The role of multilateral organizations

JOHN ROPER*

It has become fashionable to talk of the architecture of European security but I am not sure if this is a helpful analogy. There is a danger that to talk of architecture will give people the idea that we are able in 1990 to define a new plan for European security, starting from a clean sheet of paper, providing a new design, a UN building, a Tour Montparnasse. In fact the architecture of European security is much more likely to resemble a medieval fortress, the Castelo de São Jorge, or a medieval cathedral as the one here in Lisbon, a great success but made up of components from different periods and with different inspirations. What I believe we will see emerging will be effective institutional architecture, but it will not be the product of a single architect. Within it, there will be room, indeed a need, for various institutions to play their part. There will inevitably be institutional tensions between them, and considerable untidinesses. If one were starting from a *tabula rasa,* one would have something tidier but not necessarily more effective. In a period of transition and uncertainty it is useful to retain what is tried and tested until new structures become equally familiar and have gained in acceptability.

Before discussing the role of multinational organisations, we must define what are the challenges to European security in the final decade of this century and in the opening years of the next century. Two points need to be made at the outset, although perhaps it is less necessary to make these points on the banks of the Tagus than elsewhere in Europe. Unlike the situations in most of the rest of this century when challenges to security were more likely to occur in Europe initially and from there have a great impact on the rest of the world, in the coming period it is likely that it will be security challenges in the rest of the world which affect the security of Europe. To that extent it may be argued that the United Nations may have a larger role to play in the future and the European and transatlantic multinational organisations with responsibilities for security, NATO, WEU, EC, and in the future the CSCE, a relatively reduced role.

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* Director, WEU Institute for Security Studies

Secondly, we shall be dealing here not only with security in the narrow military sense of the word, but also in the much wider dimensions of economic and social security. We face challenges to the security of our societies not merely from hostile armed forces, which fortunately become more and more implausible, but from interruptions to the supply of essential raw materials and other economic inputs, from drug-dealers with their insidious products, from economic refugees attracted to the relative prosperity of our lands which contrast with the poverty which lies to the south and to the east of us in Western Europe. We will still need effective insurance policies to deal with the military challenges if they arise, and the events of the last few months suggest that this may have to include having some capability to deal with military challenges outside Europe as well as within it.

However, in looking at the development of the structures of the existing institutions and the creation of new institutions and the policy instruments with which they should be provided, the wider dimensions of security must remain very much in our minds. Such an analysis also shows us that given the growing relevance of economic security the European Community is already playing a central role in security issues. It is the European Community which makes collective decisions on economic sanctions, it is the Community by its power over aid and trade access to third countries which already controls key instruments of external policy and those of the security policy of the Twelve. To the extent that military aspects of security become relatively less important - and that in spite of Saddam Hussein is likely to be the trend of the future - the more central the Community will be to European security policy almost irrespective of what progress is made towards Political and Security Union.

The canonical challenge to European security has of course been the Soviet/Warsaw Pact challenge. In terms even of capabilities that has been significantly reduced by the *de facto* dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the progressive withdrawal of Soviet forces to the territory of the Soviet Union, and will be very considerably further reduced by the full implementation in 1994 of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. The position is of course further complicated at a time when to speak of the armed forces of the Soviet Union is itself liable to challenge. The progressive demands of the fifteen constituent republics and the growing threats of further ethnic conflicts between and within republics reduce still further the credibility of the traditional "threat".

That said, the history of empires in decline should warn us of the risks that may still occur both as a result of implosion having effects outside the territory of the Soviet Republics and because of the risks arising from civil war on the territory of a nuclear power. Even if there were to be a peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Republics the Russian Federative Republic with some 150 million people and most of the military cadres of the Red Army and the bulk if not all of the nuclear capabilities will still inevitably represent a large military potential for its European neighbours. The remaining years of the century are going to involve Western Europeans and North Americans combining apparently inconsistent policies towards the Soviet Republics; we shall both want to have series of cooperative policies to bring them into the club of European countries who share similar values and a set of insurance policies to be prepared if our and their endeavours to bring them into the club are unsuccessful. Will it be possible for governments or political parties of either side of the Atlantic to explain to our publics why we need this duality of policies?

The second set of challenges to European security in the political military area comes from the potential instabilities of the post-Communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe. The combination of economic stress, inexperienced democracies and nationalism linked to irredentism has in the past led to European instability. Western Europeans have in the last year been concentrating on the three countries referred to as the "hopeful triangle", Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic. The other three, Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria, may present even greater instabilities. At one level some Western Europeans may take the cynical view that while there may be instabilities these are unlikely to have any direct effect on our own security. The economic and social integration of Europe, even of Eastern Europe, is now however so great that no European state can afford such an insular view. Apart from the refugees which some conflicts would inevitably produce it is unlikely that we could in practice stand apart from such disputes within our continent. It is probably here that economic development and eventual membership within a common structure will help to alleviate these problems and eventually make the idea of war between these countries as implausible and indeed as impossible as it has become between the countries of Western Europe in the last forty years.

The third and last group of security challenges are those coming in broad terms from the South and in particular across the Mediterranean and from the Arab world. If there were those who doubted the relevance of these issues the events since 2 August should have persuaded them. Here, rather like the situation of the Soviet Union, we are going to need to combine a series of cooperative policies around the Mediterranean in parallel with a series

of insurance policies in order that we may, if the worst occurs, have a capability to defend ourselves. The proposal from Madrid and Rome for a Conference of Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) suggests a new multinational structure to provide at least for the cooperative policies. One of the great unresolved issues is whether, how and where the Europeans should discuss their contingency insurance policies.

In this changed strategic environment we must examine the role of the multinational organizations, but before doing so the question must be addressed whether the significant reduction in the 'clear and present danger' has or has not led to a reduction in the role of certain multinational organizations with much greater with much greater reliance on national defence policies.

It is more difficult to persuade Ministries of Finance or publics to maintain organisations for collective defence if there is not a visible threat. While an individual country can have a defence policy *à tous azimuths* against some currently hypothetical challenge it is a good deal more difficult to get collective agreement among sovereign states to do so within an alliance. The European Community in its transitional progress to a Political and Security Union is already more than an alliance with many of the instruments of external policy, but it remains to be seen how soon certain member states who place great importance on the symbolic values of national armed forces and the autonomy of national sovereignty in decision-making will be prepared to pool this element of sovereignty within a Community structure.

There is a regrettable tendency to pose false choices between the various multinational organisations. As was suggested at the outset we are likely to have a good deal of overlapping between structures in the next few decades. It is false, I would argue, to suggest one has to choose between CSCE and NATO; one is a future structure for collective security to develop cooperative policies among at least 34 states, the other a collective defence organisation to develop the insurance policies among 16 of them. It is not clear how CSCE will develop as a new collective security organization.

Despite the rhetoric which we shall no doubt hear at the Paris summit, most countries have relatively modest ambitions for CSCE. Several of the countries of Eastern Europe have significantly adjusted their expectations and believe that one must now proceed step by step in its development. In any case, CSCE and NATO are, at least for their members, complementary rather than competing organisations. It is similarly fallacious to pose a false

dilemma between Atlanticists and Europeans in order to force people to choose whether they are in the Sixteen or the Twelve. For the foreseeable future when Western Europeans are going to require a North American security commitment to Europe as part of their insurance policies they will require a political framework in which the purposes for which that military force of that Transatlantic Alliance could be used can be discussed. While they retain an ultimate nuclear component within their defence strategy they will also require an Alliance. The Community as it moves forward to Political and Security Union will gradually take responsibilities for more and more of the instruments of its common external policies. It may eventually become itself the European pillar of the Transatlantic Alliance. In the meantime there is no contradiction or conflict between their parallel responsibilities. They again have complementary functions. The path the Community will have to follow to Political and Security Union would be sufficiently complex if its membership were to remain with the present Twelve. It will be significantly more complicated if, as now seems almost certainly the case, the process of deepening is attempted in parallel with further widening of the Community. Some of the candidate members now presenting themselves are not members of NATO, and do not necessarily share the commitment of the present members to the security dimensions of a political union. Here WEU may have a useful residual and transitional role: it may be able to provide a framework for further deepening of security cooperation among certain of the Community partners thus simultaneously acting as the prototype for eventual security cooperation among the Community and a framework for the European pillar of the Alliance to develop. Again there is no contradiction between the shared goal for the absorption of WEU into the European Community and the belief that until the time for that has arrived WEU can provide an ideal place for political-military cooperation among those members of the Community and NATO who believe that such a European articulation can play a useful part.

It is not easy to find a tidy description for the relative role of these overlapping multinational structures during this period of strategic disentanglement and European institution-building. Perhaps the best analogy is the Russian nesting doll, Matroshka, where within the CSCE 34 you find at the next level the NATO 16. In turn within the NATO doll, you find the EC 12, and then finally within the Twelve you find the WEU 9. I am not sure I would want to be the doll-painter who produces this construction, but at least the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact has greatly simplified his task!

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