

EUROPEAN UNION'S ENLARGEMENT AND EFFECTS TO INTERNATIONAL SECURITY¹

Ramazan ERDAĞ²

Abstract

Security studies have gained new perspectives since end of the Cold War. With new concepts, threat perceptions changed, alliances and unions have become mandatory. On the other hand countries' different perception of terrorism weakened fight against it. The new security regime points out that states and groups have to move in a coherent manner against security threats. In the new era, security could not be provided without collaboration.

With collapse of USSR new states have appeared in the world arena and, they needed to be secure against former states. In this context Eastern Europe states gained independency against USSR and after dissolving Warsaw Pact these new nation-states first joined NATO and than European Union (EU). This integration assisted widening of democracy and peace and prevented probable conflicts in the region relatively. Global terrorism begun to threaten not only a country or region but also almost the entire world after 9/11. Especially developing and underdeveloped countries are the most effected.

EU, the most important unification in the world, enlarged six times before reaching its current 27 members. It has got ten new member countries in 2004 and two countries at the beginning of 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania). Croatia has completed the negotiation process and will join the EU in mid-2013. The official candidate status has been granted of Turkey, Serbia, Macedonia³, Iceland and Montenegro. EU's enlargement got together the countries which were enemies at past. Today these countries share common values and try to

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² Assist.Prof.Dr., Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Department of International Relations, Eskisehir/TURKEY, ramazanerdag@yahoo.com.

³ Turkey recognizes Republic of Macedonia by its constitutional name.

implement same policies. Especially after terror attacks in London and Madrid, Europe has needed more contribution to solve terror problems. In this context this study aims to indicate the function of enlargement of EU on international security issues and the importance of alliance against global terrorism. The peacekeeping operations showed the role of EU on establishing faith and stability and providing international security in the world.

Keywords: European Union, Enlargement, International Security.

Introduction

In the contemporary context, security questions are the primary concern of most countries. Comparing to those of the past, present day security issues are more complex and are generally called dilemmas. Arguments in security studies typically focus on questions such as whose/what's security? Who/what provides security? Against whom/what can security be provided? And how can security be provided? Due to these new conceptions, the precautions taken against threats have been changing. Preventing conflicts and solving problems to ensure international security and stability require greater collaboration and unification. The 9/11 terrorist attacks and others in Europe and Turkey have demonstrated this reality. In this regard, the EU is one of the most important international security actors.

In this study, firstly past and new security perspectives will be given to explain recent security issues. These new conceptions of security and changes in the perceptions of threats will give us clues to find out the new proposals. Then the study will examine the structure of EU and give brief information about EU's security and enlargement policy. This article will also stress the importance the role of EU and the enlargement of EU on international security. In this context the article focuses on EU-with completing the enlargement process- as a global actor and stability component.

Changing security perceptions in the world

Early security concerns were primarily state-based. In the process of founding nation-states, the primary requirement was that its structure and organization were strong. Realists in particular argued that the citizens of a state could only be secure if the state itself was powerful and secure. According to this argument, security referred to military force. '...in anarchy, actions taken for one's own security can threaten the security of others, leading to arms races, conflict and war. The fundamental cause of the security dilemma is uncertainty'

(Mitzen, 2006). Security is affected by the actions of other actors, and every country has the right to use force to maintain its own security. Resorting to an arms buildup seemed to be the proper response to international arrangement during the Cold War. Following the collapse of the bipolar world order, threat perceptions have changed.

New Security Concepts

Security does not have a single meaning but is a complex issue. The dictionary definition of secure is “free from danger”, but security cannot be described easily. Parallel to the developments in IR theory, new approaches to security theory have emerged. In this context, new descriptions and perspectives were advanced. For instance, according to social constructivists, security is generated through mutual interactions between individuals and their collective identity with respect to another and is produced rather than consumed. Additionally, security is provided via saving and developing international culture and values. According to Immanuel Kant (and democratic peace theory), democracies are less warlike than countries with other forms of government and do not go to war with one another.⁴ Postmodernist security theory contends that to understand security, prior definitions must be examined and criticized and alternatives have to be proposed. However, Critical Security Studies claims that security cannot be described beforehand and is a derivative concept (see Booth, 2005). For instance, on 9/11 buildings collapsed and people died, but what does this mean? What did the World Trade Center symbolize (capitalism, US pride)? What were the attackers’ aims?

It can be said that security studies have shifted from a state-centered approach to one focused on the individual. As the new security concepts demonstrate, democracy and peace are the goals of security and stability. Collaboration and cooperation are the most important elements of security.

After the Cold War and Post-9/11

After the Cold War, the EU began to play important roles in the international arena. However, its role has differed from that of other actors. Whereas the United States was aggressive and exercised hard power, the European Union has employed soft power (see

⁴ (See, Bruce Russett and Zeev Moaz (1993) ‘Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace’, *American Political Science Review*, 87, 624-638., also, Edward Newman (2001) ‘Human Security and Constructivism’, *International Studies Perspectives*, 2, 239-251., Ted Hopf (1998), ‘The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory’, *International Security*; Vol.23, No.1, 171-200.)

Rehn, 2007 and Haine, 2004). A comparison of the US National Security Strategy⁵ (September 2002) and European Security Strategy (2003) demonstrates the US's use of hard power. However the EU's security concept is quite different from that of the US and stresses the importance of not only military but also economic and civilian measures. Following the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the Eastern Block countries began to achieve independence and first joined NATO and then the EU. In the past, some countries that are now EU members were enemies and fought one another. Moreover the new EU member states, the so-called small states, have been among the most threatened. By the end of the Cold War, the project of European integration emerged as a nearly ideal security organization for the region's small states. For centuries, the security of Europe's small states⁶ had been threatened by the region's great power wars (Wivel, 2005). The integration of these states into the EU has begun to reduce such threats. The EU primarily contributed to international security in Europe by accepting new member states and especially small states.

In the post-9/11 era, the world is confronted with more dangerous and complex situations (see Haine, 2004). Because terrorism and terrorist networks are poorly understood, there is the potential for a terrorist attack anywhere, from a train station to the subway, and the bomb may even be concealed in a garbage can. Following 9/11, terrorist attacks have begun to threaten the entire world. The events in the US followed by the attacks in London, Madrid and Istanbul are evidence of this new security threat.

I discussed the differences between US and EU security concepts above, but following the attacks in Europe, the EU has become increasingly concerned about its own security. As Haine (2004) noted, the EU had understood security from the perspective of soft power because it had been at peace. In the immediate aftermath of these attacks, precautions were increased and the following questions became increasingly relevant: How can terrorism be combated? Should military force be employed? And will such efforts restrict the freedoms and rights of individuals? In the wake of 9/11, the question of which actions should be taken against terrorism demanded increased international attention. "If we consider security as a

⁵ It's also known as *Bush Doctrine*.

⁶ (The concept of 'small states' is contested in the study of international and European politics. There is no agreement on how to define a small state or what behavioral characteristics may be seen as typical, except for the general tendencies for small states to adapt to – rather than dominate – their external environment and seek influence through membership of international institutions, Anders Wivel (2005) 'The Security Challenge of Small EU Member States: Interests, Identity and the Development of the EU as a Security Actor' *JCMS 2005*, Volume 43. Number 2. pp. 393-412.)

matter of dialogue, exchange, trust building and civilian action more than military superiority, then the EU has a role to play” (Charillon, 2005: 522).

International Organizations and International Security

As Emma Rothchild (1995) stressed, “security is an objective of individuals, but can only be achieved in a collective or political process”. Security demands collective action. In this context, international organizations have been charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing common frameworks, decisions and policy. In other words, countries craft consensus and implement common outcomes within a single framework, or at least attempt to do so. Such actions help to overcome problems and resolve conflicts.

International organizations have assumed responsibility for global security. The key factor in resolving conflicts and establishing security is organizing for a common goal. In this regard, the United Nations, NATO, and the EU are the primary focus of international debate. Whereas international organizations and unions such as the EU were initially concerned about economic and financial issues, as they expanded, they began to address security issues to a greater extent. “We live in a world that is not only full of dangers and threats, but also one where the nature of the adversities are better understood, the scientific advances are more firm, and economic and social assets that can counter these menaces are more extensive. Not only do we have more problems to face, we also have more opportunities to deal with them” (Sen, 2000: 2). The enlargement of unions or organizations created security concerns, for instance, customs security, drug smuggling, illegal immigration, etc. Because these concerns arise when economically weak countries join unions such as the EU, they face difficulties integrating with the union.

The Balkan wars and regional conflicts also demonstrated the importance of international organizations. The EU has played an important role in peacekeeping operations. EU member states contributed resources and deployed military assets in combat areas during the operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Afghanistan and Iraq. Following the decision of the UN Security Council, EU military and civilian assistance have been effective in promoting regional security in the Balkans. The war and subsequent conflicts in the Balkans have been of particular importance for the EU, as this region is the middle of Europe and, hence, the EU has to address these problems to ensure that the conflict is resolved instead of becoming worse.

The role of the EU in the security agenda: the EU's development toward becoming a global force

The European Coal and Steel Community, the predecessor to the EU, was founded in 1950. The founding members of the EU were Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. In the first round of enlargement in 1973, Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom joined the union. Greece became an EU member in 1981; Portugal and Spain joined in 1986; Austria, Finland and Sweden followed in 1995; ten additional countries became member states in 2004; and the 2007 accession of Bulgaria and Romania brought the total to 27 member states. Croatia has been granted membership, and Turkey, Serbia, Iceland, Montenegro and Macedonia are candidate countries. "In fact, the economic advantages deriving from the EU's enlargement process are not spectacular, at least not in the short term. Thus, the main objective of the enlargement process is political" (Smaghi, 2002:63). "As a union of 25 states⁷ with over 450 million people producing a quarter of the world's Gross National Product (GNP), the European Union is inevitably a global player... it should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world... Europe should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world" (European Security Strategy, 2003: 1).

When the EU accepted ten new member states in 2004, most of them were former Eastern Block countries. The primary concern regarding the accession of these countries was the preservation of sovereignty and preventing a new polarization. This is because they were not only joining the EU but were also joining NATO, which presented a security dilemma, as Russia did not favor the expansion of NATO in Europe. It is interesting that after the Cold War, it was assumed that NATO would dissolve, but it instead expanded, especially in Europe. This represented a threat to Russia, as it did not wish to see NATO expand to its borders. However, Michael C. Williams and Iver B. Neumann (2000, 386) assert, "NATO enlargement will actually deliver on the promise of a more and more inclusive democratic security community within which Russia will one day be included".

It is obvious that the enlargement of the EU promoted international stability and peace, but there are, however, occasionally disagreements among the member states – as was exemplified by the debate over the EU constitution. "Enlargement has proved to be the most important instrument of the EU's soft power. The quest for EU membership has driven democratic and economic reforms forward more effectively than any rod or sword could. An

⁷ As of 1st January 2007 27 member states.

area of peace and freedom has spread out across virtually the whole of Europe thanks to the EU's soft power. By taking on new members, the EU has spread democracy much more successfully and cost-effectively than the Americans in Iraq” (Rehn, 2007: 2).

The EU is among the most successful organizations and must continue the enlargement process without hesitation. At present, the EU has 27 member states that joined in six rounds of enlargement, but the most important step in the enlargement process will likely be Turkey’s accession. With Turkey’s membership, the EU will truly represent a unified Europe, improve democracy in Turkey and help to spread democracy. Moreover, the EU will become an alliance of different cultures and civilizations. “Europe needs Turkey as a safety anchor in one of the most unstable areas of the world. Turkey is a model of democracy in the Islamic world. It can also help to turn the clash of civilizations into dialogue and coexistence” (Rehn, 2007: 3). Although there are objections to Turkish membership, accepting Turkey will afford the EU the opportunity to gain dynamic and young people. Turkey’s membership will also aid in the search for solutions to issues such as those in the Aegean and Cyprus. These international security issues will be discussed effectively and constructively among the member states under a common organizational framework. The union also typically attempts to avoid internal conflicts, which will prompt EU leaders to convince the parties to such disputes to come to reasonable solutions. Accepting Turkey as an EU member state will also accelerate these processes and will make the EU a truly Global Actor.

Moreover, the EU wishes to found its own armed forces (EUROCOR). Studies on the feasibility of EUROCOR have yet to be complied, but some critics claim that such an EU army would represent an alternative to NATO. However, most European countries are simultaneously NATO members, which are why this proposed force should not be perceived as a NATO competitor but, on the contrary, could work in cooperation with NATO.

The EU is one of the most important organizations in the world and, for those states participating in the monetary union, has a common Central Bank and a common currency⁸-the Euro. The EU is currently working to ratify a common constitution. When admitting new member countries, especially small countries, the EU provides economic aid to assist in their integration. This also helps to prevent what otherwise would likely have been failures. Given these characteristics, we consider the EU to be a potential new Global Force, and the EU has

⁸ United Kingdom, Denmark and Sweden have not joined money union.

demonstrated its commitment to addressing international problems and security issues such as the Arab-Israeli conflict⁹, the Balkan Wars, Afghanistan and Iraq.

EU Security Policy

“The changed security paradigm, the symbolic starting point, which, for many, was the attacks of September 11, 2001, has given new momentum to the development of a common security perception and identity among Western European countries” (Kardaş and Yeşiltaş, 2007: 4). As stressed in the European Security Strategy (2003: 1), “no single country is able to tackle today’s complex problems on its own”. In this document, the EU evaluates the new security situation as “more diverse, less visible and less predictable” (European Security Strategy (2003: 3) and classifies Terrorism, the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Regional Conflicts, State Failure, and Organized Crime, in addition to competition over energy resources. To address these security issues, the EU has developed three important strategies: first, continuing to develop cooperative efforts with the U.S. to disrupt terrorist financial and assistance networks to reflect the reality of the post-9/11 world; second, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and third, addressing regional conflicts and preventing state failure. In pursuit of these aims, the EU emphasizes the role of international treaties and calls on other countries to contribute to these efforts.

The EU clearly supports anti-terrorism activities and related security efforts and therefore entertains the notion of expanding the European Union’s borders and continuing the enlargement process. “Enlargement has also been described as extending the project of establishing peace within the Union, to old enmities in eastern and central Europe” (Quille, 2004: 426).

International Security and the EU

The aims of international security are to combat terrorism, resolve regional conflicts, and establish peace and stability in the world. These goals can be achieved via international treaties and agreements among international organizations and unions. To succeed, every country has to contribute efforts and to obey the rules and agreements. Thus, the EU can be considered to be a component of this process. The EU’s security concerns and activities reflect the realities of the new era. Most countries share nearly identical concerns and seek the same goal, international cooperation and support for anti-terrorism efforts. “This is a world of new dangers but also of new opportunities. The European Union has the potential to make a

⁹ To end Arab-Israeli conflict is described as EU’s a strategic priority in European Security Strategy document,

major contribution, both in dealing with the threats and in helping realise the opportunities. An active and capable European Union would make an impact on a global scale. In doing so, it would contribute to an effective multilateral system leading to a fairer, safer and more united world” European Security Strategy (2003: 14).

Conclusion

After the end of the Cold War and in the post-9/11 era, the world faces new security threats. In this new era with its new security perceptions, new security approaches have been suggested, which were discussed above, and it is nearly impossible for a country to overcome these challenges and solve problems alone. The struggle against terrorism and efforts to create a more secure world demand greater international attention. Thus, unions and organizations are important elements of the international order. The need for common politics and consensus can be achieved by well-organized and successful organizations and unions. One of these unions, the EU, as a potential global actor, is becoming an important contributor to international security. The enlargement of the EU has had positive effects on the international community by spreading democracy and individual rights. This enlargement must continue; of course, continued enlargement will create problems and obstacles, but this will also be an opportunity for the union to establish stability and to ensure consensus in a democratic manner. The EU’s enlargement process will be nearly complete with Turkey’s accession. An enlarged EU will have a larger sphere of interest and will be required to address more international conflicts.

In conclusion, security in this new era is the first theme that must be addressed. New approaches to security lead to new strategies for resolving security problems, chief among which is organizing to implement common decisions, and this can be achieved through the efforts of international organizations. The enlargement of the EU has strengthened this argument, and the EU plays a key role in this situation. The larger the EU becomes, the more effective it will be and the more it will be able to address more issues. If it is well organized and has completed the enlargement process, the EU, with its expertise in “soft power”, will also be able to propose solutions to international security issues and to implement them in democratic and peaceful ways.

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