



Center for Research and Policy Making

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MEASURING SUCCESS OF THE COMMON FOREIGN AND
SECURITY POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
IN THE CASE OF MACEDONIA *

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INTRODUCTION

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is one of the most widely discussed and analyzed policy areas of the European Union (EU). The development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) within the framework of the CFSP took place at the end of the '90s, in a process that interacted with the unfolding of the crisis of the Balkan regional order. Given this context, I believe that a study on the development of the CFSP/ESDP has to investigate how the EU Crisis Management instruments have been used. The crisis that occurred in the Republic of Macedonia, in this respect, is a case of critical salience. Macedonia is a specific case in which both the civilian and the military dimension of EU Crisis Management mechanism were applied, and there exists widespread consensus in the EU on the fact that this was done successfully. However, when talking about successes or failures, a number of slippery questions arise: what indicators of success can one refer to? For example, does success refer to the fact that the ESDP mechanism has been activated without major setbacks, or to the way in which it has affected the situation in Macedonia? Is the Macedonian case a success for the CFSP? How is success determined? Which are its standards of measurement?

I will start the analysis by asking: from where should the measurements come. One approach, which is set by Jørgensen¹, suggests three sources:

1. from the actors involved in the political process;
2. from outside observers; and, finally,
3. from some sort of combination of the two.

This three-folded approach calls attention on the relativity of ideas of success and failure, as well as on the presence of 'multiple realities' to measure the Union's performance in international politics.²

The aim of the following analysis is to determine the standards of measurement of EU CFSP and doing so, to determine the CFSP/ESDP success and/or failure while using the Macedonian case as an empirical one.

¹ Jørgensen, Knud Erik (1998). The European Union's Performance in World Politics: How should we Measure Success? in (ed.) Zielonka, Jan (1998) "Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy", *Kluwer Law International*, Chapter VI, pp. 89

² Saraiva, Miriam Gomes: The European Union as an International Actor and the Mercosur Countries, *EUI Working Paper* RSCAS No. 2004/14

IN SEARCH OF CRITERIA

It is very difficult to locate the criteria that measure the EU's performance in CFSP. Until now the academia did not find the criteria that will distinguish success from failure. Several factors influence this state of affairs.

The first reason for this condition is the extent to which one considers the CFSP/ESDP a success or failure which additionally depends on one's overall interpretation of the *nature* of the EU. If, for example, one is convinced that the EU tends to be a super-state with militaristic, imperialist ambitions, then the developments in CFSP/ESDP, including its so-called 'peace missions', are seen in a light of a power projection endeavour, and genuine successes may tend to be attributed to other external actors (e.g. the UN). If one is convinced that the CFSP is a necessary evolution of European political cooperation and ESDP an integral part of it, then developments in CFSP are welcomed and hailed as successful.³

Another very important factor when we speak about seeking the criteria for measurement is the question of *who is responsible to provide the standards or measurements*. The policy makers inside the EU as actors which are creating the CFSP itself or the success criteria should be externally

³ Common Foreign and Security Policy (2005). Ireland annual report, European Foreign Policy Research Network, FORNET

defined by actors that are not directly involved in the process of making the policy. Should we take the success as granted when the High Representative for the CFSP and Secretary-General of the Council of the EU Javier Solana is speaking about the CFSP in Macedonia? Is the success a real success when it is based on its self-made standards which does not provide any explicit terms of pros and cons in its analytical framework or should we argue that what we saw from CFSP in Macedonia is reactive conflict management rather than proactive conflict resolution.⁴ An external expressed point of view that drops a shadow on the self-proclaimed and so-called success of the CFSP in Macedonia.

METHODS OF MEASUREMENT⁵

History has shown that the success of one international policy, like EU CFSP for example, should be measured by its accomplishment in the Balkan region. Taking as an empirical case EU action vis-à-vis the Macedonian crisis, I will measure the success and/or failure of the CFSP policy thereat using the Jørgensen set methods of measurements⁶.

⁴ Gnesotto, Nicole (ed.), (2004). *European Union Security and Defence Policy - The first five years (1999-2004)*, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris

⁵ As I mentioned in the introduction, I will use the Jørgensen set common methods and apply the conflict in Macedonia as a case study

⁶ Jørgensen, Knud Erik (1998). *The European Union's Performance in World Politics: How should we Measure Success?* in (ed.) Zielonka, Jan (1998) "Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy", Kluwer Law International, Chapter VI, pp. 89

One common method of measuring EU's successes and/or failures is to use the Union's declared aims and objectives as a point of departure. The above mentioned declared aims and objectives concerning the CFSP are set in Title V in the Treaty on the European Union. They are as follows:

- to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- to strengthen the security of the Union in all ways;
- to preserve peace and strengthen international security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the objectives of the Paris Charter, including those on external borders;
- to promote international cooperation, and
- to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In the period that preceded the conflict, Macedonia represented a successful model of preventive diplomacy according to the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other international organizations for having managed to preserve the fragile interethnic equilibrium and for its hospitality

during the Kosovo refugee crisis.⁷ Indeed, the cooperation with the EU culminated when Macedonia became the first south-eastern European country to conclude a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). This is seen by all sides as a large success taken in consideration the fact that the end of the century saw a succession of wars in the Balkan area. However, the big influx of Kosovo refugees and the possible aftermaths were in general not predicted as a possible breaking point that will incorporate Macedonia in a crisis scene. It was the spill-over effect from Kosovo that threw Macedonia in conflict. In this context, it can be argued that very little was done to avoid this conflict, and that the attempts to deal with them were primarily much too unpersuasive. This reactive conflict management instead of proactive conflict resolution⁸ is seen here as a failure of CFSP in Macedonia.

An additional observation that any EU observer can extrapolate while analyzing the Macedonian case is the unpreparedness of the institutions to react on the arisen crisis. At the December 1999 Helsinki European Council meeting, EU member states set themselves a military capability target known as the Helsinki Headline Goal. It

7 See Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1213 (2000) "Honoring of obligations and commitments by 'the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' ". See also the OSCE Istanbul Summit Declaration of November 1999 (Art. 9) at: http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990_1999/summits/istadecl99e.htm

8 The list of the means at the European Union's disposal for the prevention of conflict is long: development co-operation and external assistance, trade policy instruments, social and environmental policies, diplomatic instruments and political dialogue, co-operation with international partners and NGOs.

called for EU member states to be able to deploy 60,000 troops, within 60 days and sustainable for a year in support of the Petersberg Tasks which include humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking (referred to as 'peace enforcement' in some contexts).⁹ The success and/or failure of CFSP depend exactly from the fulfillment of these headline goals. The obvious delay of their implementation had implication in a crucial moment on the ground. The EU only vowed political support for Macedonia as the Balkan nation was struggling with ethnic Albanian rebels, but it stopped short of suggestion sending western troops into the country. Instead, the foreign ministers of EU countries only issued a strongly-worded statement condemning the violence perpetrated by the ethnic Albanian rebels in Macedonia.¹⁰ They reiterated their "strong condemnation of the ethnic Albanian extremist attempts to destabilize Macedonia and the region."¹¹ The CFSP failed to deliver its capacities on the ground and with it directly influenced the further developments that have taken place. Note, for instance, how the former Development Cooperation Commissioner Joao de Deus

9 Lindstrom, Gustav (2006). The Headline Goal, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris

10 See Rory Carroll in Germon and agencies. The Guardian. Albanian rebels told to flee or die: Reinforcement arrive in the besieged city of Tetovo as the Macedonian army threatens a ground offensive backed by air strikes, Manchester (UK): Mar 21, 2001. pp. 14; see also Raymond Whitaker. The Independent. No talks with rebels, says EU security chief: [FOREIGN Edition] London (UK): Mar 21, 2001. pp. 13

11 See Xinhua News Agency. EU Vows Political Support for Macedonia, Brussels (BE): March 19, 2001

Pinheiro said in one speech on the future of CFSP, that: "prevention is better than cure, and that problems of peace and security should not only be addressed in a situation of high tensions or when violence and war have already started to take their devastating toll."¹² Almost two years after signing the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA), on March 31, 2003, the CFSP was ready to launch its first military peacekeeping mission under the Berlin Plus arrangement. Known as Operation Concordia, it succeeded to NATO's Allied Harmony operation. It consisted of roughly 350 personnel representing 27 different nations with access to NATO capabilities and assets.

In spite of everything said above one can not determine with a great dose of certainty if the CFSP involvement in Macedonia was a successes and/or failures taking in consideration the Union's declared aims and objectives as a point of departure. Attempting to go deeper into scanning the situation from this point of view could lead us to fruitless conclusions.

Secondly, even if these objectives are clearly stated problems may still arise when attempting to evaluate its success and/or failure. One very illustrative examples can be found in the pledge of the European Union in finding

12 Speech by Joao de Deus Pinheiro (1998). "Can EU Development Assistance Contribute to Peace and Security?" at the CESD/ISIS Conference on "The Future of EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy", Brussels

political solution of the crisis over the military one, of creating a grand coalition or 'Government of National Unity' from the main political parties. Although the Parliament overwhelmingly approved the new government, neither the general public, nor the political parties themselves believed in it. Instead, ones were inside the Government, they saw a chance of rehabilitation and consolidation of their bases of support on the road to the next elections. It was becoming more and more obvious, that the envisaged capacity of the grand coalition was overestimated by the CFSP. In reality, the imagined power base of the political process failed to deliver more courageous sort of reform agenda which meant discovering more effective ways for settling the political reforms frame.¹³ Moreover, there were more than few interventions by HR for CFSP Mr. Solana to save the coalition. In other words, the policy became an end in itself, rather than a means to a particular goal. Thus, the role of the grand coalition lost on significance and the President became the central political institution, instead of the Government.

This example clearly illustrates how one policy objective can change its previously planned role while the substance remains the same. Consequently, was the creation of the

13 Milososki, Antonio (2002). The EU's Foreign Policy towards Macedonia - The Crisis 2001 as a Real Challenge, Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

grand coalition a success or a failure? The answer is very easy - the question itself is wrong.

There are also examples when the policy outcomes perfectly match previously stated objectives, however, where the full achievement of objectives constitutes a policy failure. In clarifying this third approach in measuring the success and/or failure of CFSP, in my opinion, the operation Concordia as a conflict prevention policy can serve as an example. It contributed to the efforts to achieve a peaceful, democratic and prosperous country, as part of a region of stable countries, where an international security presence is no longer needed. The core aim of the mission was, to contribute further to a stable secure environment and to allow the implementation of the August 2001 OFA.¹⁴ According to the statements of high CFSP officials the mission was a success¹⁵ as it demonstrated quality, however, referring only to an evaluation of the command and control system, not real success according to the task facing the mission. Military support was visible but the political support to implement in full the Ohrid Framework Agreement was

¹⁴ See Council document 6916/03, EU-led Operation in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Master Messages, Brussels, 28 February 2003

¹⁵ As HR for CFSP stated while attending the ceremonies for termination of Operation Concordia and launch of Mission Proxima: "For the European Union it is a good day, as we have been able to contribute to this positive development in a country that is close to the Union and, after all my visits here, close to my heart. What started as the EU's first ever military mission is now successfully concluded".

missing.¹⁶ The limited policy outcomes of the mission entirely matched the stated objectives, but its achievements constitute a policy failure. In sum, conflict resolution requires the mobilization of political will. This is the bottom line in just about every area of public policy: unless the relevant decision makers, at the national or international level, want something to happen it won't.¹⁷ In this situation the lack of needed political will to make OFA a reality is seen as a failure of CFSP.

Altogether, this kind of one dimensional analytical procedure, when only the CFSP declared objectives are taken in consideration, leaves space for severe uncertainties in its attempt of measuring the success.

HOW SUCCESS IS EVALUATED BY ACTORS INVOLVED

Consequently, one additional approach appears appropriate. It will be evaluating the performance of CFSP from the perspective of actors involved. This means for instance the Macedonian case was seen as a testing ground for future CFSP/ESDP improvements, as a process of (institutional) learning by doing for the EU. Be that as it may, in line with a

¹⁶ Matthiesen, Peter H.: Macedonia and European policy, South-East Europe Review for Labor and Social Affairs (Baden-Baden), 7 (2004) 1, pp. 73-85

¹⁷ Speech by Evans, Gareth, President of the International Crisis Group (2007). Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Preventive Diplomacy in the 21st Century, University of Toronto, Peace and Conflict Society Conference Before the Crisis Breaks, Toronto

deep seated historical trend, events on the ground, notably in the Macedonian battlefield, have been shaping and structuring (and, in their turn, have been shaped and structured by) the external powers' policies, the novelty possibly being that one of such great power policies is an embryonic CFSP/ESDP belonging to a potentially supranational entity such as the European Union. To sum up, the conflict in Macedonia was perceived as a success for the CFSP. In contrast, the insights of the other actor, the Macedonian side as a country involved, the situation did have a chance not to emerge in an internal conflict if CFSP reacted in the beginning of the ethnic tensions. Although the Helsinki Headline Goals, in sense of Member States cooperating together on a voluntarily base will provide them with the capability for deploying rapidly were existing on paper, they were postponed on the ground due to unpreparedness of the institutions. From this perspective, the CFSP is seen as a failure due to more than 200 casualties¹⁸ and more than 170,000 people displaced.¹⁹ The question

18 Figures regarding casualties remain uncertain. By March 19, 2001, the BBC reported that Macedonian security forces claimed five of their soldiers were killed, while the NLA claimed it had killed 11. No definitive NLA casualty figures were cited at the time. On December 25, 2001, the Alternative Information Network cited figures of 63 deaths claimed by Macedonian security forces for their side and 64 deaths claimed by the NLA for their fighters. About 60 ethnic Albanians civilians are thought to have been killed (some say 1000) while possibly about ten ethnic Macedonian died during the conflict (Macedonian authorities did not release figures for the latter at the time, some say there were 500). As of December 2005, the fate of twenty "disappeared" civilians –13 ethnic Macedonians and six ethnic Albanians.

19 According to the Amnesty International Report 2002 for Macedonia, over 170.000 people were displaced at some time between March and August and over 50.000 remained displaced within Macedonia and in Kosovo by the end of September. People who left their homes were mainly from villages which fell under the control of the NLA

arises from the roots of this argument - what can an analyst articulate in a paradoxical situation like this one when the apparent success seen from one side is seen as a failure in 'reality' from the other side?

IN CONCLUSION

The fact that one dimensional analytical procedure leaves space for severe uncertainties in its attempt of measuring the success of CFSP; accompanied by the differently interpreted approaches of measurement from the actors involved, have lead me to the conclusion that the occurred problems are the aftermath of the absence of objective reference criteria.

Conceivably, as the first step in better understanding the CFSP performance and above-mentioned paradoxes, Jørgensen stresses out that an analyst should acknowledge the existence of '*multiple realities*'. The CFSP measurement analysis mirrors the fact that we are dealing with a moving object. One week's failure to prevent the outbreak of conflict in Macedonia may lead to next week's success in arranging a cease-fire.²⁰ Adding to this, how the question of success and/or failure is influenced by the time perspective or sustainability of the policy—was the OFA just an EU brokered agreement which will bring instant, but not

20 Cameron, Fraser. The Future of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, The Brown Journal of World Affairs, winter/spring 2003 - Volume IX, Issue 2, pp. 118

sustainable peace or a real endeavor to resolve the stacked inter-ethnic problems that will assure everlasting peace makes the measurement analysis even more complex.

Then again, measuring the success or failure of the EU's CFSP is indisputably difficult. Actually, even if the precise indicators are available, measuring policy outcomes and drawing political implications for the future is controversial at best.²¹

²¹ Ideas Factory Europe (2004). European Security: No Strategy without Politics, European Policy Centre (EPC)