,” March 1, 2017. [https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/SMS\\_1\\_European\\_\\_Defence.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/SMS_1_European__Defence.pdf).

101 the Inquiry on Sweden’s International, and Defence Cooperation. “International Defence Cooperation Efficiency, Solidarity, Sovereignty,” 2014. <https://www.icds.ee/fileadmin/media/icds.ee/failid/Bertelman2014.pdf>. P. 22

102 European Commission. “Factsheet. Defending Europe. The Case for Greater EU Cooperation on Security and Defence,” 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/defending-europe-factsheet\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/defending-europe-factsheet_en.pdf).

the U.S.<sup>103</sup> EU member states maintain 20 types of fighter planes, compared to six types of fighter planes by the U.S. Maintaining such a large number of weapon systems is in itself a costly matter. The issue at hand, however, is the lack of interoperability, which means member states' armed forces ability to jointly deploy their forces and weapon systems and communicate with each other in times of crisis (and on the battlefield).

The member states of the EU have increasingly started to develop common capabilities, still mostly driven by budget cuts, and are trying to increase efficiency in spending. Nevertheless, the potential to effectuate European defence cooperation has not been fully reached. It is paramount to European defence cooperation to achieve the needed coordinated output, to build or maintain credible, deployable, interoperable forces that are as efficient as possible, and to be able to deal with current and future security challenges.

European defence cooperation has to be regarded as a tool for enhancing European defence as such and not as a goal in itself. Previous initiatives of European defence cooperation that lacked a clear rationale or motivation on an operational level and the political support were unsuccessful. Defence cooperation initiatives in which the cooperation aspect. In contextualising such measures, it is therefore important to distinguish between two types of European defence cooperation:

103 European Commission. "Factsheet. Defending Europe. The Case for Greater EU Cooperation on Security and Defence," 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/defending-europe-factsheet\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/defending-europe-factsheet_en.pdf).

1. **Bilateral (or multilateral), often bottom-up initiatives between EU member states.** Sweden and Finland are no strangers to European defence cooperation (including cooperation on equipment) on bilateral or multilateral level, mostly with other Nordic countries, but also with other European countries and the U.S.<sup>104</sup> For Sweden and Finland, multilateral cooperation (on political and military levels) in the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) format, with its five members Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, has proven to be fruitful and is seen as an example of successful European defence cooperation.<sup>105</sup>
2. **European defence cooperation initiatives taken by the EU** within the competences of the Treaties, or, within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Many (recent) developments in these two strands of European defence cooperation have been initiated in times of austerity for all member states.

Both types of defence cooperation aim at building and maintaining credible, deployable, interoperable forces that can provide for the defence of EU member states, and neither of the types are mutually exclusive.

104 Wieslander, Anna, A Brusque Swedish Awakening: Adopting Security Policy to Baltic Sea Challenges. In: Andris Sprūds, Māris Andžāns. "Security in the Baltic Sea Region: Realities and Prospects: The Riga Conference Papers 2017." Accessed October 27, 2017. <http://liia.lv/en/publications/security-in-the-baltic-sea-region-realities-and-prospects-the-riga-conference-papers-2017-643>. p.98

105 See: "NORDEFECO." Accessed November 2, 2017. <http://www.nordefco.org/>.

## THE EU MOVING AHEAD ON EU DEFENCE COOPERATION

EUROPE'S COMMON SECURITY and Defence Policy is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty and is led in its overall political direction and priorities by the European Council (the heads of government of the EU member states). Execution, coordination and representation lie with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), currently Federica Mogherini, who is also a member of the European Commission cabinet.

As members of the Union, Sweden and Finland have been active participants in and contributors to the European debate on the implementation of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and its instruments. Most famous is perhaps Sweden's contribution to the European defence cooperation debate through the German-Sweden initiative on 'Pooling and Sharing'. This food-for-thought paper has also become known as the 'Ghent Initiative', and was published at the height of the economic crisis. It paved the way for a larger debate on military resources and capability efficiency and European defence cooperation in general.<sup>106</sup> As for operational activities, both countries have rotated in EU Battlegroup (EU BG) configurations and have contributed to EU crisis management operations.<sup>107</sup> Both countries have also participated in joint European defence capability development and research activities under the auspices of the European De-

106 "Pooling and Sharing, German-Swedish Initiative. Food for Thought. European Imperative Intensifying Military Cooperation in Europe. 'Ghent Initiative,'" November 2010. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede260511deseinitiative\\_/sede260511deseinitiative\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede260511deseinitiative_/sede260511deseinitiative_en.pdf).

107 For more information see: "EU Battlegroups - EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission." EEAS - European External Action Service. Accessed November 1, 2017. [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/33557/EUBattlegroups](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/33557/EUBattlegroups)

fence Agency (EDA). Being active members in on going CSDP activities, enhanced and new initiatives on European defence cooperation, which further develop the effectiveness of CSDP, are of interest to Sweden and Finland.

*“In the area of security and defence, more has been achieved in the last ten months than in the last decade.”*<sup>108</sup> – Frederica Mogherini (HR)

The Commission cabinet that took power in 2015 has made great efforts to enhance CSDP by launching several initiatives to increase and effectuate European defence cooperation. President Juncker stressed in his 2016 State of the Union Speech the need for a Europe that protects, empowers and defends.<sup>109</sup> Not long after the UK voted for leaving the EU, High Representative Mogherini presented the EU Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy.<sup>110</sup> This strategic document has been a result of a yearlong writing process in Brussels, in consultation the different EU member states. Addressing the changing security environment, the document sets the ambition of strategic autonomy for the EU’s CSDP. The strategy document reads as follows:

*“As Europeans we must take greater responsibility for our security. We must be ready and able to deter, respond to, and protect ourselves against external threats. While NATO exists to defend its members –*

108 European Commission. “From Shared Vision to Common Action: Implementing the EU Global Strategy Year 1,” June 20, 2017. [http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/full\\_brochure\\_year\\_1.pdf](http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/full_brochure_year_1.pdf). P.20

109 The State of the Union 2016: “Towards a Better Europe – A Europe that Protects, Empowers and Defends”, 14 September 2016.

110 “EU Global Strategy Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, June 2016 - EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission.” EEAS - European External Action Service, 2017. [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/15148/EU\\_Global\\_Strategy\\_Implementation\\_Plan\\_on\\_Security\\_and\\_Defence](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/15148/EU_Global_Strategy_Implementation_Plan_on_Security_and_Defence)

*most of which are European – from external attack, Europeans must be better equipped, trained and organised to contribute decisively to such collective efforts, as well as to act autonomously if and when necessary. An appropriate level of ambition and strategic autonomy is important for Europe’s ability to foster peace and safeguard security within and beyond its borders.”<sup>111</sup>*

As a follow-up, the European Commission set forth an Implementation Plan with proposals to implement the EU Global Strategy in the area of security and defence in November 2016.<sup>112</sup> Consecutive plans for enhancing CSDP capabilities have been focused on creating better conditions for member states to invest in capabilities more effectively, avoid unnecessary duplication and simplify cooperation. The initiatives by the European Commission were endorsed by the member states in the Bratislava Declaration.<sup>113</sup> The same ideas were also echoed by the European Parliament.<sup>114</sup> Momentum has been created since 2016 to move further ahead with concrete ideas and initiatives:

111 “A Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union - EU Global Strategy - European Commission.” EU Global Strategy, June 2016. /globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-foreign-and-security-policy-european-union. P. 19

112 “EU Global Strategy Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, June 2016 - EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission.” EEAS - European External Action Service, 2017. [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/15148/EU, Global Strategy Implementation Plan on Security and Defence.](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/15148/EU_Global_Strategy_Implementation_Plan_on_Security_and_Defence)

113 Work programme proposed by the President of the European Council, the Presidency of the Council and the President of the Commission at the meeting of the 27 Heads of State or Government on 16 September 2016, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/09/16-bratislava-declaration-androadmap>

114 European Parliament report on “the European Defence Union” (2016/2052(INI)) adopted on 22 November 2016.

1. **Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)**, enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty (Articles 42(6) and 46 TEU, and Protocol No 10), PESCO provides a legal framework for the EU to help member states to enhance their defence cooperation. The initiative helps member states that have the necessary military capabilities and ‘have made more binding commitments to one another’, to increase their defence cooperation. Member States wishing to establish PESCO have to notify their intentions to the Council and the HR, provided they meet the capabilities and operational criteria set out in Protocol No 10<sup>115, 116</sup>. The conclusions in June this year saw the European Council asking its members to come up with “a common list of criteria and binding commitments with a precise timetable and specific assessment mechanisms”, before the European Council meeting in October 2017.<sup>117</sup> Discussed and endorsed (also regarding PESCO governance) in the European Council meeting of October<sup>118</sup>, PESCO is set to be launched at the end of 2017.<sup>119</sup> It has been supported, most notably, by the Franco-German axis in order to enhance and facilitate cooperation between a group

115 See Article 1 of Protocol 10, Eur-Lex, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12008M%2FPRO%2F10>

116 “European Council Briefing. Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty Provisions on the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP);” February 2016. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/573285/EPRS\\_BRI\(2016\)573285\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/573285/EPRS_BRI(2016)573285_EN.pdf).

117 “European Council Conclusions, 22-23/06/2017 - Consilium.” Accessed November 2, 2017. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/06/23/euco-conclusions/>.

118 “European Council, 19-20/10/2017 - Consilium.” Accessed November 2, 2017. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2017/10/19-20/>.

119 The list of common commitments in in the main areas of Protocol 10 to the Treaty had not yet been made available to the public at the time of writing.

of member states.<sup>120</sup> The potential of this ‘new’ mechanism has been widely discussed, and success will lie in the hands of member states who are in the lead and responsible for the implementation.<sup>121</sup>

2. **Military Planning Conduct and Capability (MPCC)** endorsed by the European Council of June of 2017. The EU is in the process of implementing measures to increase efficiency in CSDP operations and missions. Until the decision, the EU has been relying on NATO’s command and control structure in operationalising and executing its different CSDP missions (abroad). The MPCC will oversee the EU’s non-executive military CSDP missions: at present the three EU Training Missions. The director of the MPCC has already assumed the functions of mission commander for the current missions respectively deployed in the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia. The Council also agreed to establish a Joint Support Coordination Cell to strengthen synergies between EU civilian and military missions.<sup>122</sup>

120 The French, German, Spanish and Italian “Proposals on the necessary commitments and elements for an inclusive and ambitious PESCO” was also supported by Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, and the Netherlands, see for more details: Alice Billon-Galland and Martin Quencez, “Can France and Germany Make PESCO Work as a Process Toward EU Defense?” The German Marshall Fund of the United States, October 6, 2017. <http://www.gmfus.org/publications/can-france-and-germany-make-pesco-work-process-toward-eu-defense> and Dr. Nicole Koenig and Marie Walter-Franke, “France and Germany: Spearheading a European Security and Defense Union?” Jacques Delors Institut Policy Paper, July 19, 2017

121 For literature on discussions on PESCO, see: Jo Coelmont, “With PESCO Brought to Life, Will European Defense Live Happily Ever After?” Egmont, July 2017; and Alexandra de Hoop Scheffer and Martin Quencez, “Will Europe’s Defense Momentum Lead to Anything?” The German Marshall Fund of the United States, June 26, 2017

122 European Commission. “From Shared Vision to Common Action: Implementing the EU Global Strategy Year 1,” June 20, 2017. [http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/full\\_brochure\\_year\\_1.pdf](http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/full_brochure_year_1.pdf).

3. **European Defence Fund (EDF)** member states are not new to the pooling and sharing of defence capability initiatives, whether under the auspices of the EDA or on a bilateral or multilateral basis. Examples are the NH-90 helicopter development, an initiative between France, (then) West Germany, Italy, The Netherlands and the UK, or the Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport Fleet, an initiative by the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Greece, Spain, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal and Norway. Nevertheless, the scale and success rate of such initiatives have been sparse. The EDF potentially gives a new boost to further European cooperation on capability developments. The EDF consists of a research (R&T) and capability (R&D) window. While details of the fund need to be spelled out and implemented to be ready to start in 2020, the research part of the EDF has already commenced with some pilot projects (with a total budget of €1.4 million) financed by the European Parliament. At this moment the Preparatory Action, a testing phase, is ongoing, running up to 2019 with projects with an overall budget of €90 million. The full implementation of the EDF will take place in 2020 with a European Defence Research Programme budgeted at €500 million per year for research projects. The Capability window is expected run with €5 billion of pooled resources for joint projects. As a result of the EDF, through (partial) funding of capability initiatives, but also through financial support from the EU, there could very well be a stronger incentive for member states to work together through EU frameworks. As a positive side-effect, more commonality and interoperability of systems in the various member states could potentially be achieved.<sup>123</sup>

123 Daniel Fiott. "Funding EU Defence Cooperation," April 27, 2017. <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Alert%2011%20Defence%20cooperation.pdf>.

4. **Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)** In the March 2017 Council conclusions, member states recognised the importance of developing through CARD a more structured way to deliver the key capabilities needed in Europe, based on greater transparency, political visibility and commitment from Member States, while avoiding any unnecessary additional administrative effort by Member States and EU institutions'.<sup>124</sup> The European Defence Agency (EDA) has been working towards these objectives since 2004 with different results. The EU Global Strategy has given new impetus to an initiative such as CARD in facilitating a coordinated effort of EU member states on this part of EU defence cooperation. In this regard, CARD serves as a European level mechanism to coordinate member states' efforts in defence spending and investments, thus offering a tool to effectuate more efficient and coordinated defence spending by member states. The first CARD is expected at the end of this year.<sup>125</sup>

As Mogherini reported in her first review of the EU Global Strategy: "it is increasingly clear that [these initiatives] can mutually reinforce each other".<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, there is a real risk that there are too many programmes, which can result in (political) confusion, duplication and lack of effectiveness and with that the collapse of the entire EU agenda on defence. For all these and new initiatives, it is imperative that the different

124 Consilium. "Council Conclusions on Progress in Implementing the EU Global Strategy in the Area of Security and Defence - Consilium," March 6, 2017. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/06/conclusions-security-defence/>.

125 For a further iteration on CARD, see Daniel Fiott. "The CARD on the EU Defence Table," April 27, 2017. [https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Alert\\_10\\_CARD\\_0.pdf](https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Alert_10_CARD_0.pdf).

126 European Commission. "From Shared Vision to Common Action: Implementing the EU Global Strategy Year 1," June 20, 2017. [http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/full\\_brochure\\_year\\_1.pdf](http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/full_brochure_year_1.pdf). P. 23.

actions are synchronised and a constant reflection takes place in Brussels and between member states towards possible links between the different initiatives.

## FURTHER EUROPEAN DEFENCE COOPERATION IN THE WORKS

BRUSSELS IS NOT the only place busy setting forth and implementing initiatives to further enhance and provide for European defence cooperation through the EU. Waiting for the German coalition talks to finalise, France is set to take the lead on the Franco-German axis that earlier pushed to make use of all the possibilities in the EU Treaty to make CSDP more effective, and endorsing PESCO is one of them. Elected earlier in this year, French President Macron is the only European political leader to have set forth a vision specifically endorsing far-reaching EU defence cooperation. For example, he has endorsed the idea of a European defence budget, to be deployed in making the burden-sharing of CSDP missions fairer.<sup>127</sup> This idea has also been proposed by the EU's in-house think tank, the European Political Strategy Centre, calling for an EU Security and Defence Union budget: a swift review of EU-budgeted programmes and funds across the full range of defence- and security-related activities should be conducted, with the main aim of identifying potential economies of scale and determining the merits of the joined-up financing of defence and security, possibly already in the next Multiannual Financial Framework.<sup>128</sup>

127 "Sorbonne Speech of Emmanuel Macron - Full Text / English Version," September 26, 2017. <http://international.blogs.ouest-france.fr/archive/2017/09/29/macron-sorbonne-verbatim-europe-18583.html>.

128 European Political Strategy Centre. "The Defence-Security Nexus. Towards an EU Collective Security," October 18, 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/epsc/sites/epsc/files/epsc\\_strategic\\_note\\_28\\_-\\_the\\_defence-security\\_nexus\\_-\\_towards\\_an\\_eu\\_collective\\_security.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/epsc/sites/epsc/files/epsc_strategic_note_28_-_the_defence-security_nexus_-_towards_an_eu_collective_security.pdf).

Another initiative that is in the works is a plan to create a ‘military Schengen zone’, reforming the rules and procedures applying to moving troops and military equipment inside the EU.<sup>129</sup> Such an initiative would liberate the movement of troops and materiel between EU member states. In case of crisis or emergency, military transport, for example, would priority on national railway tracks. Nevertheless, credibility, interoperability and readiness are only achieved through exercises and training during peacetime.<sup>130</sup> Providing for cooperation and cutting red tape on this matter would serve both NATO and the EU in increasing their defence capabilities and making use of efficiency through cooperation.

These are just a few of the ideas that are currently being floated in Brussels and in the different member states’ capitals. It is imperative for the momentum for European defence (cooperation) to keep the discussion going and give room to deliberations and discussions on different aspects of making European defence, whether that being in ‘just’ cutting red tape or agreeing on far-reaching military integration plans.

## BRINGING TWO SECURITY ORGANISATIONS TOGETHER: INCREASED EU-NATO COOPERATION

2016 WAS ALSO paramount to EU-NATO cooperation. Within a month of the Brexit vote and the presentation of the EU Global Strategy, the Warsaw NATO Summit took place. This summit saw a milestone in EU-NATO cooperation. While cooperation between

129 European Defence Agency. “Europe Needs a Military Schengen,” Issue 2017. <https://www.eda.europa.eu/webzine/issue12/cover-story/europe-needs-a-military-schengen>.

130 Karlijn Jans, Rachel Rizzo. “Why Europe Needs a ‘Military Schengen Zone,’” August 22, 2017. <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/22991/why-europe-needs-a-military-schengen-zone>.

the organisations has been longstanding, they both acknowledged there and then the need to further enhance cooperation in order to face and deal with the multitude of threats in which the organisations have a mutual need for each other, NATO as an alliance with full military capabilities and the EU as a ‘soft power’ organisation with a range of political-economic capabilities at its disposal. The ambitions and depth of the initiatives announced in Warsaw were unprecedented. The final communiqué includes references to enhanced EU-NATO cooperation and contains the joint declaration between the EU and NATO:

“In fulfilling the objectives [...], we [EU and NATO] believe there is an urgent need to:

- Boost our ability to counter hybrid threats, including by bolstering resilience, working together on analysis, prevention, and early detection, through timely information sharing and, to the extent possible, intelligence sharing between staffs; and cooperating on strategic communication and response. The development of coordinated procedures through our respective playbooks will substantially contribute to implementing our efforts.
- Broaden and adapt our operational cooperation including at sea, and on migration, through increased sharing of maritime situational awareness as well as better coordination and mutual reinforcement of our activities in the Mediterranean and elsewhere.
- Expand our coordination on cyber security and defence including in the context of our missions and operations, exercises and on education and training.
- Develop coherent, complementary and interoperable defence capabilities of EU Member States and NATO Allies, as well as multilateral projects.

- Facilitate a stronger defence industry and greater defence research and industrial cooperation within Europe and across the Atlantic.
- Step up our coordination on exercises, including on hybrid, by developing as the first step parallel and coordinated exercises for 2017 and 2018.
- Build the defence and security capacity and foster the resilience of our partners in the East and South in a complementary way through specific projects in a variety of areas for individual recipient countries, including by strengthening maritime capacity.”<sup>131</sup>

The declaration thus set out a roadmap to intensify and increase cooperation between the two institutions.<sup>132</sup> In addition to endorsement from NATO, the other partner to the declaration also acknowledged the need for further cooperation. The EU Global Strategy references the need for closer cooperation between the two institutions and reads:

“When it comes to collective defence, NATO remains the primary framework for most Member States. At the same time, EU-NATO relations shall not prejudice the security and defence policy of those Members which are not in NATO. The EU will therefore deepen cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance in complementarity, synergy, and full respect for the institutional framework, inclusiveness and decision-making

131 NATO. “Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.” NATO, July 8, 2016. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133163.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm).

132 NATO. “Warsaw Summit Communiqué - Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016.” NATO, July 9, 2016. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm). Paragraphs 121–126.

autonomy of the two.”<sup>133</sup>

Later that same year and as a follow up, both institutions jointly announced 42 Implementation Action Points, in the areas of countering hybrid threats, operational cooperation including maritime issues, cyber security and defence, defence capabilities, parallel and coordinated exercises and defence, defence industry and research and security capacity-building.<sup>134</sup> An example of this joint implementation plan is the new European Centre for Countering Hybrid Threats based in Helsinki.<sup>135</sup> Further developments and initiatives in institutional and operational cooperation are expected in the coming period.

Sweden and Finland are not allies but close partners. As illustrated at the NATO summit in Warsaw, both countries have a special relationship with the alliance. Sweden and Finland were in fact mentioned separately in the final summit communiqué.<sup>136</sup> The Finnish government has underscored the importance of the two institutions’ convergence: “Finland must be active in advancing any opportunities for cooperation in the EU and NATO”.<sup>137</sup> To either country, NATO membership discussions are sensitive, cooperation with NATO however is longstanding and operational in a high degree. From the side of both countries, it is

133 “A Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union - EU Global Strategy - European Commission.” EU Global Strategy, June 2016. /globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-foreign-and-security-policy-european-union. P. 20

134 “EU and NATO Start New Era of Cooperation - EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission.” EEAS - European External Action Service. Accessed October 27, 2017. [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/16643/EU](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/16643/EU)

135 For further information see: “Hybrid CoE – The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats.” <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/>.

136 Paragraph 23 (and 101 for Sweden specifically) NATO. “Warsaw Summit Communiqué - Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016.” NATO, July 9, 2016. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm).

137 Prime Minister’s Office Finland. “Government’s Defence Report,” July 2017. [http://www.defmin.fi/files/3688/J07\\_2017\\_Governments\\_Defence\\_Report\\_Eng\\_PLM\\_160217.pdf](http://www.defmin.fi/files/3688/J07_2017_Governments_Defence_Report_Eng_PLM_160217.pdf). P. 17.

imperative, as EU members, to stay close to the developments on the convergence of the EU and NATO on the above-mentioned action points and policy areas. Increased cooperation between the EU and NATO would allow both Finland and Sweden get into the loop of NATO developments, perhaps even more so than now, below the threshold of membership.

On the one hand, with the changing nature of NATO tasks and focus, also the relationship with Sweden and Finland is set to change. From partnering in international missions in Afghanistan to NATO's activities within the Enhanced Forward Presence deployment close to Swedish and Finnish border, making the link between Sweden and Finland and the NATO alliance in the future perhaps more complicated and the same time more important.<sup>138</sup> On the other hand, with a renewed focus on (hybrid) security issues in the Baltic region, the role of Sweden and Finland as security providers in that region has become more prominent. Although only members of the EU, this role remains significant for NATO too. Therefore, as EU members and close partners to NATO, Sweden and Finland could assume leadership in developing security and defence cooperation between the organisations.<sup>139</sup> Areas in which EU-NATO agreed to cooperate and in which both countries could make a real difference. As referred to earlier, Finland has already partially taken up this task by hosting the European Centre for Countering Hybrid Threats, making informally a link to a specific threat in the region itself, and making a contribution to enhancing EU-NATO cooperation.

138 Wieslander, Anna. "Can They Get Any Closer? The Case for Deepening the Partnerships Between Sweden and Finland with NATO." Atlantic Council. Accessed October 27, 2017. <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/can-they-get-any-closer-the-case-for-deepening-the-partnerships-between-sweden-and-finland-with-nato>.

139 Wieslander, Anna. "Sweden and Finland Should Lead EU-NATO Cooperation on Hybrid and Resilience." Atlantic Council, December 5, 2016. <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/sweden-and-finland-should-lead-eu-nato-cooperation-on-hybrid-and-resilience>.

## CONCLUSION: THE EU AS A SECURITY PROVIDER IN THE TRUMP ERA?

DID TRUMP CHANGE everything for European defence or is it just business as usual? Despite the U.S. President's comments in the media, the true implementation or impact of an 'America First' policy towards Europe's security is not apparent at this moment. As a matter of fact, the President's comments have diverged from U.S. officials who have travelled to Europe with a message: "do not pay attention to what the President says, instead look at what the administration does."<sup>140</sup> An example is the continued commitment of the U.S. towards Europe's security Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP)<sup>141</sup> and financial commitments towards the European Reassurance Initiative. The frank comments by the U.S. President did shake up Brussels and in a way provided for a push factor, certainly for a political sense of urgency to act on European defence.

The impending Brexit and a range of external security factors have proven to be additional factors pushing the European leadership to think seriously about defence spending, solving the capability gap and attempting to answer the question as to what role the EU should play when strengthening European defence. As Juncker stated in Prague in June 2017:

140 Anna Wieslander. "Beyond the Article 5 Backlash: What Really Happened with Trump and NATO." EURACTIV.com, June 2, 2017. <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/opinion/beyond-the-article-5-backlash-what-really-happened-with-trump-and-nato/>.

141 NATO. "NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence," May 2017. [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2017\\_05/1705-factsheet-efp.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_05/1705-factsheet-efp.pdf).

*“Over the past decade it has become crystal clear that our American partners consider that they are shouldering too much of the burden for their wealthy European Allies. We have no other choice than to defend our own interests in the Middle East, in climate change, in our trade agreements.”<sup>142</sup>*

Three years ago, ‘defence’ in the Schuman area, that hosts the main EU institutions, was a ‘dirty word’ and not considered a policy area the EU should act upon. Fast forward to 2016 and the last months of 2017; a range of European initiatives to strengthen the ‘defence pillar’ are being discussed, implemented and endorsed by all member states.

For Finland and Sweden, despite several bilateral and multi-lateral defence cooperation issues, the EU remains a cornerstone in their defence and security policy; as a security provider and as a platform for European defence cooperation. Currently, Sweden and Finland, like other European countries, would be dependent and rely on outside support to maintain its sovereignty in an evolving military crisis in, for example, the Baltic Sea region. In updating their security and defence strategies as well as through their political endorsements for these new EU initiatives, the EU is being recognised as a serious security provider.

Progress of its own ambition set out in the EU Global Strategy is being made and defence is being taken seriously on a political level. Nevertheless, many of these plans are not entirely new. For example, PESCO was discussed shortly after the Lisbon Treaty came into force in 2009, but urgency and political will were lacking and most of the initiatives died a quick death. For many of the recent initiatives taken on the EU-level, ‘the proof of the

142 “European Commission - PRESS RELEASES - Press Release - Speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the Defence and Security Conference Prague: In Defence of Europe,” June 2017. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-17-1581\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-17-1581_en.htm).

eating is in the pudding'. Should the initiatives that are currently on the table fail to be successfully implemented by member states or prove to be otherwise inadequate, Europe risks losing the momentum to achieve major progress on European defence cooperation. "Only if European capitals translate their recent declarations of political will into a real and sustainable increase in defence spending can the new CSDP proposals succeed."<sup>143</sup> Whether these initiatives will solve the challenges for European defence, and with that its military posture and deterrence, therefore remains to be seen.

It is, however, important to point out that it is the member states who will decide how effective and fruitful the initiatives on further advancing the European defence cooperation agenda, proposed by Mogherini, will be. Member states should look critically at the proposed plans, but the proposals should help tackle the capability gap that member states and, as a consequence, the EU suffer from.<sup>144</sup> It should be borne in mind that the European Commission can only shape the framework and create the necessary conditions for increasing the effectiveness of defence spending and cooperation. The success factor lays with the member states. Only through their political and strategic convergence or alignment, the EU can have a Common Security and Defence Policy with the right tools that can set the ambition for what kind of European defence is needed.

143 Sophia Besch. "EU Defence, Brexit and Trump," December 2016. [http://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/pb\\_defence\\_14dec16.pdf](http://www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/pb_defence_14dec16.pdf).

144 Karlijn Jans. "Will Mogherini's Plans Transform European Defence? | Friends of Europe," December 2016. <http://www.friendsofeurope.org/publication/will-mogherinis-plans-transform-european-defence>.

## CHAPTER IV: FINLAND, SWEDEN AND NATO: A VIEW FROM WASHINGTON

ANDRÁS SIMONYI

### NATO ENLARGEMENT AND FINNISH-SWEDISH ABSENCE

IN THE AFTERMATH of the tectonic changes in Eastern Europe of 1989 after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, only a few had the historic foresight to see the possibility of a resurgent Russia or the potential backsliding in the newer democracies. Euphoria was dominating the political elites. Only a few cautioned about the 'end of history' as we knew it. The idea that the West's liberal-democratic ways would now spread like wildfire was part of the peace dividend. Only a few of the champions of this new reality were grounded in realpolitik and with a deep historic knowledge and understanding that things could go off the rails. At the time, this minority was ridiculed. The difficulties of transition from dictatorship to democracy were thought negligible, and the vulnerabilities of Western democracies were underestimated.

Central-Eastern European countries like Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic pushed hard for the enlargement of NATO, understanding that their best hope of stabilising their countries, which were going through a very difficult phase of transition, was to join the Transatlantic institutions. There was also, however, an element of fear of a resurgent Russia wanting to reverse the process of change from dictatorship to democracy by military means. The sophistication of Russian foreign policy and its use of soft power was not yet visible. Therefore, the majority of the populations of these countries were in favour of joining

NATO. Hungary took the risk of a referendum, which resulted in a victory for the 'yes' camp.

In Western Europe such fears were never really understood. The warnings by the Central and Eastern Europeans about a possibly disruptive Russia were discarded as old-school, anti-communist rhetoric, driven by anger rather than rationality. The debate in Finland at that time focused on joining the EU. The referendum yielded strong support for joining the EU, 57–43%. The possibility of NATO membership was never put on the front burner. Those in the Finnish diplomatic corps who were close observers of the NATO enlargement process were working hard to convince the then leading political forces to take the big leap and join in the first wave, with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Swedish voices were a lot quieter. In the corridors of Brussels, the chatter between Finnish diplomats and prospective members was about a window of opportunity, which could soon close.

The same conversations took place about Swedish membership. Moreover, Sweden which had boasted of a formidable defence force during the Cold War decided in the following decades to cut back its capabilities, its military manpower and spending. In 2010, Sweden even decided to 'mothball' military conscription.

## MEMBERSHIP VS. PARTNERSHIP

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR Peace programme invented in Washington in 1994 was originally intended to put the enlargement idea on the back burner, to sidetrack the process. The idea was reluctantly taken on board by the prospective members as a 'preparatory half-way house'. However, an unintended consequence was the further tempering of Finnish and Swedish membership

debates, as both countries saw this as a framework that would result in 'just enough' of a close relationship to NATO.

The point that the driver of NATO membership is Article 5, which concerns the strategic relationship with the U.S. and the full participation in the political decision-making process, was overlooked, but not by its opponents. The efforts to thwart membership of Finland and Sweden had an undeniably strong anti-American streak.

In conversations, there was yet another important element, which reverberated to a point, but failed to change the direction of the discourse. This was the clarity about the difference in the level of political influence on NATO for members and non-members. NATO has and always will be first and foremost a military defence alliance, with Article 5 at the core, but having a place around the Council table gives any country a very special political status in the international community. It is also a distinction critical in the relationship to the U.S. An ally is an ally; a partner, however close, is a partner. Article 5 extends only to full members. This is a very important part of the considerations for membership for all those countries that have become members since 1999 and continues to be one for those that have the declared goal to become one.

The Finnish and Swedish decision was not without merits and must be respected. The two countries, by many wrongly considered as twins in the NATO membership debate, have done well as influential power-brokers in their non-aligned and neutral statuses. However, their background and strategic situations are very different. It makes no sense to look at the two as locked together. Sweden has had a political culture of over-reliance on the UN. This is changing but is still very dominant within big parts of the political and cultural elites and the rest of the population. The Russian arguments to stop enlargement were

accommodated. No doubt there was always a sense of complacency present in their decision not to join the Alliance. “We will join when we want to and when we are ready,” was the argument. The counter-argument was “Join now, while you can, as it might not be that easy in the future.”

The Finnish case, seen from the U.S., is different. It is rooted in the harsh realities of its history with Russia. The two cannot be compared.

Finnish and Swedish neutrality are therefore judged differently. Finland’s position is more understandable and pragmatically justified. It has a far more complicated history with Russia [the Soviet Union], and its neutrality is considered a stance forced upon it by past and recent history. Swedish neutrality is born out of historical development, but is a choice of convenience. It is today considered to be more a result of ideology. Neutrality served both countries well during the Cold War, but lost its original meaning after the fall of the Soviet Union. Neutrality is increasingly seen as obsolete when non-military tools of strategic disruption are inseparable from conventional military ones.

Those of us who strongly supported, and still support, Finnish and Swedish membership have put forward a case, which has both a military and non-military component. The military arguments are well-known, but the non-military aspects are often overlooked. In the past two decades, NATO has welcomed and embraced countries that were and still are in an unfinished process of transition from dictatorship to democracy, from a command economy to a fully-fledged market economy. Some of these countries have not been able to stabilise their democratic institutions and solidify a society based on transparency and the rule of law. In more cases than not, there is a democratic backslide leaning towards authoritarian rule, prone to Russian influence. Despite their membership of NATO, and for most in the EU,

the process is far from complete. It would have benefited NATO and its newest members to have had two solid, well established democracies joining the Alliance.

Of the Nordic countries, today only Denmark, Iceland and Norway are members of NATO. Given the growing importance of the Nordic countries in stabilising Europe and indeed the community of Western democracies, it would be desirable to align their membership in NATO.

### PROSPECTS OF JOINING TODAY

IN MANY WAYS, Russia can be pleased. The circumstances of joining NATO now are not favourable. The appetite for enlargement is just not there. While NATO has made clear that Russia has no veto over the enlargement process, the conditions for membership have changed and Russia has made it very clear that it would do everything it can to block Finnish and Swedish membership. Moreover, the political forces inside NATO, which see appeasement of Russia as a viable option and as a preferred road to defusing the Russian threat, have become stronger within the Alliance. This is due to many factors, among them Russian efforts to influence the public and the attendant corruption of politicians, which is not to be underestimated.

Americans, regardless of their political party, view neutrality as an outdated concept. Neutrality today, rightly or wrongly, is seen as a stance to keep equal distance from the U.S. and Russia, which of course is nonsense. Finland and Sweden are part of the West, and most Americans, if asked, would name the two countries as members of NATO. But that does not grant them status as allies in Washington.

The enhanced cooperation of the two countries with the U.S. should not just be welcome, but it is also important to the

stability of the two countries and the Nordic-Baltic region as a whole. The relationship is deep and extends from business ties to military cooperation, but perhaps the broad cooperation also creates an illusion about the content of the relationship. They are important military partners, but they are not allies.

Finland is a great example of *realpolitik* and understanding of the importance of maintaining a credible military defence posture. It is well understood that the decision of Finland to join or not to join NATO is for Finland and Finland alone. No country will force any such decision upon the Finnish people. It is important that Washington understands that willingness to join NATO has to rest upon robust support; reluctant and half-hearted membership is not welcome. There is, however, a sense in Washington that both in Sweden and Finland, there is little understanding of the nature of their enhanced relationship with the U.S., that somehow this will amount to an Article 5-type intervention to defend these countries, should they be attacked. This is not the case. Only full NATO membership provides such guarantees.

The current balance of power in the Baltic Sea region favours Russia in many ways because the country patchwork of Article 5 guarantees makes the region less resistant to Russian attack and pressure. Sweden's role in defending the Baltic States is important. The recent reinforcement of the defence of Gotland is a strong sign, key to Baltic Sea security. However, the oft-repeated argument that NATO and particularly the U.S. needs Sweden is a misunderstanding. Being useful and being indispensable are two entirely different things.

The growing concerns for security in the Baltic region in both countries are noticeable. Finland has maintained a strong capability. Sweden has done much recently to reverse the process of further weakening its armed forces, such as reintroducing

conscription for both men and women. The desire for enhanced military cooperation with the U.S. is clear. The efforts made through institutionalised cooperation like Nordic Defence Cooperation or NORDEFECO are not being overlooked.

To boost their image and standing in Washington, our think tank has suggested that the two countries be bold and raise their military spending to a level which would put many actual members of NATO to shame. In doing this, Finland and Sweden would make a strong statement that they are not mere free riders of Western defence and security, and they are not countries that want to achieve full security at a lower level of military *and* political commitment and risk-taking. It would also prove that they *think and act* like allies.

It is in this context that the ambitious project of French-German-led independent European defence must be discussed. There is no doubt that Europeans need to be ready and able to carry out robust military operations on their own in the future, without U.S. involvement. The weaknesses of European capabilities are clearly understood. The political will to overcome these are welcome. It is also clear that these goals require Europe-wide political commitment. If this commitment also strengthens the European pillar of NATO, it is a most welcome development.

However, the strengthening of European defence should not come at the cost of a strong and cohesive Atlantic Alliance. The idea that Europe will be able to fend off strategic threats on its own is an illusion. No European defence will be able to replace NATO's Article 5 guarantees, so no European nation should be guided by the idea that Europe needs to develop its autonomous defence because the U.S. does not care about Europe. This is nonsense. America cares about Europe and, counter-intuitively, the more Europe cares about itself and common threats to our community, the more the U.S. will care about Europe. Europeans

need to understand that only with U.S. leadership will we be able to counter an increasingly aggressive and assertive Russia and China.

Sweden and Finland need to consider the above, and any future investment in their militaries must be seen through this dichotomy: a need to strengthen the Transatlantic relationship, while also making sure that Europeans take their own security more seriously. Their future debates and decisions about joining NATO should also be considered in this context.

## NATO UNDER PRESIDENT TRUMP

MONTHS BEFORE THE elections, experts in Washington urged Europeans to have a ‘plan B’ ready, in case Hillary Clinton lost the elections. We said that the Europeans don’t get to elect the American President, so they must be ready to work with the U.S. President whom the American people choose to elect. They might have sympathies, they might have preferences based on their own political or ideological convictions, but in the end they must find ways to work with the President in office. This is sometimes hard, but the visceral hate toward Trump has also blinded Europeans to the realities of America.

Yes, in the first months of the Trump administration there was a fear of America turning inwards and that it might abandon NATO as the institution of choice for the transatlantic relationship. And yes, the rhetoric by President Trump about NATO being obsolete was confusing. Some of his comments were and are unnecessary. But his declarations were also taken way too literally and some Europeans saw this as a battle cry for detachment from America, suggesting that “we can no longer count on America”.

The same forces failed to recognise the fact that, from the start, tried and experienced U.S. military leaders have played an

important role in the Trump administration. Arguably one of the most influential members of the Trump cabinet, former General James Mattis, was once Commander of the Allied Command Transformation. It was not long before it became very clear that NATO would remain at the core of the transatlantic relationship. The appointment of former Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison as U.S. Ambassador to NATO was also about sending a strong message: the U.S. wants one of its most seasoned politicians to sit around the NATO Council table.

Some Europeans were driven by honest worries that the U.S. will turn away from Europe, but others displayed open or latent anti-Americanism, which always looms in the background. It is sometimes not easy to be America's friend, especially when policies are messy and when there is no perceived sense of direction, but it is easy to be its enemy. Rather than facing issues head on, it is at times a lot easier to blame America for all the world's troubles. Seen from Washington, some of the suggestions in Europe that emerged in the wake of Trump's election were opportunistic: use this to boost European independence from the U.S. Finland and Sweden, however, would do well to keep in mind that while increased European defence is welcome, this should never come at the cost of the transatlantic relationship. Yes, the Europeans should take more responsibility for their security. They need to spend more on their defence and yes, the EU's foreign policy efforts will only be considered credible if it is backed up by hard and soft power alike. In the end, however, the U.S. is the ultimate guarantor of European security, and this will remain a fact for the foreseeable future.

## FINLAND AND SWEDEN: FREE RIDERS OR IMPORTANT MILITARY PARTNERS?

FINLAND AND SWEDEN are both very important players in international affairs and are important members of the EU. They are both of strategic importance for stability and security in the Baltic Sea region. This stability is of course primarily dependent on the continued and robust presence of the U.S. and NATO, but the two countries are de facto contributors to it. Finnish and Swedish contributions are more than welcome.

They are important military partners, because of the investments in their security forces and the cutting-edge technology that is frequently the standard for these forces. Finland's reserve military structure, the rapidity with which they can deploy, the broad societal perspective into the range and type of forces and the special skill that Finland can call upon during crisis situations make it an excellent military partner. Its long border with Russia and its intelligence capabilities make it an asset, not a free rider.

On the other hand, their cooperation with the U.S. and the Alliance is also beneficial to Finland and Sweden themselves, not just to the U.S. Gotland is of strategic importance, and can play a critical, albeit not decisive role, in case of crisis in the region. However, were it controlled by the enemy it would create an extremely dangerous situation. In any conflict or in exercising for any scenario, access, basing and overflight are critical components. You must depend on allies and partners for these essential components. In these domains, NATO can work with both Finland and Sweden.

There are capabilities the two countries possess, which are real assets. There is great potential for increased cooperation in fields that are of strategic importance, such as countering non-traditional threats like hybrid attacks, threats to critical infrastructure, countering disinformation, cyber security and intelligence.

## AMERICAN LEADERSHIP: THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

U.S. LEADERSHIP in the Western world is as important as ever. As the saying goes “Europeans hate American leadership, but they hate the lack of it even more”.

The U.S. is the pillar upon which NATO rests. No country or group of countries can replace U.S. leadership within the Alliance. For years this leadership has been withdrawn or even absent, and this might have led to the conclusion that perhaps NATO is not as important as in the past. That was the wrong conclusion.

In the election campaign, there was little talk of NATO, if at all. However, the one recurring theme by both the Democrat and Republican candidates was the importance of the allies spending more on their defence, to make a larger contribution to burden-sharing. This should not have come as a surprise to European partners and allies. Earlier demands by the U.S. to spend more, the so-called 2% pledge, were never taken seriously by the Europeans, although they had all signed off on it at the Wales Summit in 2014.

Trump on the other hand is now very serious about it, for reasons beyond NATO. While the 2% shouldn't be the only component that shows commitment, demanding it is as much a political statement as a military one. Europe needs to take more responsibility for its defence and understand that the U.S. can easily be overstretched. More importantly, the U.S. public, rightly or wrongly, sees spending on allies as not spending on infrastructure, education, job creation or health care at home. Trump's call for more spending is not just the idea of an ignorant and uninformed president. He has plenty of information about the military capabilities of Europe. The strong element of pressure by the U.S. public, however, cannot be ignored.

If the requirements of military budget spending are taken more seriously, it will increase credibility and deterrence and provoke a new discussion in Europe about taking its own defence far more seriously.

The role of the President of the United States within NATO is of course not just symbolic, even if the institution of POTUS has strong symbolism. The President is the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Armed Forces, which is the decisive factor in maintaining NATO as a defence alliance. His decisions and executive orders are defining for the Alliance. The President epitomises U.S. leadership.

## THE FUTURE OF FINNISH AND SWEDISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO

FINNISH AND SWEDISH membership is not on the front burner in debates in Washington these days. Both countries are doing extremely well as friends and partners of the U.S. The relationship between the U.S. on the one hand and Sweden and Finland on the other-hand is underscored by frequent high-level visits. Enhanced security cooperation is always on the agenda. Efforts to build a special relationship with the U.S. are welcome signs that there is still a very strong constituency in favour of a close security relationship between the U.S. and the two countries.

Both countries are also regarded as important members of not just the EU, but also the group known as the Nordic countries. It does not go unnoticed that they are among the world's leaders on many fronts: education, clean, sustainable and pleasant cities, technical innovation, the environment and social innovation. The Nordic countries have a great constituency and many friends in America. They can make a huge contribution to the debates in America about the future direction of the U.S., with great credibility.

## FRIENDS

THE QUESTION OF NATO membership is politely 'avoided' in most conversations these days. It is not a priority, for the moment. There is a good understanding that the supporters of membership in Finland and Sweden will not risk a referendum, which could have a negative outcome, throwing back the possibility of joining NATO for years if not for decades.

However, a serious debate about this critical issue would be helpful. It is the majority view in Washington that neither country should be held hostage by the other, that they should go through their own internal and painful political processes.

It may emerge that many of those opposing membership have strong arguments for staying out of the Alliance. As mentioned above, some are driven by fear, others manipulated by Russian propaganda, and others still have ulterior motives, but a serious and responsible debate would also bring to the surface strong arguments in favour of membership. It would also show that the U.S. (unlike some other powers) does not interfere in the debate, and that we take the position that this is a decision for the Finnish and the Swedish people, not for the outside world to take. It would however give those who would like to see Finland and Sweden in NATO an opportunity to explain why. It would also allow for a powerful platform to push back against dangerous anti-American sentiments, which are fuelled by forces both within and beyond Finland and Sweden.

If and when Finland and Sweden decide of their own accord to join the Alliance, have no doubt that their friends in America will have a good and credible case to make when asking the Congress of the U.S. to ratify their membership.



## SUMMARY: EU, FINLAND AND SWEDEN. MAYBE NATO IN THE FUTURE?

NILS TORVALDS

### FINLAND SNEAKING OUT IN SMALL STEPS

AFTER THE RUSSIAN Revolution in 1917 and the declaration of independence, Finland was considered by Moscow and many other European capitals to be a “threatened country”. By taking neutrality as its way of acting towards other countries and alliances, this was the simplest and most practical way to stay out of major conflicts. This was the pattern for 22 years until 1940. After being neutral during the Winter War Finland joined forces with the Germans to recapture the occupied lands. But in the summer of 1944 the Finnish political leadership had to admit that the war was lost even if the Red Army was still outside the borders created by the peace treaty after the Winter War in 1940. It was obvious that the Finns had to change their approach to defence and security policy. This led to a Finland which declared itself fully neutral, to keep the Soviets calm and on their own side of the long border.

During the critical years from 1944 to 1948, Finland was in Limbo. On maps describing the way in which the European political landscape had changed, Finland was pictured as something in between. All the other countries of the old *Cordon Sanitaire* from the First World War, were occupied or about to be occupied by the Soviet Union.

Finland’s position during the peace negotiations in Paris was further aggravated by the fact, that the U.S. was on the outside. The diplomatic ties had been severed during the last months of the war, but the U.S. had not been at war with Finland and was

therefore excluded from this part of the Paris negotiations. The “*percentage paper*”, negotiated between Generalissimus Josef Stalin and Prime Minister Winston Churchill in October 1944, showed that that Great Britain was primarily interested in the Balkans and in securing communication channels to the important Asian parts of the Commonwealth.

That left Finland, as an integral, but independent part of the Soviet sphere of influence. After the Czech crisis in 1948, the Cold War established a sort of stalemate, where the borders established between the European East and West were upheld, sometimes with military interventions (East Germany 1954, Hungary 1956 and Czechoslovakia 1968). To appease the leadership in Moscow, Finland signed the *Pact of Friendship and Support* in 1948. The neutrality line was fully adopted by the post-war president Paasikivi. The Finns even rejected Marshall-funding for rebuilding after the war, as it most likely would have irritated its Eastern friends.

The leeway for Finnish foreign policy was severely limited, which in its turn was reflected in a growing misunderstanding of the country’s political aims. In small steps, Finland tried to sneak out of the Soviet sphere of influence by joining the Nordic Council and the UN in 1955. Finland became an associate member of European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1961. The status was a way of appeasing Moscow.

The limited possibilities became apparent when, in the late 1960’s, Finland tried to establish a Nordic economic community (Nordek) together with the Nordic neighbours, which actually changed the tactical approach. From this moment onwards, Finland tried to use the Soviet initiative for a conference on European security cooperation as a vehicle to enlarge the realm of political movement.

This resulted in the Conference on Security and Coopera-

tion in Europe, held in Helsinki in 1975. The CSCE was thought of as framework for keeping the unruly ghosts of the Cold War at bay. With rules on human rights, the ideological battle moved away from the geopolitical sphere, which in a way helped Finland to take further initiatives resulting in full membership of EFTA in 1986.

The whole European framework changed, however, when the Soviet Union imploded starting with the coup in Moscow in August 1991. That led Finland's president Mauno Koivisto to declare the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance from 1948 as null and void. Already in 1992 Finland applied of becoming a member in the EU.

### SWEDISH WAY OF THINKING BEFORE 1995

FOR SWEDEN ON the other hand, 1812 is significant as that was, when the Swedes were at war as a nation the last time. This was the Anglo-Swedish war (1810–1812) between Sweden and the UK. This last war for Sweden is still remembered, which is interesting as it was a totally bloodless war, due to the fact that there was not a single battle between the two countries.

Sweden has enjoyed peace for more than two centuries. Its policy has been to uphold friendly relations with most of its neighbouring countries. Finland has served as buffer between Sweden and Russia and later with the Soviet Union. As it had no combat costs to pay, Sweden was able to rise rapidly in living standards and became industrialised. At the start of the First World War, it was easy for Sweden to declare neutrality and to stay out.

Sweden was quite quick to join the League of Nations and later also the UN. But these decisions were made after a long and complex debate on different political levels. The question was whether a neutral country like Sweden might jeopardise its

neutrality by working for a safer and more peaceful world. Sweden did join the UN, the Nordic Council and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). The Swedish “realpolitik” prevailed until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Noteworthy in this regard is that both Sweden and Finland have, in relation to their size, been very active in sending their armed forces on peace-keeping missions around the world even during the Cold War. This shows that Finland and Sweden have taken different steps in upholding their neutrality during the last century.

### THE EU AS A SECURITY MEASURE?

NEITHER SWEDEN OR Finland could anticipate what kind of possibilities would open after August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1991. The fact that both countries decided quickly to apply to become members of the EU was a natural stage in a completely changed world.

Since 1995, two Nordic countries, Finland and Sweden, have been members of the EU, which in addition to Austria, Ireland, Cyprus and Malta, are non-aligned EU member states. There are many quite logical reasons for these countries to have an interest in how security and defence policies are discussed within the European Union.

The incentives for EU-membership for Finland and Sweden differed a lot, as Sweden mainly did it for economic reasons as it exported to the EU-countries. Finland, however, joined the EU mostly for security reasons. The great turbulence in Finland’s nearest geopolitical sphere between 1989 and 1991 made it evident that the political situation had drastically changed. Therefore, Finland had a completely different interest in developing cooperation in the EU on the level of defence and security policies, but without surrendering its non-alignment.

The powers of the larger EU members did aspire to turn the EU to one of the predecessors of the Western European Union (WEU) formed by the UK, France and Benelux in 1948. Together with NATO, it worked as a complement to maintaining the balance of powers in Cold War Europe. It is notable that the WEU, which was considered a defence alliance, consisted of ten member states. Finland and Sweden became observers after their accession to the EU in 1995.

This was considered a problem for the neutral Finland and Sweden, as they wanted to try to maintain their status as neutral states. Both countries wished to keep the CSDP as civilian as possible without any major military tasks. This resulted in a joint proposal to increase EU crisis management in 1997 in order to prevent the merger of the WEU and the EU by forming a EU safety and defence policy. However, after some opposition in the beginning from the larger member states, the tide turned and everybody thought that a more civilian profile would be a good idea. Nevertheless, crisis management tasks and conflict prevention lead to more military action through the list of Petersberg tasks of the WEU and the Treaty of Amsterdam, ratified in 1999. By this, the European Security and Defence Policy was formed. The Treaty of Lisbon was established in 2009 and in 2011 the WEU was abolished.

WHY IS IT THEN IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS THE POLICIES OF FINLAND AND SWEDEN?

BOTH FINLAND AND Sweden are to this day non-aligned but cannot be considered neutral. Notable is the fact that the treaty introduces the clauses of solidarity and mutual assistance, which have taken EU one step forward towards a defence union.

When looking at the historical aspects, the question arises of whether these two individual EU-member states' policies should be discussed on a general level within the European Union in Brussels and Strasbourg?

The discussion should especially focus on the interface between Finland, Sweden, EU and NATO. Some may regard this discussion to be irrelevant as the creation of the European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) back in 1999 has given the framework so far. So, did even I for a very long time, but now we have a new situation after the agreement between the foreign secretaries and ministers of 23 EU-member countries when signing the Permanent Structure of Cooperation-agreement (PESCO).

Taking into account that these two small Nordic states had a great impact on the formulation of the CSDP and the Treaty of Lisbon, EU-member countries should start a discussion on where to go from here. The formulation of the CSDP has been considered one of the greatest successes of the EU in terms of security and defence policies. It is also important to remember creation of the CSDP in 1999 posed a challenge for both Finland and Sweden as they considered themselves neutral states.

Both Finland and Sweden have been very active participants and strong supporters, which has now been seen in formalising the PESCO-agreement. The Nordic states have adjusted their policies during the past 20-25 years, so the other EU-members should discuss the future of the two countries' policies. This is also because there is a noticeable interest in gathering as many EU-members as possible into the European and transatlantic security community. The significant difference between Finland and Sweden today is their view towards future NATO-membership, even though some changes have been noticed due to the new the security situation in Europe.

The military strategies of Finland and Sweden have also greatly differed from 1990 until recent years. Looking at the latest development in CSDP and EU-cooperation, Finland and Sweden must remember that even though they have taken massive steps forward, most of the EU member states are already full members in NATO and will not start to construct competing military structures. It is simply not in their interest and would not be financially viable. Although the EU is starting to create an important new defence and security policy, there is no signs that this would in any way replace NATO.

Therefore, the only way to have a stable and secure defence policy is future NATO-membership for both Finland and Sweden. This, however, requires thorough public discussion and courage from the members of the Finnish parliament to state their opinion. A referendum might at that point be feasible at least for some politicians. But the latest referendum experiences from the presidential elections in the US and Brexit gave a strong signal that forces that do not have the right to vote might get involved and try to influence the result. This should be avoided.





Since 1994, Finland and Sweden have been partners with NATO but never applied for full membership in the Alliance. For most European countries, membership both in the EU and NATO go hand-in-hand. The total population of the European Union is some 508 million, yet only 31 million or 6% of EU citizens live in a non-NATO country.

For Europeans and Americans to better understand NATO debate, we have produced this publication: “**Finland, Sweden & NATO – Did Trump Change Everything?**”. We also want to examine if Donald Trump’s one-year-long Presidency has affected the NATO debate in Finland and Sweden.

This publication sheds light on the historic background of Finland and Sweden, and also examines how Trump’s one year in power has affected the debate on NATO in the respective countries.

This publication consists of five interesting chapters written by Anna Kronlund, Magnus Christiansson, Karlijn Jans, Andras Simonyí and Nils Torvalds. After reviewing it, the reader will hopefully have a better understanding of why Finland and Sweden are outside NATO.

This publication was done in cooperation with the following organizations:



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