

European Security Defence Policy, Role Specialization and Pooling of Resources: The EU's Need for Action and What It Means for Switzerland

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The end of the Cold War and the most recent military operations have brought Europe's military-technical deficiencies to the fore. These shortfalls and a growing uncertainty about the future of US foreign policy have created a sense of urgency among leading European nations of the need to 'take the bull by the horns' with the project of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Despite a slowdown most recently, the project's progress since 1998 has been remarkable. Besides political agreement to commit troops to achieve the headline goals set in Helsinki, various new institutions (Political and Security Committee, EU Military Committee, EU Military Staff) have been created to deal with security policy and military aspects within the Brussels bureaucracy. In addition, the European Union (EU) and NATO have adopted basic principles for EU access to NATO capacities and procedures. The draft treaty for an EU Convention foresees, among other things, a solidarity clause in case of terrorist attacks, structured defence co-operation and the setting up of a European Armaments, Research and Military Capabilities Agency. To test the feasibility of current institutions and processes, the EU has launched two police missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia and two military missions in Macedonia and in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and it envisages taking over NATO's mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) in late 2004. Although this progress adds up to Europe being able to respond at least formally to the famous 'Kissinger request' for a phone number for someone who can speak for Europe, the EU member states still do not answer many questions with a coherent voice, particularly when it comes to national security policy and military planning.

This article sheds light on the impact of these developments by analysing the case of Switzerland. As an EU outsider, Switzerland makes a particularly good case study. First, although joining the EU has been the declared aim of

the Federal Council since 1992, the impact of EU admission on Switzerland's defence policy has hardly been analysed. Second, Switzerland's location at the heart of Europe and its economic dependence on the EU – in 2002, 80 per cent of all imports came from the EU, while 60 per cent of all exports were sold to EU countries – leave it no choice but to systematically take into account European decisions and developments when considering its own policy options. Finally, the EU's balanced security approach, with a mix of economic, political and military means, offers various opportunities for Swiss contributions, thus providing an excellent 'force multiplier' for the implementation and advancement of Switzerland's foreign and security policy goals.

Our analysis starts from a twofold assumption. First, we believe that 'Europe' and the 'European cause' will become the most important sources for legitimizing the *raison d'être* of armed forces in the future and for beefing up military budgets in Europe.¹ By European cause, we mean the combination of normative aims, such as the respect for the rule of law, democracy and human and minority rights, and structural objectives, such as a strong multilateral world order, effective international institutions, peaceful relationships among nations and sustainable development. Second, rectifying military-technical deficits will require billions of euros. In order to sell increases in military spending to Europe's electorate, which is more worried about social security than defence, politicians must find new, efficient and effective ways to address the existing shortcomings. Therefore, we assume that ideas such as the pooling of resources, role specialization and the introduction of convergence criteria will rank high on the future political agenda of the EU. As the intensifying discussion on the impact of the ESDP on the transatlantic partnership has made clear, a more co-ordinated (not to say integrated) approach to military issues within the EU will influence members and non-members of the EU. Based on our assumptions, we assess the potential impact on Switzerland's future security policy and military posture. We highlight three important issues: whether and how to forge strategic partnerships, how to adapt armament procurement policies and how to overhaul security and military policy planning processes. As we will show, these issues bear importance for Europe as a whole, and not just for Switzerland (see Table 1).

Recent Development of the ESDP

Military interventions in the Gulf wars (1990–1991 and 2003), in the Balkans and in Afghanistan have provided ample proof of a huge transatlantic military capabilities gap. Most importantly, Europe has military deficits in the areas of command, control, communication and computers (C4), strategic air and sea lift, logistics, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and all-weather and precision-guided weapons of any type.² These deficiencies hinder not

TABLE I
NEED FOR ACTION CAUSED BY ESDP AT THE EUROPEAN AND AT
THE SWISS LEVEL

Issues	European need for action	Swiss need for action
Strategic guidelines	Set out European Security White Paper defining common interests and outlining when, where and how to use ESDP instruments	Reinvigorate international dimension of 'Security through Co-operation'
	Establish strategic goals and targets for military and non-military tasks	Establish strategic goals and targets for military and non-military tasks Take into account ESDP in security policy guidelines Identify capabilities needed to implement 'Security through Co-operation' Develop partner concept for international co-operation Enable cross-departmental security policy planning
Role specialization and pooling of resources	Establish top-down process for the identification of needs and core competencies	Decide on Swiss approach: Should Swiss contributions be based on existing strengths (bottom up) or should they be designed to close European shortfalls (top down)?
	Assign responsibility to establish, maintain and develop role tasks to key countries	Earmark potential Swiss contributions
	Continue to set up multinational units	Invent hedging mechanisms
Convergence criteria and certification	Adopt strategic and operational convergence and assessment criteria	Broaden the scope of partnership goals in order to contribute substantially to European force goals
	Devise calculation methods to compare national contributions	Make sure that capabilities, Partnership Goals, European convergence criteria and standardization requirements fit into a consistent concept that drives force development
	Set up review processes	Strengthen existing assessment and controlling processes according to European guidelines
	Name process owners for review tasks	
	Think about positive and negative incentives in case of compliance or non-compliance with criteria	

(continued)

TABLE 1 *CONTINUED*

Issues	European need for action	Swiss need for action
Defence budget	Establish EU budget power for ESDP tasks	Prepare to make financial contributions to European projects
	Earmark existing budgets with 'dual use' character and use them more vigorously for achieving industrial and ESDP tasks (e.g., Galileo project, R&D programmes)	Devise concepts to tailor spending to specific tasks and capabilities based on specialization concept
Procurement	Harmonize national procurement processes	Overhaul national armaments planning and procurement processes by strengthening the long-term and top-down perspective
	Promote consequent through-life orientation	Abolish independent arms evaluation in favour of joining European projects at the conception and development stage
	Introduce European integrated project teams more systematically Strengthen power of existing European procurement institutions to initiate joint projects top-down	
Military law	Identify areas for harmonization based on strategic guidelines	Assess need for reform based on adapted security policy guidelines and identified role specialization
	Think about harmonizing military leadership principles and doctrines Develop European Charter of Military Law	

only effective coalition war fighting. Because these capabilities are critical for the so-called Petersberg tasks, they also reveal Europe's key strategic weaknesses. Since 1998, European governments have realized that tackling these deficits requires billions of euros. On its own, no government would be able to rally the necessary domestic support to increase defence spending. Repeated demands for increasing investments in research and development (R&D) and procurement will not be enough. Fundamental changes need to occur, because holding on to existing European force structures and leaving R&D and procurement spending at current levels means that in the long term, only 15 per cent of Europe's land forces will achieve the degree of modernization

of US troops.³ Therefore, concepts like the pooling of resources at the European level and a more systematic division of labour – also called role specialization – are gaining politicians' attention.⁴ In the following, we discuss these approaches in more detail and highlight the conceptual risks and open questions that need to be overcome in order to implement the approaches successfully.

Role Specialization, Pooling of Resources and 'Just Contributions'

Role specialization is based on the idea that national armed forces dispose of comparative advantages. Europe can make the best use of these comparative advantages by setting up a division of labour that would allow each country to concentrate on specific capabilities rather than overstretch scarce resources. There are a number of examples of armed forces having specific comparative advantages: The German Air Force is able to contribute ECR Tornado fighter jets, which are particularly suitable for suppressing enemy air defence systems (SEAD). By contrast, the UK and France have overseas interests, and their military doctrines stipulate the capability to deploy expeditionary forces over long distances. This means that they can provide strategic lift and war-fighting capabilities. Finally, the armed forces of the Czech Republic are famous for providing effective protection against biological and chemical weapons. At the European level these capabilities would be systematically harmonized and developed in order to increase military effectiveness. At the same time, role specialization could increase economic pressure on the countries to give up national defence-industrial capacity in favour of European cross-border mergers.⁵

Effective and efficient use of scarce resources is also the driving force behind the idea of pooling. Pooling resources creates added value by combining resources that are already available but which have so far been disparately organized. Pooling seems to work best for the provision of new capabilities, but it is also feasible for existing capabilities.⁶ Pooling of resources and role specialization can be combined: NATO's AWACS fleet is multinational, stationed in Germany and registered in Luxembourg; Belgium and the Netherlands have merged portions of the maritime commandos; Germany and the UK are jointly working on new SEAD systems; the Baltic states are teaming up their efforts to pool their resources and to pursue joint procurement. In the future, Europe can benefit from these experiences by expanding the approach in order to tackle the most important military deficits. Along these lines, experts have proposed that maintenance for the new Airbus A400-M heavy-lift transportation aircraft be concentrated in one European country and that another nation should host training facilities for Eurofighter and Joint Strike Fighter pilots. Similar ideas have been brought forward to pool C130 Hercules transportation aircraft and F16 fighter jets, to field joint air-to-air refuelling capabilities, to establish joint European sea-transport capacities

(the Netherlands, France and Germany), to construct common satellites (France and Germany), to build up joint European capabilities for reconnaissance, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and combat search and rescue (CSAR) and to provide a Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTAR).⁷

Despite the beneficial and innovative aspects of role specialization and resource pooling, several potential shortcomings should not be underestimated. First, there are political risks. If one country focuses on, say, mine countermeasures, a coalition force might request access to these capabilities in the case of a conflict that opposes the national interests of that very country. Second, it will be hard to bring the domestic public to the opinion that abandoning certain capabilities makes sense. In practice, however, this is already the case: two out of 15 EU countries have no combat aircraft, and three EU countries with a coastline (Belgium, Ireland and Portugal) do not have a submarine force.⁸ Third, it is to be expected that nations will insist on playing certain roles based on their existing capabilities. From a European perspective such an approach can be less beneficial than from a national perspective, as these capabilities can be either redundant or useless for certain contingencies. As we will argue below, a European top-down approach might help overcome these obstacles.

Finally, role specialization and pooling of resources inevitably demand sophisticated assessment criteria and calculation methods. What is the best way to compare 'high tech' and more traditional contributions such as 'boots on the ground'? Will troop-contributing states accept 'chequebook diplomacy' when 'sharing the frontline' is asked for? And how can a trade-off be made if participating nations face different life cycle costs with regard to the equipment contributed? How should the airstrips or barracks provided (host nation support) be figured into the overall calculation, and how can these contributions be related to troop contingents or civilian means? How much redundancy is necessary to cope with eventual opt-outs from participating states? So far, all these questions remain unresolved. Thus, one need not be a visionary to foresee that the decades-old burden sharing debate among NATO partners is set to haunt the Europeans as well. This is especially clear when we take into account major differences between the UK and France, which emphasize the use of expeditionary forces, and Germany, with its traditional, albeit slowly changing, adherence to territorial defence. As we will argue in the next section, finding answers to these issues requires a closer look at the quantity and the quality of available capabilities. Introducing criteria like contributions as percentages of gross domestic product or troop size in relation to the population (all quantity figures) are not enough as long as there are diverging processes to make the necessary means available (quality perspective). Moreover, non-military contributions need to be taken into account more properly, thereby striking a balance

between military and civilian capabilities. Countries that want to participate in these endeavours will have to commit themselves to long-term partnerships and modify their planning and procurement processes. Our analysis of the Swiss case in the next section will highlight what this means in practice.

Planning and Certification: Convergence Criteria as a Point of Reference

As the ESDP process gained momentum in 1998–1999, many experts borrowed from the European Monetary Union experience and presented the idea of defence convergence criteria in order to set up European Armed Forces and to establish an adequate politico-military framework.⁹ Since then, various suggestions focusing on strategic and operational convergence criteria have been brought forward.¹⁰ Although we agree with these suggestions, an effective review mechanism for their implementation has so far been lacking. In the following, we submit some ideas on how to review implementation at the operational and strategic levels.

At the operational level, criteria for measuring readiness and sustainability can be reviewed by on-site inspections and exercises, as suggested in Table 2. We believe that the military culture of loyalty to a given mission and the use of inspections and verifications as scrutinizing instruments help establish a

TABLE 2
OPERATIONAL CONVERGENCE CRITERIA

Criteria	Review process	Additional comments
Operational readiness and doctrinal harmonization	Inspections, 'full flight tests', alert exercises	Procedures similar to OSCE inspections and verifications may be applied
Training readiness	Inspections, e.g., by European Military Staff	After Action Reviews and joint lessons learned workshops highlight national strengths and deficiencies.
Material readiness	Inspections, e.g., by European Military Staff	Procedures similar to OSCE inspections and verifications may be applied
Sustainability (rotations to be guaranteed)	By declaration and approval, e.g., by European Military Staff	Procedures similar to OSCE inspections and verifications may be applied
Manning and recruitment	Certification on the spot through quality experts	Standardized recruiting systems; common criteria
Cadres	Staff trainings, joint exercises, war gaming	After Action Reviews and joint lessons learned workshops highlight national strengths and deficiencies

robust and binding regime for the application of operational convergence criteria. In addition, most military planners in the European security landscape are used to working with NATO's force development processes, Standardization Agreements (STANAG) and NATO's Planning and Review Process (PARP). However, as we will argue when analysing the Swiss case in more detail, successful application of these international procedures requires them to be fully integrated in national security policy planning processes. If this is not the case, the impact on force development and force transformation will be insufficient.

While our operational criteria will help increase technical interoperability, thus providing 'bottom-up' pressure, the strategic criteria suggested in Table 3 address the issue of converging security policy guidelines from the 'top down'. These criteria could be used to set up a distribution key to pool financial resources, to establish joint procurement projects and to harmonize R&D programmes. Building on the respective principles, EU applicants facing financial problems and ad hoc contributors to Europe's Rapid Reaction Force could benefit from tailored modifications. The most important aspect, however, is the review process established to assess a country's adherence to the criteria.

Europe is right to rely on established NATO planning and review processes. These processes, however, do not offer enough attractive 'carrots' for states to comply, nor does NATO – because of the *à la carte* principle of the Partnership for Peace – have robust 'sticks' for action in case of non-compliance of participating states.¹¹ Furthermore, some states are said to complain about the heaviness of NATO defence planning and central verification processes and the fact that organizational procedures 'invariably couple new low-intensity planning to old high-intensity threat-scenarios'.¹² Because EU members wanted more flexibility and more influence on defence and operational planning, they opted in favour of a new capabilities development and review process to be established in the EU.¹³

Although the tendency of the governments to 'free their hands' is understandable, it also poses risks. We believe that the complexities of the international environment and the growing lack of adequate resources require more, not less joint action. It will thus be important to build up peer-group pressure.¹⁴ To that purpose, the task of assessing military and non-military progress in each member state and applicant state should be assigned systematically to the new ESDP institutions. Depending on the sensitivity of the issue, it will be appropriate to take recourse to a more intergovernmental body, such as the Political and Security Committee and the Organization for Joint Armament Co-operation (OCCAR), or to a (potentially) more supranational body, such as the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the European Military Staff, and – possibly at a later

TABLE 3
STRATEGIC CONVERGENCE CRITERIA

Criteria	Review process	Additional comments
Degree of harmonization of security policies (including non-military capabilities and defence diplomacy capabilities)	By declaration and approval, e.g., by the Political and Security Committee or the Staff of the High Representative for the CFSP	EU Security White Paper as conceptual framework; limited by (still) diverging 'national' interests
Size of the defence budget	By declaration and approval, e.g., by European Military Staff	Harmonized calculation methods as a precondition
R&D investments and degree of technical level	By declaration and approval, e.g., by OCCAR or the European Armaments, Research and Military Capabilities Agency	R&D strategy as part of the EU Security White Paper; harmonized R&D definition and calculation methods needed
Arms procurement strategy (as part of the European Security White Paper)	By declaration and approval, e.g., by the Political and Security Committee or the Staff of the High Representative for the CFSP, OCCAR or the European Armaments, Research and Military Capabilities Agency	Special focus should be given to a country's sustainable support for international projects; 'name and shame' by the institutions mentioned
Efficiency and effectiveness of spending of funds	Review by national and later European audit office	Better, faster, cheaper (smart procurement approach); harmonization or at least synchronization of planning processes at the European level
Standing forces as a percentage of populations ^a	By declaration and approval, e.g., by European Military Staff	Main focus: availability of Rapid Reaction Forces; demographic structure of Armed Forces; recruitment system: conscription vs professionalization
Availability factor (double-hatted troops, political restrictions due to national/domestic reasons)	By declaration and approval, e.g., by European Military Staff	Self-differentiation; hedged by framework nations or deliberate redundancy

^aFrançois Heisbourg (ed.), *European Defence: Making it Work* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2000), p. 97.

stage – the European Armaments, Research and Military Capabilities Agency.¹⁵ With regard to assessment efficiency and effectiveness, it will be most important that those bodies that set the relevant criteria will also be in charge of reviewing progress. If this is not the case, the feedback loop from goals to implementation to review will be broken and thus remain ineffective. Once the EU institutions are more strongly involved in these processes, nations will need to link up with them. This increases the need for third-party procedures. Our analysis of the Swiss case will make clear that in turn, third parties will be required to come to terms with their contributions.

Open Questions

There is an enormous potential for strengthening Europe's military endeavours in the ideas presented above. In order to implement these suggestions effectively, national adherence to sovereignty in the realm of security policy will have to be overcome. This can only be done by managing role specialization and pooling of resources in a top-down approach. To this purpose political and military leaders need to address four basic issues: a European Security White Paper, financial resources, procurement efficiency and the need to harmonize military law.

First, differing national interests are at the top of the list of reasons why nations are reluctant to pool resources or to agree on role specialization. At the start of the St Malo process, ambiguities about the role of ESDP within the EU's overall foreign policy ambitions might have been useful.¹⁶ However, now that the headline goals have been fixed, military planners need more precise guidelines in order to prepare contingency planning. To that purpose, diverging national threat assessments need to be harmonized in order to guarantee the consistency of the ESDP.¹⁷

This and other problems could be overcome with the help of a European Security White Paper, which was promised by the Belgian Presidency in 2001 but has not yet been developed.¹⁸ A European Security White Paper may well be the starting point for implementing a periodic review of the strategic environment, the derived capabilities and the means needed. If this became a standing procedure, the European Security White Paper would effectively support contingency planning and long-term planning (e.g., the development of the current Helsinki headline goal as an overall planning framework) as well.¹⁹ The EU Security Strategy is an important step into the right direction, because it analyses the key strategic threats that need to be addressed (terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and failed states and organized crime) and identifies Europe's strategic objectives (stability and good governance, international order based on multilateralism, tackling old and new threats).²⁰ Developing the draft strategy into a fully fledged European Security White Paper would require the EU member states to clarify their common interests by defining when, where and

how they are prepared to use their broad spectrum of political, diplomatic, economic and military instruments to project stability, prevent conflicts and, if necessary, to intervene to resolve conflicts. Furthermore, open discussions of the European Security White Paper could make a substantial contribution to public European debate on security policy, an issue that ranks notoriously low on the public agenda.²¹

Second, whereas the work on the European Security White Paper and joint planning and certification processes still leave room for individual action, the financial restrictions imposed by pooling will have the most effective impact. The money, once in a common purse, will no longer be vulnerable to being wasted by ineffective national approaches to arms procurement. Common definition of the capabilities needed and evaluation of their materialization may lead to tough negotiations and, at the end, to compromises. But this could also effectively exclude duplications by coincidence, the wasting of money through national R&D efforts and standardization issues that affect interoperability adversely. Once resources are pooled, the procedures may indeed be rather restrictive. That said, the process should start by giving the EU an appropriate budget to eliminate the most immediate military deficits. In the long run, the process could lead to the transfer of national budgeting competencies to the EU. A look at the dual-use character of the Galileo satellite project of the EU shows that such a process is already on the way. Furthermore, this approach could increase conditionality, in the sense that only those countries living up to their promises would receive financial assistance for security policy purposes.

Third, the public sector's increasing attention to providing value for money should also be followed strictly in the defence area as well. One of the most promising approaches to unleashing efficiency lies in redesigning procurement processes. As there is a direct link between costs and the cycle time of arms procurement processes, a sensible rule of thumb would be to halve the time generally needed for any specific project. This can be done by postponing the project start until more sophisticated concepts are available and by implementing the concepts faster. Bill Kincaid estimates that spending approximately 15 per cent of the development costs on the concept and assessment phase may help increase efficiency substantially. In addition, trust in mature technology also reduces risks and costs during the arms procurement process. Incremental acquisition may also help reduce time by getting 60 per cent solutions into service in half the time and guaranteeing later stages.²² Based on these insights, Europeans should establish joint criteria to harmonize the design and the speed of arms procurement processes in order to increase procurement efficiency.

Finally, a deeper integration of multinational armed forces will inevitably raise the issue of harmonizing the military legal frameworks of the countries

involved. The key obstacle that needs to be overcome in this respect is countries' reluctance to transfer sovereignty over troops and weapon systems to multinational commands. So far, various approaches providing for different degrees of upholding sovereignty have been developed (e.g., permanent or temporary assignment, lead nation and framework nation concept, integration concept).²³ The challenge entailed in harmonizing national military law is twofold. On the one hand, diverging regulations, *inter alia* with respect to the authority of command, the disciplinary law, the basic rights of military personnel, the right of appeal and provisions on the safety and stationing of the troops abroad render the command of multinational corps difficult.²⁴ Additional differences at the level of political decision making to deploy these forces can effectively block them from being available and used rapidly in case of urgency.²⁵ Also, a nation's military law always inherits aspects of its military history, culture and doctrine. These factors might either lead to a preference for expeditionary forces (e.g., UK and France) or to a security policy culture of reticence (e.g., Germany). To overcome these differences, discussion is needed about a European Charter of Military Law. Initial building blocks for an overall framework of this kind can be found in the OSCE code of conduct on politico-military aspects of security, adopted in 1994.²⁶

Consequences for Switzerland: Swiss Position Must Be Clearly Defined

Given the changes in the security landscape of Europe since 1990 and the most recent progress with regard to the ESDP, Switzerland must finally come to terms with Europeanizing its security and defence policy. This is, however, more easily said than done.

In 1990, the first review of Switzerland's security policy after the end of the Cold War led to a report by the Federal Council that put premier emphasis on territorial defence and the strategy of deterrence.²⁷ Three years later, a new foreign policy report began to question the long-serving core principles of neutrality and sovereignty in favour of solidarity with the international community and support of international organizations. Multilateralism came to the fore, while neutrality was portrayed as an instrument of last resort in case the international order collapsed.²⁸ In light of this new foreign policy outlook, Switzerland assisted the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) with a technical support unit in Sarajevo (1996–2000), joined NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme (1996), and deployed troops to assist the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Kosovo (1998) and the later Kosovo Force (KFOR) led by NATO (since 1999).

Domestically, the rationale behind this foreign and security policy change had not been properly communicated by the Federal Council. Political opinion on the new policy remained split.²⁹ On the political right, the Swiss People's

Party opposed Switzerland's integration into Europe's security architecture. The left-wing Social Democrats who favoured European integration remained sceptical vis-à-vis the country's rapprochement to NATO. The Christian Democratic Party and the Free Democrats welcomed co-operation but remained cautious with regard to giving up sovereignty. It is thus not surprising that the political consensus that emerged from this situation was fragile, particularly with regard to the armed forces' international activities. This is one of the reasons why the latest security policy report ('Report 2000'), which was published in July 1999, was watered down in the process of reforming Switzerland's armed forces.³⁰

The new report posits the principle of 'security through co-operation'. It states that in Europe the threat of territorial warfare has diminished sharply, while new transnational risks – the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, organized crime or the violation of human rights – have become increasingly important. The possibility of coping with these risks unilaterally is declining, and the need to co-operate is growing. This analysis leads Report 2000 to reconsider the missions of the armed forces. So far, defence has been the most important task. In the future this task will rank only third, and the need to co-operate with other armed forces, especially through joint training, will increase. In second place stands the task of preventing and managing civilian catastrophes. However, so-called 'subsidiary operations' of the armed forces to support civil authorities remain domestically contested. Finally, a new priority is placed on peace support and crisis management. Compared to the report issued in 1990, the armed forces must be prepared to expand their involvement in hot spots.

As we have highlighted above, countries participating in ESDP operations will co-operate closely in the areas of military planning, doctrine development, structures and procedures, training, R&D and arms procurement. It can be assumed that this process will deepen the European integration process and help forge a common European identity to promote peace and stability.³¹ In addition to the obvious military advantages, the greater transparency in planning and the mutual exchange among partners will also unleash new powers of innovation. Furthermore, we can expect to see the elimination, or at least reduction, of unilateral action and of duplication of effort in particular. By participating in this process, Switzerland will be securing access to the military capabilities of partner countries, leading to a pooling of resources and gains in synergy that no autonomous national Armed Force could afford or provide.

However, we should not succumb to illusions. Military forces that are deployed only as a specialized component of the common security architecture in the framework of EU-led military operations do not automatically cost less, for example. The potential savings that result from the decision to

participate in the common security architecture will have to be analysed in depth through examining varying 'role concepts'. Nevertheless, today we can say with certainty that the means implemented will lead to more efficient, more effective, more highly legitimized Swiss Armed Forces, because role specialization will result in targeted utilization of increasingly scarce national resources and, thus, in maximized performance and endurance in the chosen role. But role specialization also entails risks. Assessment of the acceptability of those risks will require analysis. Much will depend on the particulars of the total concept still under dynamic development. Integrated control mechanisms – like checks and balances, the institutionalization of mutual dependency through defining the 'national' roles – and decision mechanisms will have to be examined closely. Whether Switzerland will be willing to accept the risks that mutual dependencies involve is ultimately, while grounded in military facts, a political issue. Switzerland's resolution of that issue will depend not least upon whether the risks identified can be reduced or controlled through hedging. Besides purely military means, approaches to hedging could begin with the correct choice of partners.

Switzerland: Home Alone or Coalition Partner?

The general unpredictability of crisis events that demand political responses may lead many to the hasty and erroneous conclusion that coalition partners can be chosen anew for each concrete instance of crisis management and that national preparations for assuring interoperability will suffice. Against this line of argumentation, we object that the interoperability of armed forces for international deployments can be achieved only in the framework of long-term, highly co-operative relationships. As we argued above, this has already led to a strong move towards setting up multinational units at the European level. Taking this and other developments into account, it is our conviction that the success of role specialization and the pooling of resources and capabilities will depend upon, as a prerequisite, the willingness of nations to enter into long-term partnerships. However, on what strategic policy basis, and according to what criteria, should the choice be made between forging strategic relationships and relying on a seemingly comfortable ad hoc system?³² Currently, Switzerland's decision-makers lack the necessary basic research and conceptual framework for analysis of this issue. In an attempt to fill this gap, we propose five categories of criteria that can be used for the identification of strategic partners (see Table 4).³³

1. The first category requires a political assessment of relations to a potential partner. This would consist of, for example, assessment of the congruence between Switzerland's and a third party's foreign, security and defence policy interests, or in examination of any existing relations between

TABLE 4
CATALOGUE OF CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF
STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Category	Criteria (examples)
Political criteria	<p>Congruence or divergence between foreign, security and defence policy interests of Switzerland and the third nation</p> <p>Form and quality of existing relations between Switzerland and the third nation</p> <p>Position of the third nation in the international system (e.g., hegemon, regional power and so on)</p> <p>Duration and intensity of the third nation's participation in political and economic institutions (e.g., UN, EU, OSCE, etc.) and record of behaviour therein</p> <p>Political system of the third nation (based on democratic peace theory)</p> <p>The third nation's degrees of freedom to act (e.g., as laid down in the national constitution)</p>
Military criteria	<p>Switzerland's intended military contribution</p> <p>Duration and intensity of the third nation's embeddedness in military institutions</p> <p>Member of alliances or bi- or multinational units and record of behaviour in those institutions</p> <p>Past deployments (region, tasks, co-operation with other nations)</p> <p>Military structure, military law and military rules of engagement</p> <p>Demographic structure of Armed Forces</p> <p>Percentage of operational units available for international deployment</p> <p>Specific capabilities and competencies</p> <p>Level of technology and armaments</p> <p>Degree of standardization</p> <p>Status of military training</p> <p>Deployment doctrine and leadership structures and mechanisms</p> <p>Planning methods and planning rhythms</p>
Historical criteria	<p>Shared experiences with the third nation</p> <p>Specific historical experiences with the third nation ('historical legacy')</p> <p>Position of other nations towards the third nation</p>
Cultural criteria	<p>Language</p> <p>Mentality</p> <p>Public attitude towards military armed forces in general and towards specific forms of deployment in particular (e.g., expeditionary operations)</p>
Geographic criteria	<p>Geographic location of the third nation (e.g., in a crisis region)</p> <p>Switzerland's proximity to or distance from third nation</p> <p>Geographic and meteorological features of the third nation (e.g., for purposes of special exercises)</p>

the two nations in other policy areas. Another important criterion pertains to the potential partner's institutional memberships and that nation's record within the institutions.

2. Pertaining to the contribution that Switzerland plans to make, potential partners should be evaluated also in military terms – including, among other things, deployment experience, deployment policy and training and equipment status.
3. Shared experiences in the past and/or the specific historical role of a nation should also be considered.
4. Equally important are cultural factors, such as shared language and similar mentality, which would facilitate action and communication during deployments.
5. Geographic aspects, such as the location of a partner nation (proximity to the crisis region, for example) and its proximity to or distance from Switzerland, should be taken into account.

This first approach makes it clear that the choice of strategic partners must be based upon long-term considerations. This demands comprehensive foreign and security policy analysis, reference to clearly defined interests and goals and an underlying overall strategy that, in the case of Switzerland in particular, must accord with the country's integration intentions. Moreover, the form, extent and preparations for Switzerland's contributions require clear definition. This means three things. First, options for military contributions must be weighed in relation to non-military contributions. Second, Switzerland needs to define the organizational framework in which it wants to participate. Does Switzerland plan to follow an active internationalist line by contributing to operations led by the UN, the OSCE, EU and NATO, or will it follow a deliberate policy of restricted engagement?³⁴ Finally, Switzerland needs to evaluate alternative options – e.g., expanding its participation in the Partnership for Peace, co-operation with bi- and multi-national units – in preparation of joint actions.

Arms Policy: Autonomy is No Solution

Continuous reduction of the Swiss Armed Forces since the mid-1960s and the subsequent diminished demand for military equipment caused Switzerland's already narrow armaments industrial base to shrink. Today, this industrial base is very thin, so that Switzerland has to concentrate its own development work and the building up of competencies on strategically important sectors. In view of the limited financial resources available today, desirable but not absolutely essential national modifications of procured equipment, the so-called 'Helvetizations' or 'gold-plating', need to be avoided. Taking recourse to 'commercial off the shelf' products is a step into the right

direction, because it makes economic sense. However, this fails to address the key issue: whether or not Switzerland can afford to stand apart from European armaments projects and then conduct its own independent evaluations of the military equipment produced.

Today, international armaments projects increasingly follow the principle of integrated project teams.³⁵ The teams are made up of representatives of both the participating countries and of industry, following the goal of entering deployment experience directly into the process of developing new equipment. This means that the development, production and evaluation (testing) phases are all rolled into one process. In contrast, Switzerland generally continues to follow a lengthy, sequential procedure. It conducts independent arms equipment testing and evaluation after the equipment has already been put into operation elsewhere. This approach has grave disadvantages: it engenders additional costs and lengthens the lead time for procurement. By the time the troops are provisioned with the equipment, they risk receiving previous-generation technology that was optimized for the operational processes and strategic needs of other nations. Due to the time lag, replacement and procurement of spare parts can fail, because the foreign supplier is no longer manufacturing the required equipment. Furthermore, Switzerland misses the opportunity to profit from the valuable exchange of experience within international armaments projects as well as from the discussion and negotiations on interoperability, stationing, common basic training and shared logistics support. These are, however, precisely the things that make up the challenge, since future arms procurement is in fact capabilities procurement, which must secure the necessary transfer of know-how and expertise for operations, training and maintenance.³⁶

At the same time, the political dimension of armaments programmes becomes more important. Experience in recent years has shown that reports communicating military considerations to the Swiss parliament, to its commissions, and to the public must contain improved justifications. Terse references to the necessity to replace ageing or outmoded equipment no longer suffice today. Increasingly, armament plans are being scrutinized and assessed by politicians in the light of their security policy relevance. Therefore, it is essential to centre the discussion on the security policy utility of arms programmes. Closer co-operation with Europe in the armaments area would, of course, also pose new challenges to parliament. Members of parliament will no longer simply vote on the procurement of new material. Instead, they will have to realign their thinking to the fact that the armaments programme can also be used to procure intangible knowledge or to contribute funding or personnel to European development projects. Therefore, national considerations should be reframed on the basis of a strong European rationale.

Adjustment of Planning Processes and Development of a Grand Strategy

The Federal Council has declared Switzerland's accession to the EU as a strategic goal. The authorities responsible for security policy planning must therefore analyse the most recent developments in the ESDP, derive consequences and repercussions for Switzerland and identify the resulting need for action. This approach is necessary in order to prepare and assure Switzerland's political co-operability. While necessary, this approach is also highly demanding, for it requires collaboration across federal departments.

If we examine the range of contributions that are called for by the Petersberg tasks (humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking) and by the engagement of the EU in civil crisis management, it becomes clear that in Switzerland at least three federal departments (of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Justice and Police) are affected directly. At the strategic level, consequently, security policy and military planning processes must be co-ordinated more closely. Thanks to the most recent reforms, the Federal Council has new instruments for strategic security policy leadership: the Security Committee of the Federal Council, the permanent Security Steering Group, consisting of representatives of the three federal departments listed above, and the Intelligence Coordinator supported by the Assessment and Early Detection Bureau.³⁷ However, the current security strategy being followed in these groups focuses too narrowly upon threats and dangers and takes little account of cross-departmental matters and prospective considerations. All in all, targeted, long-term planning co-operation will only be possible if the government succeeds in developing a common, comprehensive strategy and implements that grand strategy independently of the interests of the individual federal departments. The consequences of such a move will be far reaching.

First of all, the rapid changes in the security policy environment demand that policy planning processes undergo fundamental analysis and redesign at the strategic level. Swiss security policy reports are prepared and issued by the Federal Council. The reports, today in the form of authoritative guidelines and objectives, are intended to be valid for at least a decade. This approach is no longer appropriate. In our opinion, what is needed is a transition towards a system that is examined at regular, short intervals and adapted and improved continuously (rolling planning). However, reforms such as these will come to a standstill if the Federal Department of Finance does not allow for more flexible financing and budgeting procedures or arms procurement processes in order to allow more rapid responses. The feasibility and shape of such changes are currently being considered in Switzerland.

In the second place, on the condition that the responsible departments find solutions to the foreign and security policy tasks entailed by stronger

international integration of Switzerland, the international community of nations will expect Switzerland's contribution to be 'appropriate' in size and form. From the military perspective, this means that the aforementioned discussion on security policy convergence criteria becomes significant for Switzerland as well. The convergence criteria, which can also be applied to non-military engagement, form the basis of planning – independently of individual departments – and therefore will have to be integrated into the existing legislation and annual goals planning of the Federal Council.

Third, in the narrower area of military planning, we assume close coordination between NATO and EU capability planning and review mechanisms, which forces the new Swiss Planning and Operational Staffs to adapt to the timing of these international processes. However, the history of Switzerland's PARP participation is not promising. On the one hand, political reasoning has led Switzerland to select a rather narrow range of partnership goals that are not very relevant for force development. On the other hand, the lack of an overall system to define the capabilities required to implement 'security through co-operation' by Switzerland's Armed Forces effectively hinders the integration of the partnership goals into existing planning processes and their review by the PARP mechanism. Furthermore, Switzerland has no institutionalized arrangements for dialogue with the new, permanent EU political and military bodies. This affects planning efforts in particular. Due to the linking of EU efforts and the PARP process, we can assume that the partnership goals defined through participation in the Partnership for Peace will in future figure as the central link, assuring the interoperability across the entire spectrum of possible defence and Petersberg tasks in the context of NATO- and EU-led deployments. As Switzerland does not yet have a formal relationship with the new ESDP committees, it is forced to undertake selection of the 'correct' partnership goals as a solo effort and in no direct correspondence with the other European partners.

Conclusion: Why Strategic Adaptability Becomes Key

Our discussion has identified a number of key issues that Europe and Switzerland must address due to the introduction of the ESDP (see Table 1). No matter what actions the EU members take, the impact on Switzerland's security policy and the role of Swiss Armed Forces will be immediate and substantial. So far, Switzerland is badly prepared to tackle this challenge. With its multi-functionality, greater modularity than Armed Forces 95 and flexible readiness system, Armed Forces XXI has achieved exceptional operational adaptability within the full range of its deployment mandate. Truly innovative, in addition, is the current approach to reform that will optimize Armed Forces XXI training. With a view to the European challenges, however, the current

military reforms target the wrong level. They over-emphasize operational flexibility while basically neglecting strategic adaptability. The current financial pressure will reinforce this problem: because Switzerland can no longer afford to improve its police force and the border guard as well, the prioritization of the armed forces mission turns dramatically in the direction of subsidiary engagement.³⁸ As a consequence, the military finds itself in a totally new role as a kind of ‘constabulary force.’ The problem is that the majority of the armed forces is still equipped, trained and in continuous development to fight yesterday’s high-intensity conflicts.

Strategic adaptability in our terms is equivalent to the ability of armed forces to change their capability to respond to new challenges, risks, missions and tasks rapidly and smoothly. This requires that in the long term the armed forces have to build up or to maintain essential baseline capabilities to be ‘fit-for-mission’ and, in the short-term, the capability to be ‘fit-for-role’. This includes role-specific capabilities, extension options and rapid technology insertion, providing ‘hooks’ for latent capabilities that have to be up-dated regularly by integrated project teams.

Table 5 highlights the many transitions in the Swiss Armed Forces since 1960. The incremental development – from autonomous armed forces that had to prove their flexibility within a given tactical framework to today’s armed forces, which are able to co-operate only in regard to certain selected national and international deployments – maps out a route that leads towards an integration army with consistent participation in international deployments. The last two steps in particular are justified by the significant changes in the security policy environment in Europe since 1990. However, as discussed above, Armed Forces XXI accommodated these changes only in part. Particularly problematic in this context is the lack of a national political consensus as to the autonomous or co-operative tasks that the armed forces have to fulfil. This has resulted in an overextension of the forces and sub-optimal implementation of ever-scarcer resources. These weaknesses must be eliminated in the armed forces that will be planned in the future (Armed Forces After Next) by means of consistent policy decisions. This leads us to the central challenge facing us, namely, the need to improve strategic adaptability.

The dynamic development of the ESDP is a clear illustration of how rapid and how drastically the security policy-relevant environment surrounding Switzerland can change. This means that strategic adaptability can be improved only if political intentions and military options are much more closely co-ordinated and aligned. A significant cause of the present difficulties with the reforms lies in the asymmetry of military engagement ‘hurrying ahead’, as it were, to support the international community (e.g., in the Balkans) while, at the same time, no corresponding political steps towards

TABLE 5
THE SWISS ARMED FORCES IN TRANSITION

Reforms	Armed Forces 61	Armed Forces 95; Armed Forces XXI	Armed Forces After Next
Environment	Cold War	Post-Cold War Balkan conflicts	EU expanded and politically stable Military conflicts limited to the 'outer edges' of the EU
Challenge	Mobilization of the land forces	Various levels of readiness for action Mental, material and structural interoperability	'Political interoperability' through adaptation of foreign and security policy Selection of strategic partners Arms co-operation with European partners Adaptation of planning processes: security policy and military
Primary military task	Training	(Selected) deployment Mainly subsidiary missions at home International: primarily logistics tasks for the UN or OSCE	Permanent deployment Mainly international, entire range of Petersburg Tasks with participation in UN, OSCE, EU and NATO-led missions Co-operative defence capability
Character of the armed forces	Autonomous armed forces	Co-operation armed forces	Integration armed forces
Adaptability	Within given tactical framework	Operational-tactical level	Political-strategic level

integration have been made. Because Switzerland's relations to co-operation partners, in particular to NATO and the EU, are only incomplete, 'security through co-operation' can be implemented only within very narrow confines.

The shift from today's co-operation armed forces to future integration armed forces places heavy demands on both policy and concept. As a prerequisite, Switzerland's steps towards integration within foreign policy, security policy and the military must be taken and further developed in co-ordination. Politically, this demands, in the first place, open and taboo-free re-examination of neutrality. Should the decision makers choose to initiate a new policy, for example a policy of non-alliance such as that followed so far by Sweden or Austria, this will have consequences for the definition of the armed forces mission, doctrine, processes and structure, the procurement of capabilities

and the allocation of resources. The armed forces planners must play an active accompanying role in this process and support it through developing clearly justified options based upon the European developments. This requires the heads of military planning to develop greater political awareness and sensitivity as well as to engage in continuous dialogue with policy makers. All in all, both sides – policy makers and the military – will master the challenges only if they begin to redefine Switzerland's interests in European dimensions.

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