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Small States and European Security

The question of who or what is a small state in international relations literature has generated a considerable but inconclusive literature. The seminal contributions on this issue tend to suggest that there are a number of factors that cumulatively define the presence of a small state, or otherwise. For instance, some have argued that a certain type of behaviour identifies a small state. Others have suggested that particular characteristics typify a small state, such as contiguity, size, population and so forth. There is though a lack of agreement and the use of the term 'small states' in this contribution is not only context specific but a rather subjective exercise.

ESDI as a concept

The focus of this contribution, at the request of the conference organisers at which this paper was presented, is the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI). ESDI evolved in the early 1990s as a means of allowing the European allies to mount a crisis response ability in post-cold war Europe. The shifting emphasis away from bi-polar confrontation, territorial and collective defence to crisis management also had profound implications for NATO and transatlantic relations. Put rather simplistically, the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) which incorporated the Western European Union's 1992 Petersberg Tasks (humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace making) raised the potential problem of CFSP being, in military terms, hollow. At the same time the changes in post-cold war security threatened to leave NATO equally hollow in a political sense.

ESDI was therefore developed within NATO as a means of enabling the Europeans to act politically and operationally in cases of distinct European responsibility (in other words, there the U.S. saw no compelling reason for involvement). At the same time ESDI provided a new foundation for consensus on Euro-Atlantic security within NATO and the role of the European pillar. It was through the development in 1994-6 of an important related concept, the Combined Joint Task Force Concept (CJTF), that the Alliance also ensured that the WEU is not an alternative to NATO in its core function of collective defence. Instead, it ensured that the WEU assumed responsibility for the complementary function of crisis management in Europe. The CJTF mechanism allowed NATO assets to be released to the WEU for Europe-only operations. Under the Amsterdam Treaty the CJTF concept therefore provided the WEU with access to 'an operational capability.' The concept also introduced a central paradox at the centre of Europe's post-cold war security: the 1999 WEU Audit of Capabilities would later identify the main shortcomings of the European allies as strategic transport command and control and intelligence, although these were well known in the early 1990s. Thus, presumably, most 'Europe only' operations would mean resource to the best source of the lacking assets which was and is the United States. So, Europe-only operations might therefore rely heavily on the one power who does not wish to be involved. In turn, this awakened fears amongst some European allies of a hidden 'physical veto' over Europe-only operations and reinforced the drive towards autonomous military capacities which emerged in 1998 in the Anglo-French Joint Agreement on European Defence, often called the St. Malo Declaration.

To summarise, the development of ESDI came about as the result of three developments:

- Structural reforms within NATO designed to allow for greater European responsibility;
- Development of CFSP within the EU to enable the Europeans to react to crises in a coherent manner;
- For the WEU to provide political and strategic direction for Europe-only operations.

More recent developments in late 1998 and 1998, especially those emanating from the Helsinki European Council Summit in December 1999 will dramatically change the role of the WEU and the nature of the CFSP. The call for the development of autonomous capacities in the St. Malo Declaration and the decision at the June Cologne European Council summit to merge those WEU functions relevant to the Petersberg tasks with the EU, have changed the emphasis from ESDI to the development of an operational Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP) in the EU's second pillar. The balance between ESDI and CFSP/CESDP is very much in the balance and the future of both concepts depends critically on the willingness of NATO, WEU and EU Member States, as well as those in various forms of association, to give practical effect to their aspirations. The role of small states is of importance and significance in this process and it is to this we now turn.

ESDI and small states

Since ESDI involves NATO, the EU and the WEU, who are small states in the ESDI context? If we assume, rather crudely, that the 'small states' are those who are not members of the Contact Group for Bosnia and Kosovo this would exclude only Britain, France, Germany and Italy (who were four of the six members of the Contact Group). This then leaves over half of WEU members as 'small states.' If associate members of the WEU are included, an additional five could reasonably qualify as small states (The Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Norway and Poland). Turkey would however fit awkwardly into this category with, in quantitative terms, large armed forces but, in some quarters, questions about how European it is. In the EU setting the number of small states would increase to eleven (the six small state WEU members plus Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland and Sweden) while in the NATO context thirteen of nineteen might qualify as 'small states' (again, with a question mark over Turkey). If we extend this somewhat arbitrary exercise to the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and even to the OSCE, the pattern becomes more striking – all European security organisations are mainly composed of small states. The EAPC members comprise twenty-five countries, nearly all of which in terms of their military forces and geopolitical 'weight' would be considered small, with the obvious exceptions of Russia and the Ukraine. Even if a fairly generous definition is used for 'large states,' the vast majority of NATO and EAPC members are small states.[1]

A number of questions for ESDI arise from this rather banal observation. The first issue is the role that small states play in the overlapping institutional structures upon which ESDI is constructed? The first striking observation is that membership or association with NATO, the WEU and the EU has little to do with size but much more to do with historical, domestic and political factors. For instance the role of the Netherlands as a full NATO, EU and WEU member is quite distinct from that of, for example, Austria as an EU member or Armenia as a member of the EAPC. Even if we look at the role of small states in the Bosnia crisis, in

1 EAPC states are: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrghyz Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, FYROM, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Albania in 1997 and Kosovo in 1998-9, it is hard to discern a pattern. Indeed, what is striking is the absence of a pattern. Greece voiced its particular regional concerns in Bosnia (with reference to the Macedonia issue) and Kosovo (where it opposed NATO's air strikes) while Austria forbade the use of its air space and transit rights for ground forces with regard to the Kosovo crisis. Lack of consensus was not though a unique attribute of the small state actors since there were open disagreements amongst the major powers, such as those voiced by Italy who made its discomfort known with NATO's targeting of 'soft targets' during Operation Joint Force in Kosovo. Britain advocated ground operations in Kosovo when it seemed that the bombing campaign would prove inconclusive, while Germany opposed this. The Benelux countries played an active role in Operations Allied Force and Joint Guardian and, in military terms, their contribution was greater than that of Germany during the actual air strikes.

It is far from clear that any of the traditional small state behavioural patterns significantly influenced their behaviour. Nevertheless, if a pattern is discernible it is the extent to which the smaller states were excluded from the ad hoc decision-making processes and military action. The Contact Group dominated the diplomatic agenda in Bosnia and Kosovo while the military strikes (for better and for worse) featured the larger allies. The only post-cold war operation involving an appreciable small state role was Operation Alba, launched by a coalition of EU-WEU and non-members in response to anarchy in Albania following the collapse of a government-backed pyramid investment scheme in 1997. Here, too, it is difficult to generalise about the role of small states since there appeared to be varying reasons for involvement such as geographical proximity to Albania or to send appropriate (and optimistic) signals to the appropriate organisation a country hoped to impress and join. Hence Italy led a 'coalition of the willing' that included, for example, Romania who presumably wished to catch NATO's eye but excluded Hungary, who probably felt assured in their accession chances for full membership of NATO. It is far from clear that one can discern any particular small state behaviour based on this particular case.

Agenda-setting is mainly exercised by the larger states but not exclusively. The Anglo-French St. Malo Declaration of December 1998 and the November 1999 Anglo-French Summit both saw major initiatives in European security and defence. Germany also backed the initiatives including the further elaboration of a detailed framework for European defence policy under the French EU Presidency in the latter half of 2000.[2] There can be little doubt that the larger states, including the U.S., shape the broad themes of ESDI. It would however be a mistake to ignore the contribution made by smaller states, such as Finland and Sweden, in separate initiatives. On occasion the smaller states can decisively influence the debate especially where referendums are involved for decisions to be adopted. Danish sensitivities, as with those following the referendum on the Maastricht Treaty, are ignored by larger states at their peril as are the sensitivities of the neutral and non-aligned regarding defence. The smaller states may therefore play a reasonably important role in directly or indirectly shaping the parameters of the overall security agenda being discussed by the larger allies. Thus, in general terms smaller states may not be able to set agendas but they can elaborate and modify them.

Again, as a further general observation, the larger states are more inclined to launch initiatives bilaterally, as has been the case with France and Britain, than through multilateral channels, as was the case with the Finnish-Swedish initiatives launched through the EU framework. The preference for the French and Germans to discuss security concerns bilaterally, as in Toulouse in 1999, is reflected in the equally close Anglo-French dialogue on security and defence. The less close but nonetheless important Anglo-Italian security

2 Robert Graham, 'Germany backs France's Defence Plan,' *Financial Times*, 1 December 1999, p.2.

initiatives serve as a further example of bilateral initiatives by larger powers. There are obvious political reasons why smaller states are more likely to work through multilateral fora but this is rarely without prior back-channel consultation with other smaller states in the immediate locale or beyond. Smaller states are unlikely to use positions of relative influence, such as the EU Presidency, to launch major initiatives but they are more likely to make what may appear at the time to be smaller contributions that may in time prove to be major developments. The insistence of the Finnish EU Presidency in the latter half of 1999 that conflict prevention be included in the CFSP-ESDI remit may prove to be an example.

Given the relative lack of case study material on which to base observations of practical importance vis-à-vis the role of small states and alliances in the ESDI framework, it is perhaps most constructive to look at some of the potential issues arising from the role of smaller states. Two sets of issues arise: first, the impact of the smaller member states upon ESDI and in this regard the Neutral and Non-Aligned countries (NNAs) are often regarded with some concern. The following analysis argues that these concerns are generally misplaced. Second, the role of smaller potential member states is perhaps a more serious challenge, especially the particular cases of Cyprus and Estonia.

The NNAs and ESDI

The post-Maastricht meeting debates included the question of extending the Union to the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) members.[3] The European Commission prepared a report in July 1992 on the question of extending membership not only to the EFTA countries, who had applied for membership, but also to those who were likely to apply (Cyprus, Malta, Turkey and the central and east European countries).[4] The Commission viewed enlargement as an issue that presented both risks and opportunities. The risks were in the dilution of the community while the opportunities were in enhancing the stability of post-cold war Europe. The issue of enlargement to the EFTA countries was the least controversial of all of the projected new members – they were after all nearly all countries who would become net payees, rather than beneficiaries, as well as being countries that shared similar political outlooks. Official negotiations with Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden commenced, at the European Council's urging, in February 1993. Of the four countries, only Norway was a NATO member, and it was the only one to reject the offer of membership.

What has been the effect of incorporating three neutral or non-aligned (NNA) countries into the EU upon Europe's security structures? The accession of the three EFTA countries on 1 January 1995 posed a number of issues with regard to NATO, but made little difference to the CFSP since Title V of the TEU is, supposedly, not incompatible with neutrality.[5] Moreover, the CFSP does not raise a direct challenge to the image of neutrality that is still held to be a defining characteristic of national identity by many in the three countries. However, the nature of the WEU's links with the CFSP has stalled a debate about the extent to which the vestiges of neutrality are compatible with the WEU's responsibility for the 'defence implications' of the Union. Membership of the EU by the three would appear to actually strengthen the security of the EU for two reasons. First, the Scandinavian members in

3 EFTA was founded, with Britain as a founder member, as a less restrictive version of the EEC that appealed to the minimalist free-trade principles of the member states. The other members were Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland.

4 Report of the European Commission, 'The Challenge of Enlargement,' *Europe Documents*, No.1790, 3 July 1992.

5 See for example, M. Rosch, 'Switzerland's Security Policy in Transition,' *NATO Review*, No.6, 1993; and A. Mock, 'Austria's Role in the New Europe,' *NATO Review*, 1995.

particular have a close dialogue with the Baltic states and their economic and cultural ties with these countries could prove critical over the question of the treatment and status of the Russian minorities. Second, the Scandinavian countries have a long and distinguished history of involvement in UN and OSCE peacekeeping operations and observation missions. This may well add credence to future EU-backed peacekeeping operations. However, the idea of non-alignment may nevertheless translate into an extreme conservatism when faced with potential plans to create a coherent defence element to the CFSP.

Accession of the three NNAs to the EU, to which Ireland should be added as an existing member, involved not only acceptance of all of the rights and obligations of membership (the acquis communautaire) but also acceptance of those obligations pertaining to the CFSP. The apparent ease with which the neutrals accepted the membership terms relating to the CFSP can be explained by the vague obligations implied by the CFSP (outlined in Article 11). The reference in Article 17 – to the 'progressive framing of a common defence policy … which might lead to a common defence' – is also sufficiently vague. The frequent references to 'general interests' or simply 'interests in common' as the basis for joint policy, suggests that the neutrals could refuse to recognise that their interests were being served by a suggested common action. It could also be argued that the security and defence aspects of the TEU (and CTEU) serve to uphold the status of the neutrals in two ways. First, Article 17 states that the CFSP 'shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.' Second, any decision taken with defence implications must have unanimous backing

In general, the concept of neutrality has had to be softened in the post-cold war world but the fundamental tenet of neutrality remains, as Kaj Sundberg reflected in the case of Sweden, 'Non-participation in alliances in peacetime, with a view to neutrality in the event of war.'[6] There is evidently a reluctance to radically change the recipe of neutrality-non-alignment and alliance membership, which gave Scandinavia security and stability for the cold war period. The challenge of post-cold war European security is not so much one of traditional neutrality in time of war, but of designing a means by which 'EU-led crisis management in which NATO members, as well as neutral and non-allied members of the EU, can participate fully and on an equal footing in the EU operations.'[7]

Although it is quite conceivable that the NNA EU members will wish to be involved in 'Petersberg tasks,' it is clear that any merger of the WEU and the EU beyond these tasks would meet opposition. The chances for full convergence between the EU and WEU and, beyond this with NATO, are therefore remote. Surya Subedi, arguing from a public international law background, argued that the accession of the neutrals prior to the defining of the CFSP 'has strengthened the position of the neutral States,' and that the commitments secured by the EU from the neutral states in the CFSP context are 'no more than a hollow commitment … Under the present state of affairs, neutrals have more possibility of neutering the CFSP than Brussels has of neutering the neutrals.'[8]

Provided the WEU (and soon EU) remains primarily involved with Petersberg tasks, the participation of any of the neutral or non-aligned countries does not pose any fundamental

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6 Kaj Sundberg, Former Ambassador of Sweden to Belgium, 'The New European Security Architecture: A Swedish Perspective,' *NATO Review*, Vol. 39 (3), June 1991, Web edition at www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/9103-3htm.

7 Presidency Conclusions, *Cologne European Council*, 3-4 June 1999, 'Presidency Report on Strengthening of the common European policy on security and defence,' Para. 5.

8 Surya P. Subedi, 'The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union and Neutrality: Towards Co-Existence?,' *Netherlands International Law Review*, XLII, 1995, pp. 408, 411.

inconsistencies with their NNA status. For example, forces from Austria, Finland and Sweden were involved in the WEU Police Element in Mostar and there was never a question of this being incompatible with their respective stances. It is however more difficult to conjecture what may happen to the formulation of a common defence policy with the NNAs as EU members. One possibility is a form of second-tier security membership of the various organisations, which would mirror the multi-tiered economic structure that has been suggested from time to time. The three countries concerned could maintain 'second tier' membership in NATO (through the Partnership for Peace and the EAPC) and in the WEU (as associate partners). This is however less than ideal and would lead to obvious voting complications and a possible weakening of the EU's acquis communautaire, unless an agreement could be reached that the second-tier countries would not block first-tier countries from decisions on defence and security-related matters. It is difficult to imagine any of the countries accepting this arrangement since it would have the effect of mounting a challenge to their perceived neutrality from Brussels (something that may be more unpalatable than challenges from individual capitals). Accession of other aspirant CEEC members to full membership may also create some odd dynamics for the NNA countries. Is it, for instance, imaginable that Finland and Sweden would retain some form of second-tier ranking in the event that Poland acceded to the EU, the WEU, and NATO and proceeded to make decisions with profound implications for the security of the Baltic Sea region? Would Sweden and Finland be able to credibly defend their non-aligned positions if Estonia became a NATO member?

An additional problem that should be mentioned in reference to the NNA EU members is their position on nuclear deterrence and, more specifically, the deterrent forces of Britain and France. The WEU Council of Ministers recalled in Noordwijk in 1994 that, 'Europeans have a major responsibility with regard to the defence in both the conventional and nuclear field.' NATO's New Strategic Concept of 1991 also recognised that 'the independent nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.'[9] Austria, Finland and Ireland have pointed out however that they are not party to any of these decisions and therefore disassociated themselves. Although it is difficult to envisage a scenario calling for the use of nuclear weapons, the extent to which full membership for any of these countries may be blocked by the WEU's association with the British and French nuclear deterrent forces, may be a further constraint on the development of CFSP and ESDI.

The EU's 'Special Problem', Enlargement and ESDI

Enlargement is very much part of the 2000 IGC agenda, especially since, at the urging of the Member States, the Commission wants to double the number of countries negotiating to join the EU from six to twelve[10] and to acknowledge Turkey as a candidate. Prodi has talked in grandiose terms of a 'new European order' comprising a 'wider European area offering peace, stability and prosperity' which, in twenty-five years, could consist of 30 members.[11]

The change in mood over enlargement was in no small part due to the Kosovo crisis based on the logic that the kind of stability that the EU could best offer is by setting clear goals for

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9 *WEU Council of Ministers, Preliminary Conclusions on the Formulation of a Common European Defence Policy*, Noordwijk, 14 Nov. 1994, p. Section II, Para. 6.

10 The original six being Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia. The second wave of applicants, who were originally told to wait, are Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia (joined later by Malta).

11 Peter Norman and Stefan Wagstyl, 'More room at the inn,' *Financial Times*, 13 October 1999, p. 17.

membership rather than through assistance packages. As far as enlargement is concerned, the CFSP aspects have received relatively little coverage. The regular reports from the Commission on Progress Towards Accession, which currently covers thirteen countries, are primarily concerned with the progress made by the applicant countries towards meeting the conditions suitable for the application of the Community's acquis or demonstrating the potential to do so.[12] The European Parliament Task-Force on Enlargement has though produced two constructive reports specifically on CFSP aspects of enlargement.[13] The latter acknowledges that there are 'special complications of the case of Cyprus' and a separate briefing specifically addresses this case.[14]

With regard to Cyprus, firstly under European Political Cooperation and then under CFSP, the Union adopted a policy of non-involvement in the Cyprus issue but called for an end to the division of the island on the basis of UN resolutions. The Commission delivered a favourable opinion on Cyprus's application in July 1993 following Cyprus's formal application the previous year. In June 1994 the European Council meeting in Corfu concluded that the 'essential stage' in Cyprus's preparations for accession had been concluded and the next phase of enlargement would include Cyprus (and Malta).

The Union has on several occasions announced its determination to play a 'positive and just' role in bringing about a settlement to the continuing division of Cyprus in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions. In a Council decision of 6 March 1995 an agreement was reached between the EU and Cyprus for a structured dialogue and, significantly, that the Cyprus problem is no longer regarded as a barrier to EU accession.[15] The European Council's December 1995 European Council meeting in Madrid concluded that it supported a 'just and viable solution' to the Cyprus question and, in line with the UN Security Council resolutions, it supports a settlement on the 'basis of a bi-zonal and bi-community federation.'[16]

The Turkish reaction was to threaten to increase the process of consolidating Northern Cyprus into Turkey as soon as accession negotiations commenced. The following year saw armed clashed along the 'Green Line' dividing the two halves of the island and increasing security concerns which culminated in a tense stand-off in 1997-8 following the Greek Cypriot decision to deploy a number of S-300 anti-aircraft missiles. Ankara responded that it intended to prevent the deployment of the missiles, by force if necessary. However, as Heinz Kramer has noted, despite its best efforts the Union is 'itself faced with the dilemma of being obliged to negotiate over membership for the island without having its own approach to solving the Cyprus problem.[17] More recently the European Council in Helsinki decided, during its 10-11 December deliberations, that a 'political settlement will facilitate the accession of Cyprus to the European Union.' However, the Council's decision on accession 'will be made without the above being a precondition.'[18]

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12 The applicant countries are: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Turkey.

13 European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party 'Task-Force Enlargement,' *The Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Enlargement of The European Union*, Briefing No. 30, 26 October 1998 and, *Security and Defence and Enlargement of the European Union*, Briefing No. 31, 30 October 1998.

14 European Parliament, Secretariat Working Party 'Task-Force Enlargement,' *Cyprus and the Enlargement of the European Union*, Briefing No. 1, (revised version) 18 March 1999.

15 Quoted in Constantinos A. Adamides, *The Course of Cyprus towards Accession to the European Union*, Warwick University, School of law MA Dissertation, 1996-7.

16 Quoted in Joseph S. Joseph, 'Cyprus at the Threshold of the European Union,' *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 7 (2), Spring 1996, p. 120.

17 Heinz Kramer, 'The Cyprus Problem and European Security,' *Survival*, Vol. 39 (3), Autumn 1997, p. 26.

18 *Helsinki European Council: Presidency Conclusions*, 10-11 December 1999, Para. 9 (b).

It is however difficult to see, notwithstanding the European Council's decision, that the accession of Cyprus in its current divided state will be anything other than potentially problematic for the EU, CFSP as well as ESDI. In particular it was, until recently, difficult to see how the Cyprus problem could be constructively addressed without acknowledging that Turkey should be considered a candidate for EU membership. In this regard the move by the Commission in October 1999 to acknowledge Turkey as a candidate, which has been cautiously welcomed in Ankara, is an essential starting point for providing a framework for the resolution of Cyprus' divided status.

Estonia and its two Baltic neighbours also pose special problems since the three countries are an area of self-proclaimed special interest to Russia. Relations with the Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia are a cause of tension between the Baltic states and Russia while Lithuania poses potential problems due to the Russian insistence on access to the Kaliningrad oblast. The extent to which the Baltic states may fully associate with CFSP, including in Europe-only operations utilising CJTF forces, may pose severe problems for Russia and neighbouring Belarus. To the south the question of military preparedness and effectiveness needs to be raised, especially with regard to Bulgaria.

In security terms the expansion of the EU to the east need not be a threat to Russia, with the important caveat of the Baltic states, since there is already a common border between the EU and Russia. Much also depends upon what happens to the WEU as the defensive element of the EU. If the defensive aspects are de-emphasised, the expansion of the EU and the CFSP is far more likely to be palatable to Moscow's sensitivities. The extent to which the current neutral and non-aligned members, plus Denmark, can reduce the CFSP to the Petersberg tasks with perhaps a greater emphasis on conflict prevention may further shape favourable Russian reaction.

What is more likely to be controversial is the extent to which NATO and EU expansion coincides. Although their respective expansion was initially dubbed a parallel process it is apparent that it is a distinct process. The CJTF concept though gives rise to the question of whether a 'Europe only' operation utilising NATO assets is restricted to NATO members of the EU (four are not) or whether it is open to all EU members, or current WEU full (10) and associate members (+6). The expansion of the EU to 20 or 21 would add an additional three NATO members to the current EU membership but also add three or four non-members, meaning that 14 of 20 or 21 EU members would be NATO members, instead of the current 11. If the EU expanded to 27, half of its members would be NATO members. The expansion of the EU will therefore demand clarification of how the CJTF concept works and who may participate. It may also lead to clarification of NATO's enlargement plans and lead to a further spate of enlargement under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Obviously, ESDI and the CJTF concept call for a reasonable balance between EU and NATO membership and although it is assumed that NATO will expand further, the possibility of an estranged Turkey blocking NATO expansion cannot be entirely discounted.

Undoubtedly the main security benefit to the enlargement of the EU will accrue from the expansion of the Community and the adherence to a common set of norms and standards. Expansion southwards may also have beneficial effects upon the Balkans and trade relations with Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia and Yugoslavia. The third pillar will undoubtedly face a number of profound problems, most of which exist amongst the existing fifteen members, as expansion is considered (such as asylum policy and concerns about drug trafficking). It is less obvious that the expansion of CFSP would enhance external security since it may well reawaken Russian fears of the eastward expansion of 'western Europe.' Much will depend

upon the ability of the EU to address the especially difficult security questions pertaining to Cyprus and the three Baltic states.

Conclusions

The above discussion leads to four general conclusions. The first, unstartling, conclusion concerns the difficulty of differentiating smaller from larger states. The cold war setting made this a relatively easy task, as the earlier discussion on theory shows, with a number of static indicators or behavioural characteristics indicating size. The post-cold war setting makes such classification a difficult and somewhat arbitrary process. In geopolitical terms, drawing upon the examples of Bosnia and Kosovo, the Contact Group have the best claim to 'large state' status. This would however imply that, for example, Spain and Turkey are small states which is a classification that many may disagree with. The search for a hard and fast definition is rather fruitless but the ability to match diplomatic standing, with economic pressure and the threat or actual use of military force is one that in fact does not belong to 'Europe.' The ability to combine these three aspects of 'power' into a whole, probably only belongs to the U.S. and, perhaps, to Russia.

Second, the above discussion noted that the behaviour of small states in the ESDI and more general European security contexts is distinguished by diversity as much as by similarities. It is difficult to ascertain any specific type of behaviour that distinguishes larger from smaller state behaviour. Even the presence of four NNAs in the EU, which is often taken as an exemplar of small state behaviour, shows considerable differences between their outlooks. Their respective NNA positions may be substantially modified by decisions of other small states to join, or not, alliances such as Estonia's potential membership of NATO. Amongst the small states there may also be significant differences of opinion such as the pro-European stance of Belgium and the pro-Atlantic stance of the Netherlands, in spite of their very close relations in other fields. The argument that the small states should adopt a coherent position so that they may make their voice heard by the larger states suffers from the false assumption that there is a sufficient identity of interests amongst the smaller states or larger states. Smaller states may well be most effective when they engage the larger states from positions of relative influence, such as the EU Presidency, where they can modify or shape agendas.

Third, ESDI is part of a political arrangement hatched in the early 1990s whereby NATO proves its utility to Europe by providing essential assets on a case-by-case basis, while the Euro-options (chiefly the WEU) are given access to an 'operational capability' and thus relevance to Europe's security concerns. What this actually means in military terms is unclear – especially since the Albanian, Bosnian and Kosovo cases have all illustrated a marked preference for pragmatic ad hoc coalitions and settlements. It is though becoming increasingly clear in the aftermath of the Kosovo crisis and the St. Malo declaration, that ESDI is primarily a political device and the hard issues of who should actually provide for Europe's security, and who should pay, remain relevant issues for smaller and larger states alike. The role of small states in European security and especially NATO, can only be properly understood when the larger states actually use the myriad of institutional modifications and adaptations that have emerged over the last decade. It is perhaps a measure of their confidence in the new institutional structures that they are routinely by-passed. This is of no comfort to smaller states.

Finally, with the overall theme of small states and alliances in mind, it would appear that the absence of any overt threat to the security of most small states in Europe has decreased the relevance of alliances to smaller states. As a consequence, small states have shown far more

willingness to develop specific links to security organisations that reflect only their immediate concerns. For those states facing immediate security concerns, as in the Balkans or the Caucasus, it is not clear that existing alliance structures offer tangible benefits when in most cases conflict stems from internal factors. Alliances, in the traditional sense, were designed to address threats from without and there is no guarantee that larger states will wish to involve themselves in intra-state rivalries. Unlike the cold war, smaller states may now choose to involve themselves on an à la carte basis in a wide range of security commitments with an emphasis upon their own security requirements and those in the immediate vicinity. Alliance membership or non-membership for smaller states now carries different costs and benefits than in the cold war era and this is in part because the very nature of security and alliances has changed. One factor that has not appreciably changed however is that smaller states still have the ability to upset the designs for stability promoted by the larger states.