From 1993—when the United States first indicated that it would be truly open to a vigorous “European pillar” within the alliance, through the Berlin-Brussels agreements of 1996 and the “Berlin-plus” agreement of 1999, to the building of major bureaucratic structures for a European Security and Defense Policy—much has happened, not just in this one corner of the development of transatlantic relations for the 21st century, but in the total corpus of European security. NATO has admitted three new members and promises to take in more—its “open door”—at the November 2002 Prague NATO summit. The European Union is also moving deliberately toward expanding its membership. Both institutions are deeply engaged in Central Europe, in Russia, and in the Balkans. And both are “deepening”: the European Union more obviously, with its European Monetary Union; with its Single European Currency, the Euro, in early 2002 to replace 12 national currencies; and with its efforts to leap ahead with a now-fledgling but to-be-fully-developed Common Foreign and Security Policy and European Security and Defense Policy—in some senses final acts of the devolution of sovereignty and thus still a long time in developing, but clearly now on the way.

For its part, NATO has also been “deepening,” in that it has reaffirmed the United States’ role as a permanent European power; preserved and modernized its critical integrated military command structures; engaged a wide variety of other states in its unique Partnership for Peace (and companion Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council); begun efforts to forge a potential “strategic partnership” with Russia and a “special partnership” with Ukraine; revamped its military strategy and commands (including its innovative Combined
Joint Task Force headquarters); and, for the first time, engaged twice in actual combat and in two post-conflict peacekeeping forces—all with intense lessons for the future of European security and NATO’s role in helping to create a “Europe whole and free.”

Within this overarching framework for building European security for the future (in which other institutions—such as the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], and the Council of Europe—also play roles), special attention is now being paid to the European Security and Defense Identity, or Policy—successor to the Western European Union—and to its relationship with NATO. As ESDP has developed, at least 11 separate purposes have emerged as central:

- Move forward the process of European integration.
- Lay the basis for, one day, having a truly functioning “European” foreign policy—potentially with concomitant engagements and responsibilities beyond the continent of Europe, including in response to requests from the United Nations.
- Provide one framework for adjusting relative political influence within the European Union (in this case centering primarily on France and its relations with other states, especially Germany).\(^1\)
- Enable the Europeans to have an added insurance policy—however minor it may prove to be—that they could act with military force in some limited circumstances if, for some reason, NATO (meaning, in practice, the United States) chose not to be engaged; realistically, this would be most likely to apply in some areas beyond Europe, such as parts of Africa—assuming, of course, that the European members of ESDP were inclined to take military action, either within the Petersberg Tasks or as an extension of them.

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\(^1\)As an added benefit for France, the creation of a Headline Goal Task Force that could—and would—take action in the event of military contingencies in francophone Africa would help reduce the burdens on Paris’ acting alone. This could be part of Paris’ attempt to exert added influence in Europe in the foreign policy and security realm. In theory, of course, other European countries could seek to use the rapid reaction force, or just EU crisis-management capabilities, in outside-of-Europe situations where they have unique or at least preeminent interests.
• Do something to address the constant refrain from the United States about burden sharing within the alliance, among other things to reinforce U.S. incentives to remain engaged with Europe’s strategic and political future, while also giving the Europeans some more weight in deciding, politically, where NATO should be involved militarily, and how.

• Provide some added political incentive for modernizing indigenous military forces, especially difficult in the absence of a palpable military threat—modernization that can also help European militaries remain, to the degree possible, interoperable with more-rapidly modernizing U.S. military forces.

• Give the Europeans, through the European Union, some more say in decisions reached within NATO—an incentive reinforced after the Kosovo conflict, even though that conflict in fact also reinforced the sense that NATO would be required—for the indefinite future—to undertake any military operation of that size and complexity and with comparable political constraints.

• Buttress the process of EU enlargement into Central Europe, while also helping to give those European allies concerned a sense of being able to compete for influence there with the United States.

• Spur the consolidation of European armaments industries, both within and across borders, provide some added demand for their goods and services, and create a political framework for both competing and cooperating with their American counterparts.

• Tackle the long-standing question of the relative distribution of influence between the United States and its European partners within the broader Atlantic Alliance: an inchoate aspiration, but one that is behind much of the debate—on both sides of the Atlantic—about the future of ESDP and its relationship to NATO.

• Give European governments a greater say—and reduce pressure on them—regarding a legal mandate for military action. This was an important issue at the time of the Kosovo conflict: where NATO acted without a formal mandate either from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (under Chapter VII of the UN Charter) or OSCE, a situation that caused considerable difficulty for several governments. Thus, it is important that various EU
documents on ESDP stress that it “recognizes the United Nations Security Council’s primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.”

For the United States, there is much to welcome in most if not all of these ESDP goals. The United States has long supported European integration, not as an end in itself, but among other things as a proven method of reducing the risks of future conflict in Europe and now as a means of increasing a sense of security in Central Europe. The U.S. desire for an increased European role in defense, both relatively and absolutely (and adjusted for post–cold war conditions), has a long pedigree but also a long record of mutual frustration on the two sides of the Atlantic. The United States clearly welcomes efforts that will reduce recurrent European fears, much diminished since the end of the cold war, that somehow the United States will “decouple” its security from Europe’s. It welcomes incentives to increase—or at least stabilize—European defense spending, especially where this will help the European militaries to be interoperable with NATO forces and, specifically, to be consistent with the alliance’s Defense Capabilities Initiative.

The United States should welcome the development of a Headline Goal Task Force that focuses on development of military capabilities, especially in peacemaking and peacekeeping, and whose military capabilities in the main can also contribute to NATO operations—given that most of the basic European forces would be virtually the same, whether employed by NATO or by the European Union under ESDP.

Furthermore, the United States should welcome development of a CFSP and ESDP that can, in time, lead the European nations to play a more active role beyond Europe—assuming, of course, that the respective strategic visions of the United States and, in general, the European allies will be compatible if not identical (since they are not, at times—notably in places like the zone of Arab-Israeli conflict). In areas where the United States would have significant interests, this

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2 Göteborg European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, June 15, 2001, op. cit., paragraph 47. Of course, even NATO relates to the UNSC’s “primary responsibility.” In these ESDP documents, however, the reference can be read to have more-than-routine political significance.
European capacity to act beyond the continent would also assume that the United States would be prepared to share assessment of threats and challenges beyond Europe, what should be done about them and by whom, and the process of decision and control regarding foreign policies and, potentially, military action. By contrast, where the United States did not have significant interests, or were content to see the Europeans simply act on their own—and this applies to much of Africa, both parts of the Maghreb and much of sub-Saharan Africa—then European efforts should be seen by the United States as clearly positive, so long as there were no distraction from a simultaneous need for the use of European military assets in a crisis affecting NATO.3 Also—as a quality often discussed but not so often emphasized—the United States should welcome a European capability for crisis management, especially civilian aspects, and even the use of military force that falls below the threshold where NATO would need (or want) to become engaged, but which nonetheless can be effective—operation Alba, to help stabilize Albania in April 1997, readily comes to mind.4 And there can be significant benefits from “European capacity for action in the civil fields,” that would not have to be duplicated by NATO—or the United States;5 indeed, the EU has some unique advantages in dealing with situations in a holistic way—including political, civilian, nongovernmental organization, and economic instruments—that NATO cannot match.

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3As the French defense minister said in February 2001,

the European capacity that we are establishing will widen the range of tools available to the transatlantic community for crisis management. Our American allies must be able to decide on their participation in the management of a crisis without being constrained by European impotence to endorse alone the choice between action or abstention (Alain Richard, February 3, 2001, op. cit.).

4Of course, this operation was led by Italy, after the WEU turned it down—among other reasons, because Germany did not want to engage in a second operation when it was testing the limits of its political ability to use military force (in the Bosnia Stabilization Force) and because the United Kingdom was at best ambivalent about the WEU’s undertaking a military operation on its own.

5See Alain Richard, February 3, 2001, op. cit. Also:

The development of a European crisis-management capacity, which has become necessary for Europe if it is to assume its responsibilities, is therefore useful to the Alliance, and strengthens our transatlantic partnership (ibid.).
These are all on the positive side of the ledger. But there are also negatives for the United States to be found in the European Security and Defense Policy (and aspects of CFSP, as well). Most of these negatives are about method, however, rather than about purpose and intent. These issues will need to be resolved in order to ensure that NATO and EU/ESDP will be compatible with one another, that they will work toward the same basic objectives, and that transatlantic security and political relations will be strengthened, not weakened, by the development of ESDP. The key problems for the United States so far identified center on the following:

- ESDP may stimulate some greater European defense spending, but that spending might go primarily to purchase capabilities that NATO already has in abundance; or it could be wasteful in terms of efficient use of scarce resources (e.g., the A400M large transport aircraft and even the Eurofighter); or it could stimulate (for political reasons) European efforts to close or restrict arms markets to competition from outside, including the United States. “Unnecessary duplication” is more than just a U.S. slogan; it risks becoming a serious reality. Likewise, candidates for NATO membership could be pressed to accede to ESDP requirements (including “buying European”) at the expense of preparing to be effective NATO allies.

- By contrast, ESDP could, in time, lead some allies to believe that they can meet the military requirements of the Headline Goal Task Force—and thus domestic political requirements—without facing the much more onerous and expensive demands of NATO force modernization, especially the DCI, at a time of rapid U.S. modernization, thereby risking the “hollowing out” of alliance military capabilities. In other words, the “talk” of ESDP and its institutions could substitute for the “walk” of increased defense capabilities.

- The elaboration of structures and processes in ESDP could, whether intended or not, cause competition with NATO’s structures and processes, if only because “the beast has to be fed”: structures once in being get used and, at a certain level of bureaucratic size and complexity (the EUMS is already significant in both size and competence), can compete successfully for the attention and priority required to keep NATO processes as effec-
tive as possible. Indeed, an ESDP as political and bureaucratic distraction from NATO may become the chief legitimate U.S. worry.

- Also, the still not-entirely-resolved differences regarding planning (not limited to Turkey's circumstances) have special significance for NATO. First, having more than one place where operational planning takes place could potentially lead to differences in outcomes that could, at the very least, complicate any situation in which the EU, acting on the basis of ESDP, had to hand over responsibility to NATO, or where NATO had to decide what forces it could usefully transfer to an ESDP operation without prejudicing its own ability to act—a cardinal point from the June 1996 Brussels agreement. The problem would be greater if there were not total transparency in the planning processes—which in fact can only be assured if NATO's planning staff is constantly in the same room with ESDP's—e.g., a national planning staff—and if ESDP planners are at NATO.\(^6\) Among other things, any translation (escalation) of a crisis from one conducted by the European Union through ESDP to one conducted by NATO—whether non-Article 5 or Article 5—could become that much more difficult and potentially dangerous. There have been indications that this problem could be resolved by maintaining the locus of planning in the main within NATO, assuming that Turkey's objections to completing the process of NATO-ESDP relations were lifted.\(^7\) This compromise could still leave "national" headquarters (in practice, either Britain or France) acting on only some relatively low-level operations or on military operations in some specific areas (such as parts of Africa) where there would be a low probability of NATO engagement but a possibility that European states would want to act. This might prove an effective compromise; but the point about NATO in a fully transparent en-

\(^6\)As late as February 2001, the French defense minister said that:

Where an operation does not call on NATO assets, an operational staff formed around a core provided by a national strategic staff will carry out the operational planning. This staff would be multinational and reinforced by officers from the other nations participating in the operation (Alain Richard, February 3, 2001, op. cit.).

\(^7\)Comments to the author by various EU and NATO officials, Brussels, May–June 2001.
gagement with ESDP operational planning, wherever conducted, is still important, both in principle and in practice.

Second, if defense planning—i.e., developing force structures over time—were bifurcated, with NATO’s adopting one system and ESDP’s adopting another, inconsistencies, incompatibilities, and inefficiencies—already the bane of military planners in the alliance—could become worse. Bifurcation of course would make more difficult the process of relating ESDP activities to those of NATO, could complicate the problem of interoperability, could put decisions directed toward developing the Headline Goal Task Force at variance with NATO requirements, and could introduce uncertainties regarding the potential transition from an EU/ESDP to a NATO operation. To be sure, most of the current EU states take part in NATO’s procedures, including the critical Defense Planning Questionnaire; but not all do. Important will be whether France agrees to adopt (or mimic) the DPQ, and whether the two defense planning processes are both sufficiently compatible with, and transparent to, one another. Even so, with both operational and defense planning, the development of any competing ESDP capabilities would make NATO’s life more trying.

- Additionally, the demands of internal political cohesion within the EU could make it difficult to resolve the issue of full participation by non-EU NATO members—notably Turkey—as a matter of EU process integrity (if not theology), thus risking a split in the invaluable, if not indispensable, sense of cohesion among allied states, without gaining anything truly significant in return (i.e., a rapid reaction force that would in fact be undertaking major responsibilities for European security). Of course, Turkey risks exaggerating the problems that lie in the way of its effective engagement with ESDP; it may be using these issues as part of its more important political concerns about membership in the EU; and its actions—at least as evident through mid-2001—could cause it to lose the moment, in terms of NATO’s having as much influence as possible on the shaping of ESDP practices and procedures. But Turkey’s concerns are not without merit, and if these concerns are not reasonably satisfied (along with those, in particular, of Norway and Canada), a shadow would be cast over other NATO–EU/ESDP relations.
The political impetus to make CFSP and ESDP effective could lead not only to an “integrity” in the relationship between crisis management and employment of force that NATO cannot currently match for reasons noted above (this is NATO’s problem), but also to support for full implementation of the Maastricht and Amsterdam provisions for coordination of national positions in international institutions—in effect, a “European caucus” within NATO that, if truly pursued to meet the provisions of the Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, could impair the capabilities of the North Atlantic Council and could tend to produce “least common denominator” outcomes. Here, pragmatic solutions might be effective, and it is true that, in all countries that belong to both NATO and the EU, there are “internal consultations”; but even if the EU states pay mere lip-service to the Maastricht and Amsterdam provisions, lack of clarity about the process can reduce confidence, especially in Washington.

Also, the process of relating crisis management to the use of force—where CFSP/ESDP operates quite differently from NATO and whatever body or country assumes responsibility, on a case-by-case basis, for NATO-related political crisis management—could complicate the issue of determining just how NATO would gain what the United States sees, but not all European allies see, as a necessary right of first refusal—i.e., when it would be determined that NATO as a whole is not prepared to be engaged. This could become a significant problem, especially if one or more European countries were bent upon trying, perhaps for political reasons, to manage a crisis and an accompanying military action without recourse to NATO—however illogical that proposition would be given the value of using the full range of NATO capabilities, including the spreading of political risk to include the United States, whenever possible.8

8The possibility of tactical differences among even the closest allies cannot be ruled out. Some instances include disagreements over peace plans for Bosnia in the early 1990s; differences over enforcement of the arms embargo against parties to that conflict; the complex way in which Operation Alba had to be put together to help Albania when neither NATO or the WEU were willing to act directly; and frequent squabbling, especially at the military level, over the conduct of the Kosovo campaign.
On the negative side of the ledger for the United States are some additional concerns, related to purpose and intent, of which the following are most important:

- European rhetoric about ESDP (and CFSP) could become so exaggerated—as is natural during a process of institution building—that some U.S. observers might (erroneously) believe that the EU/ESDP could take over more of the common burdens, and reduce those falling on U.S. shoulders, than would in fact be the case.

- Differences in the way in which the purposes of ESDP are characterized by different European states and political leaders could continue to sow confusion in the United States, especially about some instrumental relationships between NATO and EU/ESDP (e.g., on operational and defense planning), as well as about the types of operations the EU could actually undertake through ESDP. Such confusion could risk that EU/ESDP would be seen, in practice, as a potential competitor for NATO.

- A reverse problem could arise if a “division of labor” grew up between the European Union (ESDP) and NATO (especially along the lines of relatively high and low military technologies) however much both bodies recognize the problem inherent in a “division of risks”—e.g., airpower versus ground combat—and work to prevent it. This “division of labor” could produce an implicit fracture in the assumption that providing security in Europe is a common good to be pursued by all allies, although in practice in different ways depending on circumstances. Nor is this issue limited to the development of ESDP. The issue of whether the United States is prepared to share military tasks—and hence risks—with European allies has been a theme running through most debates about allied engagement in the Former Yugoslavia from the early 1990s onward. In Bosnia and Kosovo, these debates were eventually resolved, more or less successfully; but as of the time of this writing, it is not clear that such success will also hold true for Macedonia. Indeed, expressed U.S. doubts in 2001 about putting troops at risk in a NATO force for Macedonia raised some concern among other allies, with a significant impact on perceptions of the overall U.S. commitment to engage in real-life NATO activities containing some degree of
risk. European perceptions on this general point have played a major role in the politics of ESDP’s development.

There must be an important qualifier, however. There could emerge a “division of labor” in regard to crises or other challenges beyond Europe, in areas where the United States (perhaps with Canada and a few other allies) would not see its interests to be significantly engaged and where, therefore, the issue of NATO’s becoming involved militarily might not arise and the allies might not require the United States to be engaged. This is especially true in parts of Africa. Indeed, had there been a European capacity for action (an effective rapid reaction force) in the 1990s, it is conceivable that Europeans might have decided to intervene in Rwanda, assuming that the added military capacities, a crisis-management mechanism, and a sense of “sharing the risk” would have produced more political will on the part of key states.9 Left unaddressed, however, is another meaning of “division of labor”: that the United States would want the allies to become engaged beyond Europe—truly “outside of area”—but would be unable to gain a consensus within the alliance to do so; this is the great “emperor has no clothes” of NATO’s future.10

- Finally, the issue of the relative balance of influence between the United States and some or all European states could become sufficiently bound up with the structure and conduct of ESDP that crucial elements could be lost, such as the principles of common commitment by all allies to European security, risk

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9 See House of Lords, Select Committee on European Union, Fifteenth Report, July 25, 2000, paragraph 42:

Surprisingly, a scenario like Rwanda was seen as particularly appropriate for EU involvement by Mr Richard Hatfield, Policy Director of the Ministry of Defence. He told us that “Were that situation to come up again, it could be done under European Union auspices but it would not be done under NATO auspices because NATO has no security role in relation to Central Africa.

Of course, the point is historically moot but interesting in terms of British Ministry of Defence thinking about the future of ESDP.

10 Beyond the scope of this study are considerations of relying upon “permissive” decisions by the North Atlantic Council (NAC), but where only a few allies take part in military actions; the use of NATO infrastructure even where the NAC does not give its formal blessing—as happened during Operation Alba; or the development of “coalitions of the willing and able” to act with the United States “outside of area.”
sharing, and subordination of such issues as the balance of political influence to more-practical matters of getting the European security job done.