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Le pire des scénarios

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Directeur

Depuis le voyage de Georges Bush en Europe, et notamment sa visite historique dans les locaux du Conseil européen, un vent nouveau souffle sur les relations transatlantiques, et ce vent nouveau vient d'Europe : chacun des thèmes désormais repris en chœur par les responsables américains – les vertus du dialogue et de la négociation, le rôle de l'Union européenne dans le monde, l'importance des moyens d'action non militaires, etc. – semble en effet issu de la rhétorique diplomatique la plus européenne qui soit, telle que l'exprimait dès 2003 la Stratégie européenne de sécurité. Un tel hommage rendu à la pertinence des principes d'action extérieure de l'Union n'est pas si fréquent dans l'histoire des relations transatlantiques qu'il faille se dispenser de le noter. De la même façon, qui mieux que l'Union n'a cessé d'assimiler politique étrangère et promotion de la démocratie ? Après l'intégration des dix nouveaux membres et les perspectives ouvertes pour la plupart des autres pays européens, y compris à la Turquie, aux Balkans ou à l'Ukraine un jour, ce sont en effet près de 600 millions d'Européens qui se trouvent désormais inclus dans l'orbite géomagnétique de l'Union et soumis à toutes sortes de conditionnalité démocratique.

■ Ces réconciliations des discours européen et américain augurent-elles pour autant d'un partenariat également constructif dans l'action ? La réponse semble positive sur le Liban et sur l'Irak, où l'Union européenne s'est engagée à aider financièrement et concrètement le processus de transition ouvert par les élections du 31 janvier. En revanche, l'épreuve des faits ne semble pas encore concluante, ni sur le conflit israélo-palestinien, où Washington n'infléchit pas pour l'heure la politique de « settlements »

d'Israël, ni sur l'Iran, où le soutien américain à l'initiative européenne reste on ne peut plus rhétorique, ni sur certains dossiers multilatéraux (TNP, Cour pénale internationale, réforme des Nations unies) où les Etats-Unis maintiennent un syndrome unilatéral marqué de nominations spectaculaires.

■ 2005 sera donc une année cruciale et difficile pour la consolidation d'un partenariat global euro-américain. D'autant que le paradoxe est désormais frappant : alors que le président Bush a physiquement consacré le rôle international majeur que joue désormais l'Union européenne, les Européens eux-mêmes se prennent à douter. Les processus de ratification de la Constitution mobilisent très fortement plusieurs forces syndicales européennes contre ce qu'elles considèrent comme une orientation trop libérale de la construction européenne. Les forces « souverainistes » de tous bords militent, notamment en France, contre un projet de Constitution qui braderait à leurs yeux les nations sur l'autel du fédéralisme européen, rejoignant ainsi certains néo-conservateurs américains hostiles également à la Constitution parce qu'ils y voient l'amorce d'un Etat fédéral européen capable de concurrencer les Etats-Unis.

■ Le contresens est si énorme qu'on peut douter de la sincérité des arguments. Ni le Ministre des Affaires étrangères, ni le service d'action extérieure européen, ni les dispositions en matière de sécurité et de défense ne suppriment les souverainetés diplomatiques et militaires des Vingt-cinq, même si ces dispositions essentielles de la Constitution renforcent considérablement les capacités d'action et d'influence internationale de

Institute Activities

The Institute and the Union

■ On 7 March a seminar entitled 'The ESDP Contribution to the Fight Against Terrorism' (Gustav Lindstrom) was held in Brussels following an initiative by the Luxembourg EU presidency. Attended by officials, academics and military officers, it included a discussion by working groups of instruments used for prevention, protection and consequence management, support to third countries and cooperation with partners, the United States in particular, and with international organisations. The Minister for Defence of Luxembourg, Luc Frieden, opened the seminar.

■ The Director and the new Director of the EU Satellite Centre, Mr F. Asbeck, met at the Institute on 17 March to discuss the future of the two agencies.

Seminars

■ Given the importance of the EC's Green Paper on Defence Procurement of September 2004, on 21 January the Institute (Burkard Schmitt) held a conference on 'Towards a European Defence Equipment Market' to discuss the options for increasing intra-European competition in defence markets currently on the table.

■ On 27 January Dov Lynch hosted the NGO International Alert seminar 'From War Economics to Peace Economies'. This conference brought to the Institute the authors of a book entitled *From War Economies to Peace Economies in the South Caucasus* (published by International Alert UK) to present their work on the dynamics between economy and conflict in the South Caucasus to a European audience and to discuss proposals to alter the status quo.

■ With the debate on reform of the United Nations in mind, a seminar on 'The EU and the UN: implementing effective multilateralism' (Martin Ortega) was held at the Institute on 21 March. Three issues were discussed: the EU's contribution to the UN's purposes and principles; EU-UN cooperation in peacekeeping; and UNSC reform.

Task Forces

■ A first meeting of the Institute's Task Force on the Middle East (Walter Posch) was held in Paris on 14 February to debate 'Iraq after the elections'. Topics examined included the policy of the new US administration, an evaluation of the elections, the status of northern Iraq and the EU's next steps. A *Chaillot Paper* based on this meeting will be published in June.

Institute publications

Chaillot Papers

■ *No. 76: Information security – a new challenge for the EU*, by Alain Esterle, Hanno Ranck and Burkard Schmitt; edited by Burkard Schmitt (March).

■ *No. 75: EU security and defence. Core documents 2004*, (February).

■ *No. 74: What Russia sees*, by Dmitry Danilov, Sergei Karaganov, Dov Lynch, Alexey Pushkov, Dmitri Trenin and Andrei Zagorski; edited by Dov Lynch (January).

ESDP

The Institute has published Italian and Spanish versions of *EU Security and Defence Policy – The first five years (1999-2004)*.

Seminar Papers

■ Papers presented at the second Institute seminar organised with an institute in a new EU member country (Riga, 17-18 September 2004) have been published by the Latvian Institute of International Affairs as *New Security Challenges and EU Responses*, edited by Atis Lejins and Antonio Missiroli (online at www.lai.lv).

Forthcoming

■ *Occasional Paper: The democratic legitimacy of European Security and Defence Policy*, by Wolfgang Wagner.

■ *Occasional Paper: L'Union et l'Afrique subsaharienne: quel partenariat ?*, by Roland Sourd.

■ *Towards a European defence equipment market*, a report by an independent task force chaired by Burkard Schmitt.

Institute staff

– Jean-Yves Haine left the Institute in March for a research fellow post at the IISS, London.

– Truike De Moor joined the Institute as a secretary.

– Marcin Zaborowski (Polish) will join the Research Team on 1 May.

External publications

Nicole Gnesotto

– 'Reconsidering the future', *EuroFuture*, Spring 2005

– 'Legitimidad interna sin legitimidad externa', *Foreign Policy* (Edición española), no. 6, December-January 2005.

Gustav Lindstrom

– 'New Global Challenges: the "Hard" side', in *New Security Challenges and EU Responses* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, September 2004).

Dov Lynch

– "'The enemy is at the gate": Russia after Beslan', *International Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 1, January 2005.

Antonio Missiroli

– 'Dopo la Costituzione, una politica estera comune', *Il Mulino*, 1/2005.

– 'New Global Challenges: the "Soft" side', in *New Security Challenges and EU Responses* (Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, September 2004).

Missions on the ground

In the first two weeks of February, Dov Lynch did in-depth field work in Georgia and in its breakaway region of Abkhazia. He also undertook several other non-conference related missions, including private consultation with the Slovenian Foreign Minister, D. Rupel, before his visit to Moldova as Chairman of the OSCE. Dov Lynch also helped facilitate high-level dialogue meetings between Georgia and the separatist authorities of South Ossetia in March.

Research awards

Visiting Fellows

During the period January to March the following studied at the Institute as visiting fellows:

– Régine Serra (Portuguese), whose research topic was 'Europe-Japon: outils pour renforcer le dialogue stratégique'.

– Islam Yusufi (from FYROM), 'EU police missions and institution-building in the Balkans'.

Associate Research Fellow

The Institute's second associate research fellow, Agnieszka Nowak, is spending five months at the Institute. Her area of expertise is EU civilian crisis management capabilities.

Middle East: a fragile momentum

Have we reached a turning-point in the political history of the Middle East? Recent events would certainly suggest so. They result from foreign intervention and domestic change, which have affected the respective countries to different degrees, depending on how far democracy was already in place. Carefully supported, democracy could develop further, thus enhancing stability in Europe's neighbourhood. At the same time, we should take note of two interrelated realities: the trend towards democracy and the powerful rise and reinforcement of Islamism, Shia Islamism in particular. This is especially the case in Iraq, but is it also true for the rest of the region?

■ The municipal elections in Saudi Arabia are the best example of democracy starting in even the most conservative political environment. These elections were the first experience of the democratic process for the people of Saudi Arabia, so the very fact that they took place is more significant than their obvious flaws (such as the exclusion of women from participation and half of the seats still being filled by appointees). Although many observers have expressed disappointment at the outcome – Islamist-backed candidates won most of the seats – this needs to be seen in the Saudi context: the ongoing reform process requires political dexterity, as too much too fast could lead to the collapse of the whole process and cause more instability.

■ Reforms are the main issue for Palestinians too. The elections bestowed a robust mandate on Mr Abbas, who is committed to overcoming the legacy of corrupt misrule that has crippled the reputation and functioning of the Palestinian Authority. Moreover, there is now a real chance of a new start to the peace

process by reviving the 'road map' because he is a partner acceptable to both the United States and Israel. While Abbas has slender chances of reining in extremist groups, Hamas has recently announced its willingness to participate in the elections scheduled for July 2005, thus indicating for the first time a change in policy from obstruction towards democratic competition.

■ Although the protests in Lebanon highlighted the cleavage between the anti-Syrian westernisers and the pro-Syrian Islamist-oriented layers of society, they can also be seen as an exercise in democratic competition. On the one hand, the anti-Syrian protests were successful in building up enough pressure to win the international support necessary to force Syria to start to withdraw its troops. On the other, the rallies organised by pro-Syrian, pro-Iranian Hezbollah left no doubt that this party is still an actor to be reckoned with. Hence, what is important is not the question of who was stronger in the showdown of mass rallies, but the fact that millions of Lebanese on both sides of the political divide took to the streets in a peaceful manner. This proves that the country has finally overcome its civil war legacy.

■ Positive as the developments in Saudi Arabia, Palestine and Lebanon are, Iraq presents a rather gloomy picture. True, many Iraqis showed impressive resistance to the threat of terror and went to cast their ballots, electing a National Assembly dominated by moderate Shia Islamists. But the population is split into three ethno-religious segments that could become the fracture lines of future clashes. However, a total breakdown of the situation is not inevitable as long as the victorious Shia majority continues shrewdly to eschew harsh reactions against the various attacks aimed at Shia

representatives and civilians. Nevertheless, it would be naive to assume that the problem of sectarian tensions or the question of Kurdish autonomy will be solved any time soon.

■ It is difficult to see how Iraq can start functioning as a state amidst the ongoing insurgency, and helping the future government to quell the resistance is not enough. Iraq will need further commitment and support, both politically and economically. The EU has already allocated funds for reconstruction and has signalled willingness to assist in the process of drafting the constitution. Operation EUJUST-LEX is about to provide top-level training for 770 individuals in the police, judiciary and prison service. The mission adds critical value to other efforts by the Commission, member states and international actors like the UN and NATO.

■ The success or failure of Iraq's transition will affect the region as a whole. To prevent collapse, rational and constructive cooperation among all parties involved is the key. This cooperation has to include hitherto critical neighbours such as Iran, which, with its strategic position greatly strengthened, is a net beneficiary of the toppling of Saddam Hussein. But whereas Tehran insists on a place as a respected member of the international community, it is also the main supporter of Islamist movements in Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon. A decision by Iran to abide by its obligations under the NPT Treaty would help to give a positive shape to its future relations with the rest of the world. In the final analysis, no matter how reluctant the parties are to engage, the fragile momentum to promote democracy in the region is now under way and Tehran has some interest in providing critical support.

Walter Posch

Briefings

On 14 March the research team briefed a group from the Swedish National Defence College.

On-line/http

All of the Institute's publications and reports on seminars can be accessed on the Institute's website:

www.iss-eu.org

The Balkans: getting serious about conditionality

2005 could be a 'make or break' year for the EU's strategy in the Balkans. By accepting Croatia as a candidate at last December's European Council, the EU confirmed its Thessaloniki commitment to the whole region. This was intended to give hope to the rest of the region and to help insulate it from the potential fallout of the discussions on Kosovo's 'final status' expected later this year.

■ Yet once again, a spanner has been thrown into the works: Carla del Ponte, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia no longer believes that Croatia is 'fully cooperating'. She is not convinced by Croatia's efforts to arrest General Ante Gotovina, the last remaining indictee that Croatia must deliver. Most EU member states share her opinion, but dissenters argue that the Council's decision in March to postpone accession negotiations will damage the fragile momentum of reform throughout the region.

■ The failure of Serbia-Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina to cooperate adequately with the ICTY has much delayed their progress towards the EU. Late last year, High Representative Paddy Ashdown again wielded his draconian powers to sack obstructive officials – to some effect, as Bosnian Serb indictees are now arriving in The Hague. Serbia went through a dismal winter of deadlock and tension while Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica stubbornly refused to arrest several indicted generals, a key condition for the Commission to conclude a positive Feasibility Study. Serbia-Montenegro is the only country in the Western Balkans still not even at the starting blocks of EU integration.

Serbia was taken aback in March by the example set by Kosovo's Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, whose prompt and unequivocal surrender to the ICTY won international praise for Kosovar 'political maturity'. The prospect of losing more ground in the battle over 'final status', combined with the threat to further delay the Feasibility Study, led Serbia finally to lean on a number of its key indictees, who are now in The Hague (although the prime suspects, Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, remain at large). This could be enough at last to bring Serbia-Montenegro onto the EU track.

■ So conditionality works – but at a price. Haradinaj's resignation has deprived Kosovo of its most effective political leader just when it needs to focus on preparing for 'final status' discussions. Croatian public support for EU membership has fallen below 50 per cent, and the Government may now face a nationalist backlash. Serbian support for EU integration is around 75 per cent – but most Serbs do not recognise the link with ICTY compliance, which some 60 per cent oppose. International pressure on Serbia has helped make the extremist Radicals (whose leader is in The Hague) the most popular party, supported by about a third of voters. Nor has the EU itself gone unscathed, as the ICTY issue has exposed divisions among the member states.

■ Because unity is crucial to the EU's credibility in the Western Balkans, it is worth reminding ourselves of the rationale for insisting on cooperation with the ICTY:

▶ *Justice.* Durable peace and reconciliation in the region will not be possible if the key figures responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity

are allowed to go unpunished.

▶ *Political stabilisation.* Removing the most troublesome characters from the political scene lifts the burden of 'collective guilt' from nations, allowing them to draw a line under the past and move forward faster with vital reforms, especially in the military and security sectors.

▶ *Rule of law.* ICTY compliance is an international obligation of all UN member states. Evidence of the political will – and the capacity – to comply is a key indicator of the existence of the rule of law, in the absence of which a state cannot be a credible EU candidate, capable of implementing the obligations of membership.

■ It is hard to see much room for 'flexibility' on ICTY compliance – either they do, or they don't. The ethical principles involved are fundamental to the EU's purposes.

■ Croatia has come a long way in cooperating with ICTY – and has been duly rewarded by 'promotion' to accession candidate. Precisely because it is now so far advanced, the EU demands the highest standards before starting accession negotiations. Croatia's candidate status is indeed a powerful signal to the rest of the region – but so is the EU's demonstration that it takes its own conditionality seriously and applies it even-handedly. This is especially important for Serbia, always ready to complain of victimisation and bias. Developments in recent weeks have confirmed the importance of the EU's 'regional approach' to the Western Balkans – rewarding individual states on merit, while recognising the political interconnectedness of the region. The ball is now in Croatia's court.

Judy Batt

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l'Union. C'est même en ce domaine de la politique étrangère et de défense que la Constitution apporte, par rapport au Traité de Nice, une plus-value majeure, s'agissant de la cohérence des actions extérieures, de la rapidité des décisions et des mises en œuvre, de la capacité du Ministre à susciter du consensus politique entre les Etats membres, et entre ceux-ci et les partenaires extérieurs dont, au premier chef, les Etats-Unis. Le moment où les Etats-Unis eux-mêmes

en appellent au soutien politique, financier, diplomatique de l'Union dans la stabilisation des crises internationales peut-il être celui où les Européens préféreraient finalement la paralysie, voire l'autodestruction collective ? Existe-t-il d'ailleurs pire scénario pour la stabilité internationale que celui où coïncideraient, aux Etats-Unis, un retour à l'unilatéralisme sans contraintes et, en Europe, un sabotage politique sans limites ? ■