
REPORT

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CYPRUS AS A SECURITY PRODUCER; **POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

INTRODUCTION

The global geopolitical setting is undergoing profound change. The fact that G20 replaced G8 during the present economic crisis, illustrate this thesis. An aging Europe will have to meet new centers of power in Asia and South America. USA will still be a very important player but its relative power is in decline. The future of Russia is in doubt. The struggle for resources – in particular in Africa – will be increasingly intense. Simultaneously, it is possible to identify an arc of crisis going from Western Africa through the Mediterranean to Central Asia. Cyprus is strategically located at this arc.

This paper will focus on two issues: Firstly it will give a short analysis on the present geopolitical situation and in particular the state of play in what one can refer to as the “arc of crisis” and, secondly, it will focus on Cyprus and what potential role Cyprus can play within European security and defense policy.

GEOPOLITICAL CHANGES

When giving an opinion on another country's foreign and security policy one should always be careful to avoid expressing a state of hubris. Therefore, the author will not dwell on the various plans for reconciliation on Cyprus. It is far too complicated matter and the author is not qualified to do so. However, it should be pointed out that the outcome of the referendum in 2004 on the so called Annan Plan was a disappointment from a European perspective. One of the main reasons for this disappointment was that the outcome had repercussions to the EU's security and defense policy.

One of the first French sound movies about the famous Cardinal Richelieu starts off with a messenger entering into the Cardinals office declaring “Sir, the Thirty Years War has just begun!” As we all know the conflict in question did not gain that title until after the pace of

Westphalia in 1648. However, the quote tells us one important thing, namely that we cannot know where we are heading; we can only see that the world is undergoing great changes.

The financial crisis is a good example of how fast the international scene may change. The first warnings of an upcoming financial crisis began to show in 1999 but did not really commence in 2007 and was identified as a real crisis in the beginning of 2008. Less than a year ago, many thought that this was the end of market economy. Today, few make that argument and the system seems to be recovering. One notes the general reluctance to act before the crisis had become really dangerous and there was a temptation to draw too far-reaching conclusions. The financial crisis has, however, showed us something of more lasting importance. A similar crisis five years ago would have been dealt with by the G7 or the G8. This time, however, it was the G20 that played a leading role. This fact illustrates the ongoing change on the geopolitical chessboard.

Another significant change is that an aging Europe will have to cede place to new great powers such as China, India and Brazil. Nevertheless, Europe will certainly continue to be an important player and the Lisbon treaty will help Europe keeping its strength. However, no one seems to believe that the new EU President will be able – or allowed – to provide the leadership needed to realize the potential of a more united Europe. European leaders tend to give priority to short term and narrow interests instead of thinking of the big challenges of the future. Hence, Europe's power will decline.

It should be noted that the Lisbon treaty includes article 42.7 which regulates the solidarity towards a country that has been attacked on its territory. The article states:

If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defense policy of certain Member States. Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defense and the forum for its implementation.

As a consequence, the Swedish government has made a declaration of solidarity stating that Sweden will not be passive in the case of a catastrophe or an attack against another EU-member or a Nordic country. Sweden therefore expects other countries to act in the same way as if Sweden would be the victim. What this shows us is that there is a notion of a European defense, which in turn can be of importance to Cyprus.

The future of NATO is also in some doubt. The organization has staged its future on progress in Afghanistan, a move which may prove to have devastating results. Its new strategic concept – to be presented this spring – will have to strike a balance between those who want to keep the “old” NATO for collective defense, in accordance with article 5 of the NATO treaty, and those who prefer the “new” NATO with an enhanced role in crisis management in far away countries. The concept must also be instrumental in finally realizing the “strategic partnership” between EU and NATO, an issue which is directly linked to the situation between Turkey and Cyprus.

The US is still the only superpower, in particular in military terms. However, its budget deficit is reaching enormous proportions. An interesting factor in this remark is that China controls a large part of that debt. Furthermore, its military is becoming seriously overstretched, fighting

on multiple fronts. Finally, so far, President Obama has not measured up to the high expectations laid upon him. In particular, he faces the difficult task of rebuilding the U.S. reputation overseas which suffered greatly during the Bush years.

We are also witnessing the comeback of China in the western Indian Ocean. After a total absence during the last 500 years, Chinese naval vessels now patrol these waters which are an interesting illustration of the changing structure of world power. China is also an important investor in Africa. Regrettably, its strategy of non-interference in domestic policies tends to hamper Europe's goal of promoting democracy, human rights and good governance. China is also, together with Russia, an important provider of arms to conflict-ridden Africa. China is clearly, therefore, becoming a world power.

Russia plays an increasingly important role as Europe's main provider of energy. This leads to a split between those who have strong memories of the Soviet occupation and those who follow the policy of Russia first. For many of the countries around the Baltic, they will always be afraid of Russia, either because it's becoming too strong or becoming too weak.

ARC OF CRISIS

At the end of the 70s, Zbigniew Brzezinski – the former security advisor to President Carter – launched the idea of “an arc of crisis” in the wake of, inter alia, the fall of the Shah. The expression was re-launched in the French White Book from 2008. This time, the “arc” is stretching from western Africa to central Asia.

The population within this arc of crisis is quickly increasing and their governments are generally fragile and their economies stumbling. Many leaders are ailing and without natural successors. These states usually possess important resources of gas and oil but they normally lack other natural resources, in particular potable water. Climate change will aggravate this problem and there is a huge risk that the huge streams of migrants into neighboring territories may provoke new types of conflict. At the same time, this is an area which is characterized by religious tensions, especially between moderate and extremist Islam, between Shia and Sunnies. These areas are also prime breeding grounds for organizations like Al-Qaeda.

The “arc of crisis” is currently the scene for a number of ongoing conflicts such as India-Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and, of course, the eternal Middle East conflict. Fragile Pakistan is already a nuclear weapon state and Iran strives to become one. The consequences may become very disturbing as nuclear Iran may push other Middle East states to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

The Mediterranean Sea plays a crucial role within this “arc of crisis” as it leads from the Atlantic to Asia and includes both the Black and the Red Sea. Substantial amounts of trade – of which energy forms a very important part – goes through the Mediterranean which also is the link between Europe and North Africa. Recent findings of hydrocarbon in the area between Cyprus, Egypt and Israel further increase the importance of the Mediterranean. Therefore, both Cyprus and Turkey are particularly important for Europe's strategy from a geopolitical point of view.

THE DEATH OF THE NATION STATE?

Globalization and the rise of an information society have important repercussions for the nation state. This concept has, since the peace of Westphalia, been the basis for the international system of state building. We now seem to be heading towards a looser concept with many non-state actors involved.

Today, Western states do not fight wars in the traditional state to state manner; neither do they conduct crisis management operations on their own. Instead they do so by forming coalitions such as the UN, NATO, EU or even coalitions of the willing. The objective of war has also changed considerably and has left the traditional concept of waging war for the purpose of conquering territory, instead the West now wage war with the objective to conquer hearts and minds. The “enemy” is, more often than not, a non-state actor. But also on the Western side, there is a proliferation of actors: multinational enterprises and NGOs of various sorts. In Afghanistan, reportedly, there are some 1500 big and small NGOs at work¹. In addition, we see the increased use of private military enterprises – a reminiscence of the mercenary system once common in Europe.

Immigration plays a large part in this new type of warfare. As all western states have various groups of immigrants, the “enemy” will always have relatives and followers in states who participate in crisis management operations. The bombings in Madrid 2004 and London 2005 are perhaps the best examples of this

The internet is another crucial factor. There is an estimated one billion or more internet users globally. The usage of social media such as Blogs, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook may have a great political impact and are difficult to bring under state control. To a large extent, this can be illustrated by the current demonstrations in Iran. But while it is more and more difficult for dictators to repress their populations without the world knowing it, this media also fosters extreme individualism where people tend to follow only such news that corresponds with their own ideas. This might endanger the critical debate, an essential building block of democratic society. It should also be noted that the internet is a media which is very easily manipulated.

In sum, these developments are slowly leading towards the fragmentation of the state and the creation of new international actors. However, the conventional objectives of waging wars are under no circumstance dead in the rest of the world, which the war between Georgia and Russia in 2009 clearly shows.

AN INTEGRATED MARITIME POLICY

Europe is currently launching several important initiatives relating to maritime affairs which, in relation to Cyprus - a maritime country, will be of great importance.

¹ <http://www.cmi.no/afghanistan/themes/ngos.cfm>

In its “blue book” on a European integrated maritime policy, the European Commission writes:

“The seas are Europe’s lifeblood. Europe’s maritime spaces and its coasts are central to its well-being and prosperity – they are Europe’s trade routes, climate regulator, sources of food, energy and resources, and a favored site for its citizens’ residence and recreation.”²

The general aim of this policy is to develop the competitiveness of European maritime industry and to further secure, safe and environmental-friendly shipping.

A particular goal is to handle the increasing intra-European transport system. Internal freight will increase by 70% in the coming years. Our already congested roads cannot handle this. The answer is increased use of railways, canals and maritime transport. Regarding the latter, there is a project called Motorways of the Sea.

Motorways of the Sea should form a door-to-door logistic network that gives viable, regular, reliable, frequent, and high-quality services.



In general, the network should absorb a significant part of expected increase in freight traffic, and give improved access to peripheral and island regions and states.

At the time of writing, four motorways are identified: Motorway of the Baltic Sea, Motorway of the Sea of Western Europe, Motorway of the Sea of south-east Europe, and Motorway of the Sea of south-west Europe. Cyprus has the potential to play a key role in these projects.

Source: West-Mos., <http://westmos.eu>

It is hoped, that Motorways of the Sea also can be used in order to link the Northern and Southern shores together in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean (or the Barcelona process).

POLICY OPTIONS FOR CYPRUS

As Dr. Maria Strömviik at the University of Lund pointed out, there is hardly something that one could call “a Western strategy”³. Such a strategy must, from a theoretical point of view, contain a political project and a balance between ends, means and ways of action which, put together, can lead to fulfillment of the project. It is, however, quite possible to identify a

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union; [COM(2007) 574] p. 2., <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0575:FIN:EN:PDF>
³ Strömviik Maria., *Challenges and opportunities for the European security and defence policy*. pp. 1-8, 2009, www.erpig.org.

number of general goals: peace, stability, human rights and good governance. From a more narrow European policy point of view, there are important projects such as the development of the ESDP, implementation of Berlin plus agreement on cooperation between EU and NATO, and the integration of Turkey. In this context, Cyprus has both advantages and drawbacks.

Advantages

1. Geostrategic Position: Cyprus is positioned in an important geostrategic location; in particular in relation to the Middle East. This fact has already been used, inter alia, after the Israel – Hezbollah war in 2006 by the Swedish Navy. At that time, an important operation regarding refugees was staged in the context of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Furthermore, France acquired rights to use ports and airfields in Cyprus in 2007, which is also proof of the islands importance.
2. EU Membership: Cyprus is a member of the EU and it participates in the ESDP (European Security and Defense Policy) its participation has, however, been restricted to staff officers only. It has at least one officer in the EUMS (Military Staff of the European Union) and a military representative in the EUMC (European Union Military Committee). It is a member of one of EU's battle groups. Cyprus is also a prosperous country and a member of the Euro-zone.
3. Colonial Heritage: Cyprus is also a former colony. This should give it extra credibility in dealing with other former colonies. It also has historically good relations with Middle East states. As a consequence, Cyprus may play a facilitating role between the EU and the Middle East and North Africa.
4. A Maritime Nation: Cyprus has an important shipping industry and possesses great know-how in maritime affairs. This may be an important advantage in the realization of EU's integrated maritime policy.

Disadvantages

1. Security Consumer: Cyprus could be characterized as more of a security consumer than a producer. It is a divided country and the UN troops stationed on the island are needed elsewhere. Its relations with Turkey and, to a lesser extent, the TRNC are becoming an internal problem within the EU. It must be realized that for Europe, Turkey is at least as important as Cyprus perhaps even more. The EU strives to use carrots – and some sticks – in order to secure a democratic development of Turkey. It is felt, however, that Cyprus is infringing upon this policy and is beginning to perceive Cyprus as an obstacle towards this goal. More generally, it is felt that Cyprus uses its membership in the EU more to further its interests regarding Turkey and the TRNC than to further the common good. As these policies to some extent are directed against the US, the policy also presents problems for the Transatlantic Link.
2. EU-NATO Relations: A serious consequence of the bad relations vis-à-vis Turkey is that Cyprus is not a member of the PfP (Partnership for Peace) and does not have a security agreement with NATO. This situation poses serious problems for the relations between EU and NATO and actually impedes the full realization of the “Berlin plus” agreement.

3. Non-Contribution: Many Cypriots tend to look at security in narrow military terms and as a zero-sum game rather than contributing to the EU defense structure on multiple levels. Cyprus essentially joined the EU hoping that its membership would guarantee its strategic interests and make it feel secure vis-à-vis Turkey. However, Nicosia may have been somewhat ignorant, not realizing that collective defense was never intended as the *raison d'être* of the EU.

OPTIONS AND ROLES

The Republic of Cyprus is now engaged in negotiations with the TRNC. From a European standpoint, reconciliation is of high strategic importance. It's widely believed that Cyprus's problems with Turkey will cease to exist in case of reconciliation but there are no guarantees for this. Hence, some of the ideas below may not be possible to realize. The general idea is that Cyprus should establish itself as a producer of security. There is, obviously, no clear definition of this notion, however, politics is perceptions. Cyprus needs to reinvent its image in such a way so that it will be able to influence its neighbors and partners. An overarching objective of such a strategy should be to present Cyprus as a helpful player in EU politics. Furthermore, it is important for Cyprus to understand that the concept of security should not only be seen from a military perspective and discussed in military terms.

Taking all this into consideration, it is essential that Cyprus:

- Use its EU membership to further European interests to a higher extent than today; in particular, Cyprus should feel secure enough to further good relations with Turkey.
- Sends home the UNIFICYP.
- Joins PfP and develops a partnership program as well as developing interoperability.
- Establishes a security agreement with NATO.
- Actively participates in the ESDC (European Security and Defense College).
- Start a crash program in education in NATO affairs: NATO Defense College and the SHAPE school in Oberammergau.
- Abandons its plans for demilitarization as disarmament should not be an option. Cyprus needs, like all sovereign states, forces that can guarantee its borders and defend its interests. Hence, there is a need for at least some kind of gendarmerie, an air force and an armed coast guard. If this is not possible, Cyprus must ask Europe for help. Given its geostrategic situation, Cyprus should under no circumstances be allowed to become a security vacuum.
- Foster its good relations to Middle East countries in view of possible peace-operations.
- Foster good relations with North African states in order to facilitate the Barcelona Process and the Mediterranean Union.

- Become an active player in the Integrated Maritime Policy. Pursue a policy of secure, safe and environmental friendly shipping. This should be one of Cyprus's main objectives and it should strive to become a centre of excellence in this field.
- Use its strategic location to become a cornerstone in the upcoming European Integrated Maritime Surveillance System and in FRONTEX.
- Reevaluate the position of the British bases. On the one hand, Europe is in need of the British presence as the UK is one of the few member states with real, tangible military resources. On the other, Cyprus is not Gibraltar which has been under the British Crown for centuries. In that perspective, the idea of sovereign areas on a fellow European country sounds extremely odd. It seems preferable that Cyprus and the UK renegotiate the agreement regulating the bases. Cyprus now has a unique opportunity for this as the UK's defense budget is extremely overstretched.

If reconciliation with TRNC is not possible, Cyprus should act in order to stabilize the situation – agree to disagree. It should be conceivable to agree on a number of CBMs (Confidence Building Measures) In particular, Cyprus must avoid holding Europe hostage to its problems.

CONCLUSION

Europe and its citizens will live through important changes in the geopolitical setting. There are many difficult challenges that need to be tackled. Cyprus with its long history and advantageous geostrategic situation can be an important security producer. That, however, requires that Cyprus, to the extent possible, re-conciliates itself with TRNC and Turkey. Cyprus will get respect from other Europeans if it works for Europe in a proactive manner.

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