THE FUTURE OF
MULTILATERALISM

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elf
European Liberal Forum

THE FUTURE OF
MULTILATERALISM

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Foreword

Dear Reader,

At one of its first international conferences held in June 2008 in Helsinki, the European Liberal Forum addressed, with the support of its Finnish member organisation Think Tank e2, a topic of global importance: The future of multilateralism.

During the two-day conference, government and academia representatives as well as other experts from Finland and Germany discussed the perspectives of multilateralism and the challenges multilateral organisations are facing at the dawn of the 21st century.

Despite newly emerging actors such as China, Russia, India and Brazil, the United States and the European Union are still the ones to determine whether any cooperation is multilateral or not. Whereas the concept of "efficient multilateralism" has been the central stance of the EU's approach to international politics, Europe focuses on multilateral approaches as such, while the United States emphasize on the efficiency of cooperation.

The difference in orientation, however, has been softened since Barack Obama took office in January 2009. Indeed, the 44th American President expressed the willingness of the American people to join forces with other nations to address global challenges.

The global financial and economic crisis that unfolded in the fall of 2008 with the failure of the investment bank Lehman Brothers, underlined once more the importance of efficient international cooperation when it comes to global challenges.

At the Pittsburgh summit in September 2009, the G20 heads of State and Government agreed on a multilateral approach to consoli-

date the global economic system and avoid another financial crisis of this magnitude.

The upcoming UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009 will reveal whether world leaders are able to decisively deal with climate change.

The UN is the largest international organisation which aims at facilitating multilateral cooperation. Though on the agenda for years, the necessary reforms of its structures are still pending. It seems, however, that the issue of UN reform is now back on the international agenda – indeed due to a shift in the US attitude towards international cooperation and multilateralism.

This publication includes the major contributions taken from the speeches given at the conference. It will provide the reader a more in-depth understanding of the importance of multilateralism in the wake of increasing globalisation.

I sincerely hope that these documents contribute to future discussions at the European and international levels.

On behalf of the European Liberal Forum I would like to thank those who have contributed to this publication and to Think Tank e2 for its support in publishing these documents.

Brussels, October 2009
Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, MEP
President of the European Liberal Forum asbl

Professor Tuomas Forsberg, University of Tampere[1]

The Concept of Multilateralism and the Changing International Environment

Multilateralism is a concept that is often used in politics but frequently misunderstood. Politicians talking about multilateralism often talk past one another. This is why the concept should be analysed and clarified. The word 'multilateral' is readily understood as referring to cooperation among many parties, or, in international politics, among several states. The word originates in Latin, but this should not make it any more difficult to understand its content. The opposites of 'multilateral' are unilateral, one-sided action and bilateral cooperation among two states.

Multilateralism, however, is easier to misconceive. While it refers to a doctrine that favours multilateral cooperation, multilateral cooperation as such does not yet prove that the cooperation is guided by multilateralism as an ideology. Also, multilateralism as an ideology can prevail even when multilateral cooperation fails.

Another tricky aspect of multilateralism is that it is often confused with the concept of 'multipolarity'. This relates to the number of power centres: if there are more than two centres of power, the system

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is said to be 'multipolar'; with two power centres, it is bipolar; and if there is a hegemony within a system, it is known as 'unipolar'. There is a tendency to think that a multipolar system is geared toward multilateral cooperation, that bipolar systems organise themselves bilaterally and that unilateralism prevails in unipolar systems.

The linkage between the number of power centres and the nature of international cooperation is, however, much more complex. Historically, multilateralism gained strength during the multipolar European system of the post-Napoleonic age, but the multipolar systems predating this era and the multipolar system before the First World War were not particularly multilateral.

By contrast, after the Second World War the United States (US) was in a hegemonic position in the West, and the Cold War international system was resolutely bipolar, but the US decided to organise international cooperation multilaterally. A hegemony can act unilaterally – an option not afforded to small states – but how international cooperation is organised is a matter of political choice, not a structural necessity. Not all hegemonies are alike in this regard. The international system may have become unipolar through US hegemony after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and while this makes unilateral US policies more understandable from a structural point of view, it does not yet explain the change in US thinking.

Furthermore, 'multilateralism' is a misleading concept if it denotes only the number of countries cooperating. We should not measure the level of multilateralism by simply counting the participating countries.

There are two things more important than the number of parties. First, multilateralism should be defined in relation to the issue around which states cooperate. If seven countries, for example, should decide multilaterally to divide Antarctica, the decision could be seen as multilateral in the organisation of the cooperation but hardly multilateral in view of the nature of the issue: if Antarctica is

seen as part of the common heritage of mankind, multilateral cooperation requires more parties at the decision-making table.

This is why we often distinguish between regional and multilateral forms. Although based on the principle of multilateralism, European integration is still a regional organisation. Often implicit in 'multilateralism' is a global dimension, although technically, regional cooperation among many is also multilateral.

Second, multilateral cooperation represents multilateralism only if it is guided by multilateral thinking. There are certain principles for multilateralism, such as inclusiveness and shared principles for decision-making. Multilateralism as a doctrine means that one prefers multilateral cooperation over bilateralism and unilateralism; multilateral cooperation is tried first, and one is ready to listen to the others and formulate policies together. If they exist, multilateral fora should not be by-passed. If multilateral cooperation is achieved by dictates or passive adaptation by weaker parties, it does not represent genuine multilateralism.

In other words, not every country needs to be part of an arrangement that is multilateral. And even more importantly, it is not the case that everybody needs to agree on multilateral solutions if multilateralism is based on open and transparent principles.

Multilateralism and legitimacy

Multilateralism is in today's world a normatively loaded concept. It is seen as a good thing, and unilateralism, by contrast, as bad. The underlying normative rule is not simply 'the more the merrier', but that a greater number participating in policy formulation and its execution increases legitimacy.

This connection between multilateralism and legitimacy has led to a situation where multilateralism is often defined through legitimacy and not vice versa. When we say that somebody is behaving

unilaterally, we mean non-legitimate behaviour. If somebody is defending his or her legitimate rights unilaterally, we say that he or she is doing so alone and not 'unilaterally'.

While legitimacy is important, it does not mean that multilateralism is always normatively better than bilateralism or unilateralism. Of course there are also costs or drawbacks with multilateralism. The most often voiced criticism is that multilateralism is ineffective and that multilateral cooperation may dilute values. But such is the importance of international legitimacy that while such arguments are often heard in internal debates affecting policy formulation, states often want to make their unilateral policies appear multilateral.

The European Union, for its part, has adopted the term 'effective multilateralism', which in a typical Euro-language manner hints that real dilemmas can be solved by combining opposite terms.

Multilateralism has been seen as a quintessentially liberal way of organising international politics. This is partly because multilateral institutions have typically promoted liberal values, but also because it is a liberal invention to create international regimes that domesticate world politics. Not all domestically liberal states or liberal governments promote multilateralism, but it is much more unlikely that non-liberal states could do it.

Multilateralism in the real world

The trend toward growing multilateralism in international politics is clear yet not linear. The concert system in nineteenth-century Europe was a historical innovation. The most important factor in spreading multilateralism was US policy in creation of post-WWII institutions.

Multilateralism has also triumphed because the world has become more complex. This complexity has increased the volume of multilateralism but complexity is also partly a result of multilateralism, which has encouraged complexity.

In the post-WW era, multilateralism developed as an institution: it became a durable and routine matter among states. This led to an expectation that multilateralism would endure changes in the distribution of power. Even if the US power that once was critical to the establishment of multilateral fora disappeared, multilateral cooperation would continue, it was argued, because it was institutionalised.

Yet what happened was not a decline in US power but its relative growth. United States ideology also changed, but how much of the change was influenced by its new hegemonic position remains an open question. It nevertheless became gradually more hostile to international multilateral arrangements even of its own creation. It was perceived that the US preferred 'coalitions of willing' over established multilateral institutions such as the UN and NATO, and thus relied on cooperation that was multilateral in form but unilateral in spirit.

Are we now, in 2008, seeing a demise of the international order based on multilateralism?

The criticism of organisations that were established during the Cold War era does not necessarily entail criticism of multilateralism, but without multilateralism as an ideology, they will not survive. If multilateralism is strong as an ideology, we can create new institutions to replace those that have become old-fashioned, but it is often easier to transform old institutions than create new ones.

Nevertheless, also new multilateral institutions have been created after the end of the Cold War. What is new in this new era is that there can be genuine multilateralism led by weaker states and parties. We have achieved significant international treaties, for example, in arms control or environmental issues with global implications even without the big players.

The US hegemony is challenged by many new international power centres and by the sheer unsustainability of the costs of hegemony in the long run. Twenty years ago there was much talk about the rise of Japan, now everybody is talking about the rise of China. Besides,

Russia is boosting its position with the help of rapidly increased oil revenues. Brazil and India, the remaining initials of the BRIC countries[2] are also counted as new power centres of twenty-first century international politics. And finally, there is of course our European Union, already the world's biggest trade power, which is developing its military dimension and internal cohesion.

However, there is no classic multipolar international order yet in sight. Ten years ago, the two answers for the lack of balancing by other states consisted of two parts: first, the actors are still too weak or incoherent – the EU, for example – to be able to balance the US. Secondly, the US is a benign hegemony and therefore there is no need to balance it.

In summer 2008, both arguments are less solid than perhaps ten years ago. Political scientists today talk of soft balancing that uses multilateral institutions in order to bind the giant as an alternative to power-political hard balancing. This is also the core of the famous thesis by Robert Kagan, according to which the European plea for multilateralism is a strategy of the weak.

But in the present world, in 2008, everybody is weak. Richard Haass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations[3], has recently argued that the present system is no longer unipolar: the US unipolar moment is over. The world will not become multipolar, because power has become diffuse. Instead, international relations will be defined by 'nonpolarity', which will be difficult and challenging, says Haass. Cooperation is a must and multilateralism essential in this non-polar world.

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2   "BRIC countries" refers to a group of fast-growing developing economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China.

3   The Council on Foreign Relations is "an independent, nonpartisan membership organization, think tank, and publisher dedicated to ...better understand[ing] the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other countries".

I have wanted to clarify the concept of 'multilateralism' by arguing that it is much more than plain 'cooperation by many'. I have also emphasised that multilateralism is a politically loaded concept that should not be confused with legitimacy. Although it is easy to sympathise with multilateralism as a doctrine, we should be aware of the dogma that anything multilateral is good. ■

Kai Sauer, Director, Ministry for Foreign Affairs[1]

Challenges for the United Nations as a Guarantor of International Security and Development

The United Nations (UN) holds special significance for Finland. From 1955, when Finland became a member, until the end of the Cold War, the UN was our primary foreign policy forum. After the Cold War, the UN was pretty much replaced by the EU, but Finland is still, in 2008, very active within the United Nations framework.

This presentation will address two main themes. The first is the perception on the UN – that which has led us to consider the UN to be an ineffective and slow 'dinosaur' – and to what extent this perception corresponds to the realities. The second theme goes back to whether the UN as an organisation is seriously challenged by alternative concepts, and if so, what is the credibility of these concepts or alternatives.

One way to look at the UN is to divide it into three components: the first part can be referred to as the UN secretariat. This consists of more than 10 000 people working for the UN in the New York headquarters, in the field and for different funds and programmes. The second UN are the member states, while the third component

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[1] **Kai Sauer** currently works for the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In 2000–2003, he worked at the Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN and has been Senior Adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary General (Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, UNMIK & United Nations Office of the Special Envoy for Kosovo, UNOSEK) and Director of the Western Balkans Unit (Ministry for Foreign Affairs) .

are civil society actors, academia, media etc. Over the years the first UN has grown into a wide network of actors composing almost every possible sphere of life. This complicated system projects a rather unwieldy image of the UN.

The UN seems to be an overburdened bureaucracy, like a Christmas tree that has been decorated every year without us taking off last year's decorations. A fine example from daily life are the UN diplomats and their mandates. The UN is full of humanitarian and other kind of mandates. There have been attempts to reduce the number of these outdated mandates, but most of them have 'a godfather' or 'a sponsor' in one of the member states, making it impossible to reduce the numbers. They keep piling up, which is one of the factors creating the image of a stiff and overburdened bureaucracy. The image of the UN is further soiled by scandals; the Oil-for-Food Programme is the best, or worst, example.

Against this background, the demands for a thorough UN reform are fully justified, and there is no shortage of calls to reform the UN, the secretariat and the administration. The 2005 UN summit agreed on the importance of reforms. Both the current and previous Secretary General have launched several attempts to reform the UN. These reforms are, nevertheless, always subject to an agreement of the member states. There are '192 clients' to be satisfied and they might have different views on the UN system. Change is therefore bound to be very slow.

When it comes to the second UN, the member states, one has to understand that several issues get blocked in the Security Council because of national interests. The end of the Cold War did not mean the end of the veto. For example, a double veto was cast in 2008 on the question of Myanmar (Burma) by Russia and China. The Kosovo status solution also became a hostage of the Security Council, or more precisely, of the Russian position in the Security Council. The US, too, regularly blocks any resolutions which might occur on Israel.

As to the larger composition of UN membership, the General Assembly, the recent voting patterns give some cause for concern. At the time of this presentation (summer 2008), the think thank European Council on Foreign Relations is finalising a detailed policy paper on the different voting patterns on human rights in the General Assembly[2]. The writers assess that a great section of UN membership is tilting from the west toward Russia and China. Put simply, the Russian and Chinese concept of, and attitude toward, human rights is gaining more and more ground. All in all, this does not project a very dynamic picture of the UN. In the worst case the UN could be called a 'sanctuary of irresponsible sovereignty'.

Alternatives to the UN?

In some circles the current situation has raised thoughts about alternatives to the UN. One of the most prominent suggestions was put forward by the US presidential candidate John McCain (Republican), who advanced the idea of a league of democracies. This is an old idea that has been discussed in different forms by different quarters of the US academia and practitioners. It goes back to the Clinton era, which introduced the concept of the community of democracies. But the idea really never got off the ground. In fact there is only one single statement agreed on by the community of democracies, dating back to Burma in 2003. This does not bode well for the 'league of democracies'.

The concept is, of course, an excellent catchphrase, which made it possible for McCain to distinguish himself from the Bush administration as somebody who is not a unilateralist. On the other hand, he did not alienate the UN critics, either, by putting too much emphasis on the US returning to the UN.

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2 Richard Gowan & Franziska Brantner (2008), *A Global Force for Human Rights? An Audit of European Power at the UN*, European Council on Foreign Relations, http://ecfr.3cdn.net/3a4f39da1b34463d16_tom6b928f.pdf

But when we take a deeper look at the concept, the 'league of democracies' raises several questions: What is the definition of democracy? Who gets invited to the club? What are the common interests of the democracies when they are gathered together? Or how can they reach an agreement on a profound issue? Another issue is the legitimacy of such an exclusive club: if the members agree on something, where's the legitimacy of that decision? International law is important, since decisions need to be anchored. This leads us back to the UN. The baggage of the past is also there, as is the Bush agenda of global security.

For the sake of comparison, I've also considered some UN references of presidential candidate Barack Obama (Democrat), whose statements have been perhaps more explicit and clear with regard to the UN. He has advocated the leading role of the US and the UN, support for UN reform and commitment to addressing climate change. Peacekeeping is also a fairly important matter, even if the US does not contribute to UN peacekeeping to a very great extent. They are, after all, in favour of the coalition of the willing. Nevertheless, under Obama the United States might return to UN peacekeeping. Obama has also voiced some criticism, especially about the Human Rights Council and International Criminal Court.

As a conclusion, I would like to remind you of the concept of 'T.I.N.A.', by former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. 'T.I.N.A.' stands for 'There Is No Alternative' (but the UN). We are probably stuck between two bad options but we have to choose the least bad. In my opinion this would be the UN. We should stay within the existing UN. Even with all its shortcomings, the United Nations remains the most important body and framework for discussing issues of global security, climate change and the food crisis. As far as I can see it, the need for the UN is growing: the threats are becoming global instead of remaining domestic or more conventional.

As for the European Union, Joachim Krause referred[3] to the possibility of the US returning to us (Europe) and reinforcing the transatlantic bond. It is obviously very good to cultivate the transatlantic relationship with the US, but what about the transpacific relationship? What about the relationship to the bottom billion? – There is a lot of work to be done and if we think that these issues can be solved only with the US, we are wrong. We need mechanisms to integrate the rest of the world, and especially the 'growing rest'. ■

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3   See Professor Krause's presentation.

Kalle Liesinen, Crisis Management Specialist[1]

Future Challenges of Peacemaking Processes

"One of the fundamental differences between peace and war is this: One can always improve the peace, but you cannot improve the war – you have to stop it in a way or another."

My personal past includes some military training and education. One of the most valuable lessons I learned already as a young captain was that scholars, historians and officers are endlessly capable of arguing which practical decision could be the best one and what might be the second or third best. In my second life I have probably come to add diplomats and politicians onto my short list of these wise and very slow persons.

In the real world I have experienced that any peace decision – even if it compromises, does not please us and may be the second best – seems to work rather well provided that it is reasonable logical. Beginning the peace process is important; one can always direct the sequence of events toward the best outcome and intended impact if you only concentrate your efforts and coordinate the actions. The only but sadly too beaten road to unavoidable disaster is acting

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inefficiently, being uncoordinated and trying to please all aspirations even if they do not fit into the picture and the timing.

States and state-centric organisations have been major engines of conflict resolution. This is gradually changing, mainly due to the changing nature of disputes and conflicts. In addition, not only do the crises evolve, but also the capability of the international community alternates between conflict settlement and full stalemates.

It is widely recognised that in the course of time, peace is always the best solution – not only for those suffering in war, but for everybody. I wish that the international community would remember this and seek balance between their short and long-term goals.

Too often the international community has acted as a disjointed entity with divergent aspirations. Typically the general power struggle has a bearing on the local crisis that could easily be settled if only handled in the local context. Positive options tend to get lost when a local conflict becomes a part of a global game. The problem in organising field work between the UN and the EU in Kosovo 2007–2008 is a case in point and an example of losing the credibility of the international community in the eyes of the local population.[2]

The orientation of international community

The first challenge for the future of peacemaking processes is the orientation of the international community. Up to 2009, I worked in an organisation (Crisis Management Initiative, CMI) that strives to strengthen the capacity of the international community in compre-

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2   The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) was approved by the European Council on 14 December 2007 in order to replace the UN force in Kosovo. The implementation was delayed as Russia and Serbia initially considered the mission illegal pending a new decision by the United Nations Security Council, which was rendered in late 2008. Meanwhile The Kosovo Assembly declared Kosovo to be independent, and both the Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and EULEX faced practical difficulties. International missions have been subject to violent protests from local factions against international presence in Kosovo.

hensive crisis management and conflict resolution. This approach seeks the benefits to be gained from creating synergy between different functions such as mediation, civilian and military crisis management, humanitarian aid, and development cooperation – and between such organisations as the UN, regional organisations such as the EU or the African Union, other inter-state organisations such as NATO and the huge field of international organisations (IOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

We need strong ethical values and a vision of a better future for mankind. This justifies calling for efficiency and the avoidance of duplication in various functions and organisations. Organisations are the international community's tools, which are not supposed to hinder the work by creating collisions of interest.

A conventional state-centric approach may be an uneasy opener in many cases of resolving crisis. A huge majority of conflicts are basically internal problems with ethnic, religious, economic, social, crime-related and other complicated dimensions. This has had dramatic consequences on the approaches and practices in conflict resolving and peace building. The official actors of the international community may find themselves as helpless outsiders as governments of war-torn societies are often reluctant to 'internationalise' their internal disputes. Sometimes even international humanitarian aid is restricted, as we saw in Myanmar (Burma) in 2008.[3]

The United Nations is and should remain a natural leader in peacemaking activities. It is the international community's only common forum as one entity. Regional organisations, the European Union, the African Union and others can be increasingly active in peacemaking, which is a positive development and will strengthen

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[3] Cyclone Nargis caused the worst natural disaster in the recorded history of Myanmar on May 2, 2008, resulting in catastrophic destruction and about 150,000 fatalities. Relief efforts were slowed for political reasons as Burma's rulers initially resisted aid.

the capacity of the international community to solve conflicts, and hopefully also to engage in preventative diplomacy much more actively. Inter-state military organisations – NATO, for example – can create the momentum needed even in demanding situations.

A workable intervention strategy, however, has to be multilevel and needs to fold the official process of mediation and peacemaking, the possible quasi-official processes promoted by unofficial groups and the various activities of civil society. There is a great potential of synergy in elements of soft power diplomacy, economic benefits and measures of hard power such as military and civilian crisis management.

Need for multilevel approach inside war-torn societies

The second challenge in the future of peacemaking processes is how to understand the need of a multilevel approach inside the war-torn societies. A peace agreement is not enough – we need healing processes involving the societies from bottom to top. It's a hard fact that getting involved in mediation too early, when the conflict is not yet ripe, can further create tensions and escalate the situation. If the parties have not yet reached a mutually hurting stalemate and the will for peace does not exist, attempts at conflict management are almost certain to fail. It is only when relevant parties are ready that peacemaking can be successful.

Private diplomacy has become more important in resolving international conflicts partly because of the increased ability of actors to reach out into conflict-afflicted communities. 'Track II organisations' (for example, CMI) are free from the political baggage their official counterparts carry and can thus be more effective at times in providing networking capabilities among parts of societies that are 'off limits' to most government personnel.

Soft power diplomacy has often been seen only as a means of a state or other official political organisation indirectly to impact on other political bodies through cultural or ideological influence. This mechanism does exist but it is seldom under the control of one political will, because of extremely complicated influence mechanisms and long time perspective. Soft power diplomacy is rather a tool for civil society actors than a part of official operations. Unofficial actors, serving as neutral parties, can help provide bridges within divided societies; unofficial activities are often the only means through which members of opposing parties or factions can safely meet. Soft power diplomacy ensures that participants at the grassroots levels are involved in the healing process.

This is how soft power diplomacy can in time create favourable conditions for breakthroughs. Building mutual confidence between the parties is a process that takes time. The process can be initiated well before the negotiations, but at the negotiation table it will only fully start with both parties sticking to their commitments and implementing them in a manner that increases trust.

The importance of small civil society actors

The third challenge in the future of the peacemaking processes is to understand the importance of small civil society actors working for sustainable peace parallel to the official peace processes. The supporters of civil society often underestimate the influence of small drops when the opponents are at the same time ready to use megalomaniac preventive means like controlling the whole internet.

In a centuries-long conflict, one may eventually reach a point where the parties on both sides completely lose perspective of each other's intentions. No peace process can succeed without re-establishing trust and making the parties understand the needs of one another. This limits the topics to be negotiated by the parties and

means that some matters must be left for the political process following the peace agreement. This also increases the responsibilities of outside supporters.

It is not possible to achieve sustainable peace without those groups, or individuals, who are regarded as real representatives of the parties. If a group has no legitimate leader, there is no point in negotiating until one can be established. Participants at the 'peace table' must have the power to agree and implement agreements. Those who can threaten a veto and spoil the process must be kept involved and under control.

Common people are less likely to accept an agreement if they have not been involved in the process well enough to understand why the agreement was designed as it was, and why it is the best option available. We should particularly include women and civil society groups in peace processes and conflict resolution as this may bring totally new approaches to the process. A sustainable peace needs everybody to guarantee that no seeds of future conflict are left behind.

Key factors in promoting peace

Open discussion; an adequate, understandable and extensive information flow; and free media have proved to be key factors in promoting the peace. How to involve these elements in state building is a challenge as they must often be created from an opposite setup.

Maintaining peace and making it long-lasting is a top priority for a post-war society. Generally – and unluckily – it is always too easy to deny, to block and to keep positions than to give up, seek opportunities and aim to changes via dynamic development. We know that nearly half of the conflicts flare up during the first five vulnerable years of peace. No political solution is final or permanent, but the peace process can be sustainable, if it is adequately supported by the international community. People should feel that with peace they

can have a positive future again: freedom to work and travel; to start a family and raise children.

The most effective guarantees for a lasting peace are everyday economic survival and a just society. Peace talks need to create the framework where these issues can be effectively addressed after the peace accord. I have personally been involved in a few peace processes. In Aceh[4] I witnessed how the remarkable international tsunami aid was blocked and piling in harbours and bank accounts because of the war, and how it was released as a wave of goodwill when the peace treaty was signed half a year after the disaster. Then everybody could see, feel and understand the benefits of peace: the process was irreversible.

How to support the first years after any peace treaty remains a challenge. It has been a challenge and a stumbling block already earlier, but now we know better. Sustainable peace requires visible grassroots economic input much more than we have believed. Luckily economists can prove that investment in future prospects pays back handsomely.

All conflicts can be solved. What we need is an international community with a shared understanding and a comprehensive approach using all available means to gain peace – and patience to finalise the efforts. Conflicts do not end in the signing of a peace agreement. Stability rests on the principle that fundamental social changes are necessary to prevent renewed hostilities. The use of soft power diplomacy and the building up of an active civil society are great resources in originating, facilitating and ensuring future peace processes. Winning the war may be good but winning the peace is the ultimate goal and the first priority. ■

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4   Former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari facilitated Aceh peace negotiations in 2004–2005. Kalle Liesinen was first responsible for implementing the decommissioning process and served later as a deputy head of the EU-ASEAN monitoring mission in Aceh.

Jyri Häkämies, Minister of Defence[1]

Crisis Management, Finland And The European Union

F inland is an active member and partner of various democratic organisations in Europe. European Union membership, NATO partnership and the chairmanship of OSCE[2] during 2008 are clearly complementary. A country with a relatively small population can gain diplomatic and international influence only by being an active contributor. At the same time Finland can offer an optimal output to crisis management. The work for international crisis management has to be done with a broad concept of security, combining civilian and military tools.

Finland has participated in peacekeeping and crisis management activities for decades. In June 2008, Finland's military contribution was 667 troops in the crisis management operations. In two major NATO-led operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, Finland had over 500 troops and in the EU-led operations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Chad some 100 troops and also 220 troops in the Nordic Battlegroup[3]. We will continue to contribute at this level also in the future as we do in June 2008 in Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan and

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1 **Jyri Häkämies** has been the Finnish Minister of Defence since 2007. He has represented the National Coalition Party (Kansallinen Kokoomus) in the Finnish Parliament since 1999.

2 The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

3 The Nordic Battlegroup was not deployd in operation and has been inactive since summer 2008.

Chad. The role of the European Union is increasing as the two EU-led operations carried out demonstrate.

We spent over 115 million euros in 2007 to implement these operations. Since the operations are becoming more and more demanding, the expenditure is rising. However, in Finland the national expenditure of crisis management is shared between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Today's slogan is 'comprehensive approach'. How do we understand this term? The need for a comprehensive approach is underlined by today's crises, which are hardly ever only military in nature. We need the resources of various players and sectors to address current crisis prevention and management challenges. The coordination required to ensure the best possible synergy does not come without effort. Partnership between different international and regional organisations is also needed. In order to succeed, we need coordination from the very beginning: from capability development to training, from planning to conduct of operations, from exit strategy to the end state and not forgetting the exercise of 'lessons learned'.

How Finland sees the progress as a member state of the European Union

Finland is concerned about developing a European Security and Defence Policy both now and in the future. The two, security and development, go together, which is why we promote a comprehensive approach to crisis management. The European Union is one of those rare organisations which has the full spectrum of assets and means to use in crisis spots, including diplomatic means, trade policy, development assistance and military and civilian crisis management.

We need to improve our capabilities in order to create an even more active role for the European Union. For example, all the services (army, air, maritime) should be able to act in the area of opera-

tions at the same time. 'Jointness' is thus one of the areas with a great potential. The same goal applies to cooperation between various organisations and players in crisis management.

Capabilities-related work within the European Union started firstly with stocktaking of all current capabilities, secondly with identifying the shortages and thirdly, in 2008, we focus on actions for improvement. Two major shortcomings are the strategic and tactical airlift capabilities. The further away the crises are the more challenging the operations will be. From the Finnish perspective, multilateral cooperation is the answer to these challenges. A good example is Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC), where several NATO countries and Sweden and Finland pooled together to purchase and operate three C-17 Globemaster aircrafts.[4] Finland also supports the Franco-British helicopter initiative to tackle the shortage of tactical airlift.

Finland has underscored preventive measures in crisis management. The European Union should act at a very early stage of crisis. The European Union must have the capability for rapid and robust intervention in order to prevent any escalation of crises. The European Union Battlegroup concept was created for these purposes. Since 2007, battlegroups have been operational, two at a time. By summer 2008 Finland has participated in two Battlegroups, the German-Dutch-Finnish and the Nordic Battlegroups. So far, all the experiences have been very positive. By June 2008, the Battlegroups have not been deployed. However, Finland can use the same well-trained personnel in operations such as European Union Force EUFOR/Chad.

Closer and more active cooperation between various organisations is important for European Security and Defence Policy. Multilateral cooperation between the United Nations, NATO and the African Union is pivotal for the European Union as well. In crisis management the European Union and NATO are complementary – not competing – actors. When they operate in the same area in order to

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4 The first C-17 Globemaster aircraft was delivered in July 2009.

achieve lasting results, they need to work closely together. Lack of co-operation might put civilian and military personnel in unnecessary danger. These two organisations should also work to improve their political dialogue. This may be facilitated by the Lisbon Treaty, which enables the development of the European Union. In crisis management, the EU seeks a broader and more effective model. The treaty highlights the combination of military and civilian crisis management measures, and permanent-structured cooperation provides a new chance to develop capabilities further. This initiative enables all the member states to go forward faster in areas of military capabilities enhancement. The European Defence Agency (EDA) could have an important role in this respect.

'Comprehensive approach' also has a national dimension. For example, a large country area, such as Finland, with a relatively small population, can't really waste effort and resources in competing between authorities. To give an example, Finland has a strong tradition of coordination between different authorities. The act on the Finnish defence forces was endorsed in 1974 and renewed in 2007. In accordance with this law, the defence forces are obliged to give executive assistance to other authorities on request. This principle is even more underscored in the renewed act. The very same rule applies to other authorities as well.

Rather than being burdened with a multitude of duties, the Finnish defence forces currently have only three main tasks: first, national defence; secondly, assistance to other authorities both in Finland and abroad; and third, participation in crisis management operations. All these tasks have the cooperative dimension that we call the comprehensive approach. This applies both during normal times and in times of crisis. Each authority and ministry has their own role, but they all have capabilities that can be used for other purposes as well. What we are trying to do is avoid unnecessary overlap and duplication in capabilities and in tasks. In an optimal

situation, the same national resources can be used for all missions and tasks both nationally and internationally. In the field of crisis management we have transferred our experience at the national level to the international arena.

Coordination between various authorities starts from capability development. First of all, we need to make sure that necessary capabilities are provided. Coordination ensures that maximum benefit is being drawn from resources that are always scarce.

As a conclusion, some challenges and areas for further improvement need to be highlighted. The crisis management operations will be more demanding in the future. How do we deal with a harsh environment or with long distances? When negotiating today's crises we should act rapidly and the comprehensive approach should start at a very early stage, preferably from the assessment phase. Different actors need to understand the requirements of a situation in a similar way and draw conclusions for further action together.

Finally, a word about national resources: while the price of materiel increases by 9 % per year, the national military budgets are being cut down. This equation does not work, especially when demands for crisis management are growing all the time. The feasible solution is multilateral cooperation and the comprehensive approach. ∎

Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, MEP[1]

Effective Multilateralism in the Future

The international world order has changed a lot in the last decades – the two most significant dates being November 1989 (symbolising the end of the Cold War) and September 2001 (symbolising the premature end of Francis Fukuyama's *End of History*). Both dates brought with it a message: that the nation state which dominated 20th century politics has lost a lot of its influence, that supranational actors such as global corporations, powerful NGOs and many new regional alliances but also crises of global scale as well as internationally active terror organisations have exposed new limits to the power of the nation state and its governments.

In such a new world – with many more actors, sources of power and influence – international cooperation between the still existing state actors is more necessary than ever before. State sovereignty was shown to be nearly powerless by terrorism and civil/tribal wars, untamed globalisation, environmental problems, nature catastrophes of enormous proportions and organised crime. Systems of international order have evolved considerably in what they are trying to achieve: first it was peace, trade and the spreading of democracy; today it is also the setting of a framework to find common solutions to global problems. Examples of the latter would include the Kyoto protocol or the MDGs – which also already show the deficits of the

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approach in that there is no mechanism of enforcement which comes out in the less than satisfying results.

For four years the concept of "effective multilateralism" has been the central stance of the European Union's approach to international politics. The doctrine gives priority to employing the collective security system of the UN when international action is needed. The concept has been formulated by European leaders such as Javier Solana as the most promising tool to bind all relevant actors together in efforts to end conflicts, the spread of diseases, poverty and hunger. The term was prominently placed in the common European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003 even though the concept of cooperation in the light of widely shared values such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law has long been part of European thinking. The approach already appeared in The Common Concept of the Western European Union" of 1995 arguing that cooperative mechanisms should be applied and strengthened through the implementation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and through the 'establishment of international organisations based on common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law'.

The Lisbon Treaty once more upholds this European belief in cooperation and common, internationally legitimized solutions[2]:

The Union shall seek to develop relations and build partnerships with third countries, and international, regional or global organisations which share the principles referred to in the first subparagraph. It shall promote multilateral solutions to common problems, in particular in the framework of the United Nations.

But for this approach it is essential to have partners who share the vision. This is what seems to be increasingly difficult in our day and time: American unilateralism has been increasing since the end of

2   Lisbon Treaty, provisions on the Union's external actions, chapter 1, Article 10

the Cold War and especially since 9/11. Russia seems to turn away from the West and its values, rediscovering its imperial appetite; UN Security Council reform has not been moving forward for years; in over six years, the WTO has not managed to conclude the Doha Round; and a quickly rising China is challenging the West with a behaviour that produces Cold War reflexes. The Middle East is an agglomerate of failed states, failing states, religious clashes and never-ending provocations. In this situation, where realist positions are gaining ground, we have to ask ourselves whether the EU's central foreign policy concept of "effective multilateralism" make any sense, now or at all? Let's have a look at the shortcomings of the concept for some answers on how multilateralism can be effective today. Effective Multilateralism can only work if there is agreement over the aims and purposes of multilateral action between all actors involved. As of today this is still mostly a matter of agreement on a transatlantic track.

The transatlantic avantgarde

Whether any cooperation is multilateral or not is still determined by the two big Western blocs: the US and the EU. Even with the newly emerging power houses of China, Russia, India and Brazil, these two set the rules of the game. Looking at "effective multilateralism" from a transatlantic angle, the crucial point is that the US puts more emphasis on "effective" and Europeans more on "multilateralism".

For Europeans it is most important that there is some sort of multilateral cooperation, even if it's incomplete. For Americans there are fewer shades of grey, they support a multilateral approach only if it's effective. If it's not, they also look for alternatives such as unilateralism, coalitions of the willing – and back to the front with McCain – a league of democracies. Americans base their stance on their technological superiority; Europeans theirs on the lack thereof and an emphasis on a rules basis. Europeans are sceptically-conservative

in their world view convinced that any well meaning action can also bring about chaos – as was shown in Iraq.

Americans on the other hand are optimistic that any action in the name of peace and security is justified. One of the central tenets of the Bush Doctrine therefore stands in the way of a truly effective multilateralism – the belief that independent action is prime to guarantee American freedom and security. When Donald Rumsfeld then Secretary of Defence said in 2001: "The coalition must not determine the mission", he outlined this changed belief that if (military) action is required it does not matter whether the crucial allies support it or not. Clearly, the Americans were correct in their ways just not their means, because they discredited the right idea of pre-emption with an amateurish course of action: Pre-emptive action has to become an acceptable concept. Realistically, and considering today's challenges, there must be a mechanism that allows taking action when it is clear that a threat is becoming imminent and before harm is done.

To discuss whether Europeans are correct in believing in the superiority of the concept after all it is necessary to distinguish between open forms of multilateralism (UN) and closed forms – that is regionally and thematically restricted cooperation (NATO). Open forms have often proven to be rather ineffective and exactly these failures led to major disagreements between opponents and proponents of both systems over the validity of the concept of effective multilateralism itself. And while the US prefers hard power, coalitions of the willing and pre-emptive action, the EU prefers to put its stakes on soft power, diplomacy, rules-based, multilateral action sanctioned by the UN.

What makes multilateral cooperation so hard to achieve?

What other factors make international cooperation – and at the same time an agreement to reform of the UN – so difficult? One thing is the heterogeneity of the actors (cultural, ideological, political, economical, social) and their different means and convictions to achieve the same aims (peace, prosperity, security). Even though all states seek some kind of alliances and partnerships, the traditional forms of cooperation have been surpassed by the new demands of a globalized world. This can best be seen in the largest case of organized cooperation there is: the United Nations.

Crises are growing in numbers, but the UN after years of almost fruitless debate are still struggling to come to terms with the necessary reforms of its structures to guarantee everyone fair participation. Rights, responsibilities and duties need to be redistributed if the organization is to cope with the challenges. Internal wars over power, resources and influence take away from the strength and resources that are needed to fight today's crises – the UN should truly live up to its name and become "united" instead of remaining divided over these issues of power and influence. It could be the last chance. The start has been made with the discussion on "system-wide coherence" to reform operational activities in development and the "one UN" campaign.

The problem here is however the opposition of the G77. They fault the suggestions made as another effort to bolster western dominance. The ideas for reform – that is of merging or closing certain agencies or at least bringing about efficient coordination – have sparked a fear and suspicion among the more than 130 countries composing the group of G77 that the West is driving a hidden agenda to decrease UN contributions to the global South. The "Utstein group" (Ministers from among Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the UK and others

promoting Development Co-operation and pushing international consensus on reform) had analyzed the shortcomings of the present construction in 2003 and pointed specifically at three problems as the central reasons for ineffectiveness and inefficiency: duplication of work, institutional fragmentation and mandate overlap.

The key to reforming the UN is to persuade the G77 to give up their resistance to operational reforms and thereby allowing the UN to become an agenda-setting global player with regards to development and conflict resolution. Only with help of the G77 can the UN become "one UN" and turn into an alternative to donor-driven institutions, such as the World Bank. Therefore, the EU needs to put pressure on those blocking reforms in the UN so that the "Janus-faced" policies can come to an end. We do need bilateral agreements and partnerships but those may not be boycotted in superior systems of order such as the UN and its geopolitical blocks. Ultimately, the donor countries have the leverage to demand the changes they deem necessary to use their funds more efficiently and effectively.

EU can push progress by walking ahead

The Member States of the European Union have to do their homework to ensure that multilateral cooperation has a chance to be effective in the first place. Multilateralism is most efficient and effective if the Union as an international actor is speaking with one voice, which is as we all know not always the case. The different reactions (and consequently actions) on George Bush's call to support the war in Iraq have shown that problem very vividly. A common European position is important for instance on the question of authorisation of the use of force which is a major point of disagreement with the United States. Such issues and unsolved questions take away from the effectiveness that is required to counter the challenges of our globalising world in the 21st century. With the fight against terror-

ism, the problem of failing or failed states descending into chaos, with poverty, hunger, pandemics, climate change and the lack of perspective for many young people, common strategies and effective multilateral cooperation are ever growing in urgency.

It is clear that the EU cannot be multilateral alone. ENP, EU enlargement, the Transatlantic alliance, a new partnership with Russia, the Mediterranean Union, more or less institutionalized partnerships with Africa are among the debated alliances, and there is no internal unity as how to deal with all these challenges. The ratification and implementation of the Lisbon Treaty might remedy some of these problems. With a new Foreign Minister, an External Action Service and more competences, the Union will be better equipped for external challenges that require having a common position. The treaty also introduces an article on mutual defence assistance, a solidarity clause, permanent structured cooperation in the field of defence and an extension of the "Petersberg tasks". In addition, it will be interesting to see what are the possibilities and possible impact of bringing existing multinational forces such as Eurocorps, Eurofor, and other relevant structures for ESDP operations under permanent structural cooperation as laid out in the Lisbon Treaty.

Future – alternative – forms of cooperation

What is the alternative if multilateralism remains "ineffective"? There are already some examples of new concepts that can be an alternative to the old nation-state centered justification for international rules. In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) produced "The Responsibility to protect", a comprehensive report detailing how the "right of humanitarian intervention" could be exercised. Maybe such "themes" can provide the framework that certain organisations are missing? Other concepts such as Human Security, which require a different set of rules and

justifications, are also gaining prominence. Human Security looks no longer at the nation state as the defining factor for action but at the individual and his/her needs. The concept promotes a people-centered view of security in order to achieve regional and global stability – and thereby security for the state. On several occasions the "Human Security" approach has managed to bring actors together on a common platform to achieve progress that was not possible in the traditional forums where a crisis had been discussed. Good examples are disarmament and the fight against global warming. These successful cases of international cooperation prove that there is a way out of the multilateral dilemma of non-action.

By involving civil society actors like NGOs and the general public into a UN-initiated debate, humanitarian advocacy was able to prevail and thereby set an example of international lawmaking in a world that does not yet provide the right framework. This could be the true advantage of a thematic approach. Just like effective multilateralism transcends traditional limits of international cooperation, the concept of Human Security transcends traditional limits of international aid and development approaches. Human Security is also dependent of a legitimizing rule book. Without a framework of legitimization and rules, the concept has no authority and backing. A working multilateralism is the precondition for "human security" to succeed, and in turn, the concept can add legitimacy to multilateral action.

A recently released study by DG RELEX (October 2007), the quasi predecessor of an EU Foreign Ministry, recommended that comprehensive civil-military planning has to be bolstered when dealing with conflicts as it is the "prerequisite for success and effectiveness of civil-military co-operations". This planning should be based on clear priorities, reflect the strategic vision on what the mission is supposed to achieve and be as inclusive as possible. In analyzing cases of international co-ordination (for instance the EUPOL mission in the DRC) the study came to the conclusion "that in the lack of a strong

lead 'selective multilateralism' rather than 'effective multilateralism' seems to be more applicable" (to describe Security Sector Reform co-ordination in the DRC).

A form of selective multilateralism is the League of Democracies, the idea of an official organisation of democratic states trying to promote democracy worldwide. This plan is not new – Madeleine Albright had promoted it in the 1990s – but it has been warmed up again now in the face of eminent crises (cyclone in Burma, Tibet versus China) by prominent voices such U.S. Presidential candidate John McCain and his advisor Robert Kagan. The main idea is to bring to life the evolving legal principle known as "responsibility to pro-tect" which makes governments accountable for humanitarian crises on their territory. The idea is to use the concept as an argument to gear up action with a group of democratic allies when the UN are blocked and unable to come up with solutions in situations where lives are at stake. Opponents point to the lack of legitimacy that the circumventing UN decision-making bodies would bring about. Kagan rejects this criticism arguing the League would only "complement" the UN Security Council with forceful interventions whenever there is a blockage in a crisis of life-and-death.

It is quite possible that the European Union will need to adopt an official position on this proposal soon. It should actually support at least the core of the idea - that is, bringing about action when a UN blockade is aggravating a humanitarian crisis. But rather than installing a new institution that would construct a parallel and rival-ing structure to the UN, a selective multilateralism or a coalition of the willing is preferable in the name of a concrete humanitarian cri-sis. The concept "Human Security" can here be helpful in setting the boundaries as to what constitutes a case for international interven-tion against the will of the rulers of an affected state.

With regard to these remarks the fundamental suggestion is: Improve the work in the existing bodies of international cooperation

instead of founding new ones for every special and specific need. It is true that the most relevant organisation, the UN, has long been performing way below expectations. The progress of reforms is disheartening and the blockades of some countries make the call for enhancing cooperation and coordination seem ridiculous. However, it makes sense to have a forum for debate, even if it is imperfect. Without the long pending reforms the UN need to undergo, this strategy of multilateral cooperation will never work as "effectively" as it could. Therefore the key to a truly effective multilateralism lies in a deep and substantial reform of the UN. The UN is certainly the best framework to find common solutions to problems that in the end affect everyone – directly or indirectly – but only if they represent, today's globalized world order. This means the inclusion of emerging powers like China or India into the decision-making process as much as a fair process of decision-making itself. This means mostly structural reforms which includes an overhaul of the power structure in the Security Council. These two steps alone would give more legitimacy to UN decisions and at the same time more weight and force to the ongoing and upcoming missions of the organisation. Three concepts that must therefore be given urgent priority are the inclusion of relevant decision-makers and actors, more democratic structures and a rules-based multilateralism.

In the end, it must become clearer that we are living and working in and with an antiquated system of rules and order. An international order that worked in the 1960s when we had the Cold War and powerful nation states, as well as a unipolar (Western) power balance can not cope with today's challenges. In the U.S., people have understood this since 11 September; in Europe we are still clinging to the outdated belief that problems have their limits within nation state borders.

The European Union and its partners have to overcome this and accept and then promote the understanding that challenges worldwide need to be addressed thematically: natural catastrophes such

as earthquakes or desertification, humanitarian crises caused by armed conflict, epidemics or food shortages, but also more general development questions such as poverty and child mortality. The rules for this new international order still need to be set up, and to gain as much acceptance as possible we need a forum such as the UN. We in the West need to put our weight behind the task of persuading the G77 that it is in their own interest to make development operations more efficient.

Europeans need to work on three fronts, to make effective multilateralism become a reality. The first concerns ourselves; we need to understand the paradigm shift in international law and order and persuade our fellow citizens that crises outside our borders are not beyond our responsibility. The second front is the transatlantic alliance: we need to find a mechanism of cooperation on multilateral action. A new chance will be given with a new American president who learns from the mistakes of his predecessor. The third is to address the fears and suspicions of the G77 to finally break the stalemate of reforms at the United Nations.

These three fronts – or tasks – all have one thing in common: they require trust on both sides. As Albert Einstein wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt in 1950, "Every kind of peaceful cooperation among men is primarily based on mutual trust and only secondarily on institutions such as courts of justice and police."[3] At home this requires that our citizens trust in our judgement and analytical skills to know what is the right thing to do. In our transatlantic partnership it requires trust that we will be a reliable partner when needed. And in our relation to the developing world, we require the trust from countries that are just now beginning to catch up with the industrialized world and fear that the new global challenges will make them be left behind once again. Let's start with building trust then. ∎

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3 For her television program concerning the implications of the H-Bomb, 13 February 1950.

Prof. Dr. Joachim Krause[1]

The Crisis of Multilateralism

When Barack Obama assumes power as the 44th President of the United States in January 2009, there certainly will be a shift in the U.S. attitude towards international cooperation and multilateralism. The disdain of the Bush-Administration for the UN and other forms of multilateralism and the derogative language about "soft Europeans" have already given way to a more cooperative approach, but there might be further changes in that direction. In particular, after the Democrats have been able to keep their majorities both in the Senate and the House, we surely will see a major shift in U.S. foreign policy. We will see a President who is much more ready to work within the framework of multilateralism and who will forego unilateralism; and we will see a Congress much more ready to cooperate with others in the field of climate change and energy security as well as other issues. Many Europeans are already becoming triumphant because of what they consider to be Americans finally accepting the wisdom of "our" multilateral, inclusive approach in world politics. Will Europeans actually witness the triumph of their liberal multilateralism over neoconservative U.S. unilateralism in the coming years? Will the U.S. ruefully rejoin the family of civilized nations that are practising cooperative diplomacy and will we witness a new era of cooperative multilateralism?

This article argues that such hopes are ill placed because there is a deeply rooted scepticism within the U.S. about the efficacy and

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utility of some forms of multilateralism, in particular the UN system, which will linger on. This scepticism is neither – as is argued by structural realist theoreticians – the consequence of the Bush-Administration's neo-imperialistic temptation under conditions of unipolarity, nor is it a product of the neo-conservative ideology, as it is argued by liberal institutionalists. It is rather the consequence of frustrations over the inability of UN multilateralism to efficiently address the main international problems in the fields of security, trade, development, and climate change. What we will see is a growing readiness of the coming U.S. Administration to explore with their European and Asian allies ways to reform multilateralism that promise to be more effective. This will result in increased requests upon Europeans to assume added responsibilities and to upgrade burden-sharing. It is argued here that there is a high probability that this attempt will be frustrated, because most Europeans do not understand the nature of U.S. concerns about multilateralism and are unwilling to shoulder additional burdens. On the contrary, there is a high probability that the European belief according to which there are distinct differences between the European approach towards international affairs (civil power approach, open and inclusive multilateralism, limited resort to military instruments, cooperation with other multilateral fora, in particular the UN) will rather turn into ideologies that will be used in order to fend off critique focussing on the inability of Europe to address some of the main problems of today's world.

This paper proceeds as follows: In a first step the main concerns that have been voiced in the U.S. about multilateralism will be presented. From there, the crisis of multilateralism will be analysed. Differences between Democrats and Republicans will be also addressed. The paper then turns to the way Europeans conceive this debate and why so many in Europe have failed to understand the nature of the problem.

Differences between Americans and Europeans in the assessment of multilateralism have been discussed since the early 1990s. In

Europe they were interpreted as the consequence of the emergence of two fundamentally different political cultures: the U.S. was seen as the unipolar power, as the sole global superpower that was to shed off all constraints on its freedom of action, while the Europeans were credited with having devised an alternative way of dealing with international affairs, which was more peaceful and promising than the American one (Kantian approach). Another interpretation was that Europeans were already living in the Kantian world of cooperation, while the USA considered itself to be in a world of anarchy.

It is argued here that these differences rather have to be seen against the backdrop of different conclusions drawn from the international crises that occurred after the end of the East-West-conflict. Both Europeans and Americans found themselves in a period of surprise and irritation after the end of the Cold War in light of the fact that there were new regional conflicts to cope with. This was a period of grave failures in Western policy as well as of internationalism. These experiences caused a reshaping of U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. considers itself to be a global power of order (Ordnungsmacht) that is using multilateral cooperation as well as military instruments, whereby the selection is dependent upon it respective utility. In Europe the conclusions that were drawn were different. The European experiences of reconciliation after World War II as well as of the peaceful end of the Cold War were seen as a proof that any kind of traditional power politics does not pay off. As a consequence, Europeans tend towards civilian means of conflict resolution and towards a greater role of multilateral institutions. As the civilized means of multilateralism failed to yield results in the Balkans as elsewhere, the U.S. began to act more and more unilaterally, while the Europeans increasingly became concerned with U.S. unilateralism rather than with the problems themselves.

Multilateralism has been a tool of U.S. foreign policy since the 1920s and it has been devised and shaped by various Administrations. Indeed, most of today's existing forms of multilateralism go back to

initiatives by the U.S. Their creation was part of the U.S. led approach to reorganize international relations after World War II. The role of multilateralism was mainly seen as instrumental, i.e. multilateralism was conceived of as an instrument to achieve certain purposes and to solve problems, which otherwise might have a negative influence on international order. For U.S. diplomacy after WW II the resurrection of European economies, the re-establishment of a global financial system and of free trade as well as the containment of communism and of the Soviet military threat were the main concerns. Multilateral institutions were being measured according to their ability to contribute to the solution of these problems. Hence, the effectiveness of multilateral institutions moved into the center of attention. As a consequence, many global institutions were either abandoned (such as the League of Nations) or sidestepped. In some ways the United Nations became more or less irrelevant after 1947. Its main tasks – providing peace, free trade and protection of human rights – were effectively taken up by either Special Organisations (such as IMF and World Bank) that were under some form of control by the U.S. and its allies or by institutions outside the UN system (such as the GATT negotiations in the field of free trade or NATO in the field of security). What remained was a UN-system that was mainly a debating circle.

Despite its crucial role in bringing about multilateralism, the U.S. has never relied on multilateral institutions alone. Rather, all U.S. administrations – not to speak of Congress – have always been torn between the wish to act through multilateral institutions (which is difficult, but which holds the prospect of broad acceptance and legitimacy) on the one hand and the temptation to act unilaterally on the other hand, since this promises to be more efficient and rapid.[2]

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[2] Stanley Hoffmann, "The United States and International Organizations," in: Robert J. Lieber (ed.), *Eagle Rules? Foreign Policy and American Primacy in the Twenty-First Century* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall 2002), pp.342–352; see also Patrick Stewart (ed.), *Multilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy. Ambivalent Engagement* (Boulder Col. : Lynne Rienner 2002).

What made the Bush-Administration so peculiar was that it has tilt-ed radically towards unilateralism in a way unprecedented to date. However, unilateral tendencies were already there during the era of the Clinton-Administration. It was the consequence of deep felt frustrations over the international handling of regional crises.

When the East–West conflict was over in 1990, there was a broad international consensus that the UN should assume more responsibilities in the field of international security. The most relevant event was the summit meeting of the UNSC in January 1992, whose participants formally affirmed their intention to revive the so far dormant system of collective security with a central role of the UNSC. However, due to the fact that the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait had already shown the weaknesses of the Security Council when dealing with such a challenge, the wars in former Yugoslavia (Slovenia 1991, Croatia 1991/1992, and, worst of all, Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992–1995) demonstrated the inability of the system of collective defence to cope with such challenges. The same was true with the handling of Iraq under Saddam Hussein.

It was during this period that the respective debates in the U.S. and in most European states took different paths. While there have been no self-critical debates in Europe about the botched job done in the Balkans until this very day – except in the Netherlands where the performance of the Dutch battalion during the siege and fall of Srebrenica triggered off a thorough debate about the shortcomings of the UN approach – the discussion in the U.S. was much more to the point. In both parties and among the various think tanks the failures of international interventionism in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina were openly discussed. Among them, neo-conservative intellectuals and politicians provided the most radical criticism. They depicted the western approach as wrong and indecisive from the beginning and demanded a stronger U.S. leadership role in favor of freedom, democracy and human rights. These authors were very successful

in shaping the political opinion within the Republican Party, which, after November 1994, had won the majority in both Houses of the U.S. Congress. The main subject of criticism was the treatment of Bosnia-Herzegovina through the UN Security Council.

The skepticism of Republicans about the effectiveness of multilateralism grew in 1998, when Saddam Hussein – supported by France and Russia – tried successfully to reinterpret and eventually to shed off the constraints of the UN-disarmament regime. During spring and summer of 1998 the U.S. Congress conducted extensive hearings about Iraq during which almost all witnesses testified that – in light of Iraqi defiance and lack of support by key allies – there was no point in keeping up the UN inspection regime and that regime change would be the only option left. Based on these hearings Congress passed a legislation in consensus with the Senate and an overwhelming majority in the House in October 1998 – the Iraqi Liberation Act – which arrived to the conclusion that it was no longer useful to pursue the option of trying to disarm Iraq through the United Nations and that regime change was the preferred U.S. policy towards Iraq.[3] The coming to power of the second Bush administration further radicalized this skepticism. There was an influx of militant (neo-)conservative thinking on U.S. foreign policy unprecedented so far. These conservatives had always been the spearheads of criticism directed at the European allies. They also resisted international institutions and alliances, which were said to compromise the liberal goals the U.S. should pursue. The resultant invasion of Iraq, which was preceded by a deep international (and transatlantic crisis) marked the climax of U.S. criticism of multilateralism. It also marked a partial shift in the policy of the Bush-Administration, since failure to succeed in Iraq was now being attributed to its unilateralism. The experience of failed unilateralism brought the Bush-Administration towards multilateral institutions, mainly NATO and

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3   Iraq Liberation Act (*Public Law* 105-338) from October 31, 1998.

the IAEA. However, the readiness to cooperate remained limited. Skepticism towards global multilateralism remained. The Bush administration started to redo many areas of multilateral diplomacy with fervor unknown so far. This related mainly to the withdrawal from the Kyoto Climate Protocol as well as to the retreat from the negotiations on a verification protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention. Also the opposition against the International Criminal Court (ICC) has to be named here and many other instances where U.S. opposition to multilateral negotiation fora has become a source of rather constant irritation for Europeans.

The positions taken by Democratic politicians during these years were not significantly different as many had wished to see. Their positions towards the UN system were definitely more moderate than the ones taken by Republicans, but the UNSC was more than often criticized by Democrats for being unable to solve current international crises. Even a devoted multilateralist such as John G. Ruggie stated in 2003: "It is no exaggeration to say the United Nations today lacks the capacity to act predictably on its core mission: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."[4] Some leading thinkers of the Democrats suggested that it was better to invent a new international organization for dealing with security problems, for instance a community of democratic nations.[5] One can argue that there was definitely a larger readiness to look into the potential of multilateralism, but with a view to rather devise new forms of multilateralism than to stick to old ones, in particular to the clumsy UN-system.

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[4] John G. Ruggie, "This Crisis of Multilateralism is Different", Speech delivered at the UNA-USA National Forum on the United Nations, June 26, 2003, to be found on the website of the United Nations Association of the United States of America and the Business Council for the United Nations (www.unausa.org); see also John Van Oudenaaren, "What is 'Multilateral'?", *Policy Review*, No. 117 (February 2003), pp. 33–47.

[5] G. John Ikenberry and Ann Marie Slaughter: *Forging a World of Liberty under Law. US National Security in the 21st Century*. Final Report of the Princeton Project on National Security. Woodrow-Wilson School: Princeton University, September 2006.

The emotional way the debates over the regime change in Iraq were led in Europe and in the U.S. have rendered it extremely difficult to carry on a rational and balanced debate. In order to conduct this debate, one has to look at the main arguments brought forward by the more moderate critics of multilateralism in the US. The main criticism was directed at the system of collective security:

1 Collective security was said to be ineffective due to the lack of unity among the members of the Security Council, in particular in cases where astute dictators have tried to play out various big powers against each other.[6]

2 By the same token, the lack of consequentiality was being cited as a further weakness. Even in cases where the Security Council could agree on measures and sanctions against individual states, the implementation was usually considered to remain inconsequential and half-hearted.

3 As a corollary, the enormous potential of the UN system for strategies of evasion and buck-passing has been cited as particularly strong in the field of collective security ("evasive multilateralism").

The criticism against collective security has also spread to other forms of multilateralism. A lot of this critique was directed at multilateral negotiations:

• The original purposes of negotiations were said to have become compromised by the sheer nature of multilateral consensus seeking. Negotiations, it was argued, too often end up with results that do not reflect the original purposes and, even worst, have perverse effects (in particular in the field of

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6 C.f. Mohammed Ayoob, "Squaring the Circle: Collective Security in a System of States," in: Thomas G. Weiss (ed.), *Collective Security in a Changing World* (Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner 1993), pp. 45–62; see also Rosemary Righter, *Utopia Lost. The United Nations and World Order* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund Press 1995).

human rights). Instead of addressing and solving real problems, the results were often undue limits on the behavior of those states – most notably the U.S. – that have more international responsibilities than others.

- Multinational negotiations were said to tend towards trendy or lopsided solutions which are more than often Anti-Western or directed against the U.S. and Israel.

- The open and public nature of multilateral negotiations as well as the increasing involvement of NGOs was seen as another element of irritation, since both entail the danger of undue populism and erratic results.

But it is not only the nature of open multilateral negotiations that has caused concern among critics, rather existing international instruments and organizations have also become subject to criticism:

- International multilateral organizations, in particular the UN, were criticized to further incompetence and overspending. Mainly the principle of "one state one vote" as well as the principle of "equal regional distribution" was being called decisive in impeding the efficiency of international organizations.

- Multilateral organizations were also credited with being too slow and too ineffective because of their complicated procedural and institutional setup. It has often been argued that they show typical signs of bureaucratic inertia and the arrogation of overseeing rights.

- Multilateral organizations were said to show symptoms typical of large organizations, such as the tendency to become more concerned with themselves than with their environment or the tendency to forget about its original purposes.

European reactions to these arguments were quite negative, even when they were brought up by main-stream American politicians and scholars. In most parts of Europe the dominant view today is that multilateralism is the most important way to structure international relations and to address problems and challenges in many areas. Most European governments, as well as public opinion and pundits from academia, thus, have reacted to any kind of criticism on multilateralism with a dogged defense of multilateralism. One might even argue that the undiplomatic and often very arrogant behavior of the Bush-Administration was a good excuse for many European supporters of multilateralism to eschew a well-balanced debate about the advantages and disadvantages of multilateralism. Hence, a distinct form of European ideological thinking on multilateralism – as the opposite to the neo-conservative ideology of unilateralism – has set in. In face of the coming change in the U.S. presidency it is high time for Europeans to rethink multilateralism and to get engaged in an enlightened debate about multilateralism with the U.S.

A couple of European governments have already realized that there is a need to take the U.S. criticism of multilateralism into account. They have at least devised a formula of "effective multilateralism," which has found its way into the European Security Strategy of December 2003. They also point to the fact that the reform of the United Nations should bring about major changes. However, "effective multilateralism" so far has remained more or less a formula without any yardstick to measure effectiveness. The UN reform, in particular the reform of the security sector, has yielded only limited results. A reform of the UNSC has not taken place so far and it is doubtful whether change is possible or whether change is needed.

What is needed is an inventory of the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of multilateralism. There have been cases of successful multilateralism as well as cases of outright failure. In order to approach the issue of discerning between effective and less

effective variations of multilateralism it might be useful to discern between at least five different forms of multilateralism. For each of them the question of effectiveness puts itself in a different way:

1 **Collective security:** This is according to the UN Charter the main system for preserving peace (chapter 6 and 7 of the UN Charter); however, its effectiveness is being put into question.

2 **The multilateralism of international finance and trade:** These are institutions which usually have limited membership or un-equal rights and obligations, but which are usually credited with a relatively high performance (WTO, IMF, World Bank).

3 **Open functional multilateralism:** This type of multilateralism deals mainly under the UN umbrella with military and non-security-related aspects of international life. The agenda is, in principle, open ended and almost inexhaustible and, sometimes, unavoidably overlaps with collective security and multilateral trade institutions. Open functional multilateralism is based on the notion that states might prefer to solve common problems in a multilateral way. Meanwhile, the sheer number of fora for multilateral negotiations as well as multilateral conventions, organisations and regimes is hard to count. It is this type of multilateralism which most critics refer to when they talk about the ineffectiveness of multilateralism.

4 **Closed functional multilateralism:** Such forms of multilateralism have been developed as instruments to seek opportunities for international co-operation when open multilateralism has failed to yield results. NATO is a typical case in kind. Closed multilateralism often takes the form of directorates or a cartel. Typical examples are the Group of Seven (G7) and Group of Eight (G8), the various contact groups and the various export-control regimes (including the Nuclear Suppliers

Group [NSG], Australia Group, Missile Technology Control Regime [MTCR] and the Wassenaar Arrangement). As a rule, closed functional forms of multilateralism seem to yield better results than open functional forms of multilateralism.

5   **Epistemic multilateralism:** This type of multilateralism is the quasi-permanent co-operation that exists among like-minded states in a broad range of fields, such as the European Union (EU) and, to a lesser degree, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Epistemic multilateralism is usually credited as being the most effective one.

What is needed is a critical European debate about multilateralism that avoids both the uncritical support of all kinds of multilateralism (ideology of multilateralism) and the hypercritical disdain of any kind of multilateralism (ideology of unilateralism). This debate should also be led with American participation, since there the critical reappraisal of multilateralism has a much longer tradition. This debate should have the following items on its agenda:

• A sober and critical appraisal of the benefits and deficits of the different kinds of multilateralism under different conditions. This appraisal has to take into account experiences that were made during the past 20–30 years.

• The readiness to change existing forms of multilateralism, even to give up institutions and legal instruments if they turn out to be no longer efficient. This will be difficult to achieve, since there are many who cling to all kinds of multilateralism.

• The readiness to devise new and effective forms of multilateralism if the need arises. Again, this sounds easier than it is in reality, since many prefer existing institutions even if they have turned out to be ineffective.

- The acceptance that there is a trade off between effectiveness and legitimacy (participation). Accepting this trade off means it is sometimes extremely difficult to arrive at optimal solutions.

- The readiness to put into question whether there really is a need for a radical reform of the Security Council. One might rather argue that it is better to find solutions to the security problem by invoking functional default institutions (such as NATO).

- The readiness to devise new forms of multilateralism to deal with climate change. The current format of open functional multilateralism seems to be inappropriate to overcome the current impasses. ∎

ELF Conference, Helsinki, Finland:
The Future of Multilateralism

Restaurant Pääposti, Mannerheiminaukio 1 B, (room B5–6)

Tuesday 10 June 2008

14.00–14.20	Welcome to the conference / ***Alexander Lambsdorff***, President, ELF; ***Karina Jutila***, director, Think tank e2
14.20–14.40	The concept of multilateralism and the changing international environment / Professor ***Tuomas Forsberg***, University of Helsinki
14.40–15.00	The crisis of multilateral organisations at the start of 21th century / Professor ***Joachim Krause***, University of Kiel
15.00–15.20	Challenges for the UN as a guarantor for the international security and development / ***Kai Sauer***, Head of Unit, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
15.20–15.30	Questions
15.30–15.40	Break
15.40–16.00	Changing Nato / ***Antti Sierla***, Ambassador, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
16.00–17.00	Discussion
18.30–	Dinner hosted by Minister of the Environment, mrs. ***Paula Lehtomäki***

Wednesday 11 June 2008

9.00–9.30	Future challenges of the peace making processes / Executive Director **Kalle Liesinen**, CMI
9.30–9.50	Crisis management, Finland and EU / Minister of Defence **Jyri Häkämies**
9.50–10.00	Questions
10.00–10.20	Effective multilateralism in the future / ***Alexander Lambsdorff***
10.30–10.40	Questions
10.40–11.00	Break
11.00–12.15	Discussions in small groups and conclusion
12.15–13	Break (the General Assembly of the European Liberal Forum)
13.00–15.00	Lunch in the restaurant Loiste
15.00–16.00	Opportunity to visit the parliament (Eduskunta, which is at the distance of 200 metres from the restaurant)

This publication includes the major contributions taken from the speeches given at *The Future of Multilateralism* conference in June 2008 in Helsinki. It will provide the reader a more in-depth understanding of the importance of multilateralism and the challenges multilateral organisations are facing at the dawn of the 21st century.

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