A ‘Special’ Alliance

The Evolution of European Foreign Policy and its Impact on the Transatlantic Alliance

(1945-2005)

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Introduction

The American-European tensions around the Iraq War are over and so are former president Bush’s unilateral policies. However, a newly ratified Lisbon Treaty in Europe and a new American administration have the power to alter the nature of the transatlantic alliance. It becomes imperative therefore to study how the historic evolution of a ‘common’ European foreign policy, culminating with the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, is likely to impact the transatlantic partnership. How have the European leaders managed to develop a progressively common, albeit flawed, foreign policy, and how has the transatlantic alliance changed since the end of the Second World War? This question is crucial to understanding the future road for the European Union’s foreign policy and the impact that such a decision could have on the transatlantic alliance. Furthermore, the evolution of the transatlantic alliance in the post-Cold War period and the promise of the Lisbon Treaty represent topics that have raised numerous suppositions about the outlook of the transatlantic alliance. However, the answers that scholars such as Andre Moravcsik, Ivo Daalder and Christopher Hill have provided can only be regarded simply as assumptions. Nevertheless, the method of studying the past in order to create alternatives for the future represents the best way to construct a valid analysis of present and future trends in the Atlantic alliance.

Hence, this paper seeks to answer the previously stated question by observing the process of European political integration since the end of the Second World War through the multiple treaties and documents that have institutionalized the concept of a common ‘European’ foreign policy. Furthermore, the paper examines the development of American-European relations that accompanied the European integration process and accounts for recent events that have challenged the relationship, such as the Iraq War. This essay also analyzes the provisions
concerning common foreign and security policies present in the Lisbon Treaty and their potential impact on the EU's relationship with the United States. Finally, the paper attempts to offer several recommendations for the improvement of the Atlantic alliance.

The transatlantic alliance has been at the center of international relations and has evolved over time since its initial conception at the end of the Second World War. Devastated by the war, Europe was vulnerable to the communist forces coming from the east. Although weakened by tremendous losses, the USSR emerged victorious and sought to acquire greater influence geographically by encouraging and aiding communist governments to take power in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. On the other hand, the United States, empowered by its victory over Germany and Japan, became an undisputed force on the world stage. It abandoned its isolationist tendencies and became the main protector of democracy and free markets in the world. Due to divergent values but similar global ambitions, the two superpowers were poised for competition geopolitically and, potentially, militarily. In response, the US developed a policy of containment through which it attempted to prevent communism from spreading to other parts of the world, particularly to Western Europe. In order to create a strong buffer zone against the USSR's influence, the US desired a politically, economically and militarily powerful Western Europe. The creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) resolved the military dilemma, as the organization became the main provider of military security to Europe and a deterrent to the USSR's expansionist policies. Western European was able to enjoy military safety at almost no expense. To empower Western Europe economically, the US invested large amounts of aid in reconstruction. This helped to ensure that their governments were democratically stable against communist factions within the countries themselves but also from outside influences.
Viewed from both sides of the Atlantic, the American project of economically rebuilding Western Europe has proven to be a tremendous success. Europe, historically prone to devastating wars, has experienced more than half a century of peace, stability and economic prosperity. As such, the project of economic and political integration that began in Western Europe in the early 1950s now encompasses twenty-seven countries, from Portugal in the far west to Latvia in the east. The fall of communism in 1989 was due in part to an economically strong and politically stable United States and Europe. The Eastern European countries have since adopted democratic systems of government and have reformed their economic and political structures in order to qualify for admission into the European Union. Because the United States provided Europe with military protection, European leaders were able to focus internally. This led to a gradual enlargement policy, through which former communist countries became part of a common European market and joined a developing political system. Although the United States always encouraged political unity, economic integration won widespread approval mainly because of its immediate benefits to the European states. Furthermore, since the end of the war, the United States and Europe strengthened their economic cooperation, thereby sustaining the transatlantic ties. Nevertheless, despite the importance of these factors to the transatlantic alliance, this paper focuses on the political aspects of European integration and the US-EU relationship.

NATO and the European project of integration were major steps taken by European leaders and strongly encouraged by American administrations in order to contain USSR’s influence and power. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990 the traditional dichotomy between West and East changed dramatically, and so a re-examination of the transatlantic relationship became necessary. First of all, it is important to recognize that Europe and the United States share common values rooted in democratic principles, appreciation for
human liberty and human rights, and a common history. The United States and Europe are intricately connected, not just historically and sentimentally but economically too. The American-European economic bloc currently represents the world’s largest trade zone. In the political realm however, the matters are more complicated. Foreign policy has always been the weakest pillar of a united Europe, as exemplified by the creation of numerous treaties. However, as Europe attempted to integrate politically and create a common defense and military structure, it stumbled upon various internal obstacles from larger European states unwilling to give up their sovereignty in favor of a centralized European foreign policy. Furthermore, the integration process also faced US administrations wary of any political and military developments that threatened US interests or challenge its leadership in the world and within the NATO structure. The paradox between the United States’ unremitting support for European economic and political integration on the one hand and its often skeptical attitude towards European efforts to define its foreign policy on the other represents a central theme in the transatlantic alliance. For this reason, this paper refers to the transatlantic alliance as being ‘special.’

The most recent development in European foreign policy is the creation and ratification of the Lisbon Treaty which entered into force on December 1, 2009. The treaty symbolizes the crystallization of European ambitions to exercise a greater role in international affairs. Furthermore, it represents an opportunity for the EU to assert itself on the international stage with greater confidence politically and potentially, militarily. Nevertheless, although the treaty creates important structures and positions such as the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and a permanent President of the European Council, it will not alter the fundamental structure of EU’s foreign policy. This area remains the most sensitive of the European integration process, as member states and Brussels vie for authority and influence over
foreign policy objectives. Since the creation of the EU, member states were often hesitant about an all-encompassing European foreign policy and reluctant to cooperate on specific policies that would irritate the Americans. Nevertheless, because of a more centralized decision-making process and a new body of about 3,000 diplomats who represent EU’s interests abroad, the Lisbon Treaty represents a real opportunity for greater coherence in foreign policy. It is up to individual states to allow for the EU to exercise a greater role on the world stage and adhere to the provisions in the Treaty. For that reason, ‘opportunity’ remains the key word regarding the Lisbon Treaty’s impact on foreign policy in the near future.

Since the end of the Cold War, the US and the EU have attempted to modernize their relationship partly because their common enemy, the USSR disappeared. The economic unification of European countries has allowed the EU to enter into a real economic competition with the US. This competition has often led to disputes between the two regions on trade matters such as tariffs and other protectionist measures. However, politically the US and the EU still operate under the Cold War mentality. The Americans regard the EU as a dependent ally, especially militarily, often difficult to deal with, thereby preferring to collaborate with member states individually. Similarly, Europe is well aware of its weaknesses, especially militarily and its obstacles to unanimity, although it would like to exercise a greater role in the world. The EU still relies heavily on NATO, although it has recently attempted to construct a common defense system and coordinate defense policies and developments. Internally, the EU is dealing with perennial problems such as an aging demographic and immigration. On the other hand, the United States is well aware of its diminishing influence in the world. As a consequence, it will attempt to shift its political attention to emerging regions such as Asia in order to secure its interests for the future. This change in focus could hurt the transatlantic alliance and prompt the
Europeans to distance themselves from NATO by constructing their own military system. Therefore, it is essential that both the United States and the EU re-examine their relationship with one another and agree to cooperate, while understanding each other’s weaknesses and strengths.

America needs Europe as much as Europe needs America, even in the post Cold War era. American military power is unrivaled in the world, allowing for effective coalitions within NATO to take place in fragile states like Afghanistan. However, American hard power can greatly benefit from Europe’s civilian power – economic, diplomatic and cultural policy instruments – and its multilateral traditions. It will take a patient and encouraging United States and an assertive and more united Europe for the transatlantic relationship to develop into an equal partnership. The US and the EU must become counterparts, not counterweights, if the world order is to be maintained. The United States must relinquish any suspicion of a stronger, more independent European Union that turns its back on the US. Rather, it must encourage the Union to increase its political and military role within NATO structures. Political competition should not be allowed to exist; it must not be confounded with any economic competition between the two regions. A separation of global responsibilities should be favored in which the US views the EU as an equal partner, albeit exercising a different role on the international stage, and vice versa. With the advent of a new American administration and the recent ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the US and the EU have a vital opportunity to reform their alliance and strengthen their ability to cooperate on important global matters.
Development of a Common European Foreign Policy

**Essential Theories of European Integration and Present Challenges**

Although the Lisbon Treaty attempts to further centralize the foreign policy making process of the European Union, the system remains an intergovernmental one in which member states share responsibilities with the EU. Therefore, governance by consensus is the main decision-making approach taken by the European leaders. When analyzing the EU’s foreign policy, the term ‘capability-expectations gap’ coined by Christopher Hill, professor of International Relations at London School of Economics, best represents the discrepancy between European aspirations to world governance on the one hand, and the often harsh political realities at home on the other. In other words, while the EU leaders and public in tandem with the United States demand that the EU exercise a greater role in shouldering the responsibilities of world governance, the reality within the EU is that it does not have “the institutional resources or the political legitimacy to take on these roles” (Hix 1999, 347). Simon Hix argues that one reason why the EU has been slow to construct a common foreign policy is because the latter represents a “high politics” issue. Hix (1999, 350) defines high politics as consisting of those issues which “touch on the fundamental definition, identity, security and sovereignty of the nation state.” Therefore, because foreign and security policies are fundamental to national identity and security, the EU member states have been reluctant to give up their sovereignty in order to allow a centralized body to make crucial decisions regarding their foreign interests and goals.

Another theory that explains why the EU integrated economically faster and more successfully than politically is put forward by Piner Tank who argues that “the loss of economic sovereignty as a result of economic integration strengthens the resolve of the member states to
defend their sovereignty over foreign and security policies” (Hix 1999, 356). Therefore, one could argue that economic integration of the European states took place at the expense of political integration. However, now that the EU has achieved full economic integration, transforming itself into a free trade zone, its leaders will consequently turn to the political realm, finding ways to further the political process that started with the Treaty of Rome. The European leaders have always been eager to achieve greater global influence but realized from the start that economic integration was a pre-requisite to political union. Having met its economic goals, the EU is currently at the stage when it “has the potential to be a major force in shaping global events” (Hix 1999, 355). The Lisbon Treaty represents the latest development in the EU’s foreign policy realm and has become the main tool through which European leaders will seek to achieve their long-held goals of a greater European role in the world. For this reason, it is crucial to examine the roadblocks that have plagued the European process of political integration in the past and could potentially become a nuisance for the EU in the future.

In the words of Charlotte Bretherton, author of “The EU as a Global Actor,” the European Common Foreign and Security Policy, popularly referred to as the CFSP, cannot be viewed as a truly common policy, because it is rather “a highly institutionalized and complex process of consultation and cooperation between Member State governments” (Bretherton 2006, 163). However, Bretherton agrees that when member states do have common interests and therefore cooperate to achieve them, EU foreign policy can be regarded as successful. Hence, in order to understand the difficulties that European leaders faced when constructing and implementing common foreign policy goals, one must ponder the answers to the following questions. How did the common foreign policy come into existence and what were the main motivations behind it? What were the struggles and barriers that European leaders had to face in
order to construct EU’s foreign policy? How did the US respond to European developments in this area, and how has the relationship between the two sides changed since the introduction of a European common foreign policy concept?

First Steps in the European Integration Process

The urge to construct a common foreign and security policy among European countries came about at the end of the Second World War mainly because of the communist threat coming from the east and Europe’s desire to develop a global identity separate from the United States. European leaders could not have imagined that Europe would ever achieve lasting peace and security especially at the end of World War II. The enmity between France and Germany was rooted in historic and economic ties and represented the main cause of the two most devastating wars in the history of mankind. Therefore, if Europe were ever to achieve peace and prosperity, it would have to start with France and Germany engaging in a mutual partnership and becoming the leaders of a united Europe. The first European leader that understood this concept and expressed it publicly was Winston Churchill. In 1948 at the Congress of Europe in Hague, Churchill called for the creation of a “United States of Europe” (Smith 2002, 39). However, Churchill’s ambition to create a federal European system was too big of a dream at that time. If Europe were to create a common foreign policy, it would take the boldness of European leaders to make small, incremental steps towards centralization without eroding nation states’ individual sovereignty.

European integration proceeded modestly with economic cooperation as its first feasible goal. In 1947, most of the western European states created the Organization for European Economic Cooperation. However, France was still skeptical of a resurgent Germany and sought
to maintain control over its industrial production. The United States was heavily involved in the economic integration process, encouraging European leaders to take bold actions in order to form a buffer zone against the Soviet Union. The US had obvious interests in a strong Western Europe because it was engaged in a bitter Cold War against the USSR. The Marshall Plan, which sent massive amounts of aid to western European countries to help them reconstruct their industries and infrastructure, was one of the policies that the US government pursued at the beginning of the Cold War period in order to contain the spread of communism. A robust Western Europe economically, according to US government officials, was a top priority in America’s fight against communism.

However, Europe needed not only a strong market based economy to resist the communist influence from the east but also a powerful and united military that would deter the Soviet armies from invading Western Europe. Since the major European powers were militarily weak at the end of the Second World War, the United States represented the only force able to face the Soviet military threat. Therefore, in 1948, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was created under the leadership of the US but incorporating most of the Western European states. The United States vowed to protect Europe which allowed the Europeans to focus on their own internal problems. With the European security dilemma in the hands of the Americans, the European leaders were able to focus on economic integration and discuss the possibility of future political integration.

A successful European integration would be feasible only when the two major continental powers in Europe, namely France and Germany, were subject to a supranational body that would prevent any future competition between the two powers. The Franco-German relations were regarded by prominent European leaders such as France’s foreign minister, Robert Schuman, as
essential to further European integration. Therefore, under Schuman’s leadership, the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty was signed in Paris in 1951. The initial goal was to create a supranational authority over the French and German coal and steel production in order to eliminate potential rivalries between the two states. The treaty’s purpose, according to Schuman, was that “any war between France and Germany becomes not only unthinkable, but in actual fact impossible” (Smith 2002, 43). Therefore, although the European Coal and Steel Community was initially designed as an economic institution, its ultimate purpose was to achieve political and security objectives, as steel and coal were essential to the manufacturing of arms. However, from a political standpoint, the French were still fearful of a resurgent military Germany who would come to assume leadership in Europe. Thus, when the European Political Community (EPC) was created in 1952 as part of the European Defense Community (EDC), France refused to ratify the agreement because of two main reasons: its wariness of a potentially powerful Germany and De Gaulle’s reluctance to surrender French control of its military to a supranational organization. The failure of the European Political Community prompted Great Britain, backed by the US, to support the creation of the Western European Union (WEU) in 1955. The EDC debacle proved that Europe was not ready to embark on a meaningful road to political unity and coordination. As Hazel Smith (2002, 45) observed, “the responsibility for a ‘European’ foreign policy remained at the level of the nation-state.” Nevertheless, by 1955, the three main postwar problems in Europe had been solved. The economic rebuilding of Western Europe was underway, aided by programs such as the Marshall Plan; Germany was successfully integrated into the “Western liberal capitalist democratic framework;” and military protection against the Soviet Union was provided under the umbrella of NATO (Smith 2002, 45).
The monumental document that laid the foundation of what today is called the European Union was the Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957. The treaty created the European Economic Community (EEC) which established the European common market among the six initial members: France, Western Germany, the three Benelux countries and Italy. The EEC was led by France which opposed the development of any foreign policy competencies to be exercised by the organization. Nevertheless, it was French president, Charles de Gaulle, who in 1959 proposed that the foreign ministers of the six countries meet regularly to discuss foreign policy issues. However, because of de Gaulle’s strong opposition to NATO and Netherlands’ affinity for the Atlantic alliance, the formal meetings between the governments of the Six did not lead to any concrete measures. Furthermore, the 1960s were characterized by disagreements between the United States and France. De Gaulle twice vetoed Britain’s application to join the Community and in 1966 withdrew France from NATO. De Gaulle saw Britain as being too closely aligned with the US, and he believed that Europe must pursue policies independent of United States’ approval.

Three Stages in the Evolution of a Common European Foreign Policy

First Stage (1969-1981)

The development of a European common foreign policy has been marked by the perennial tension between national autonomy and sovereignty on the one hand, and “commonality of policy and action” on the other (Smith 2002, 63). According to Hazel Smith, there are three chronological parts to the development of European foreign policy. The first part spanned from 1969 to 1981 and was characterized by “non-binding institutionalization of foreign policy coordination” (Smith 2002, 66). After a turbulent period concerning foreign policy
development in the 1960s, the European leaders turned again to the lofty goal of achieving consensus in the foreign policy area. In 1969, leaders of the western European countries organized a summit at The Hague in which they agreed on “a long-term orientation towards an increasingly collective approach to foreign policy” (Smith 2002, 64). Their main goal was to create a united Europe capable of exercising leadership in the world. However, such ideals did not materialize into a treaty. In 1970 European Heads of State created a forum, the European Political Cooperation (EPC), where ideas concerning foreign policy could be shared and debated. Decisions were taken by consensus although it was often difficult to get member states to agree on a common course of action. Pragmatic, incremental changes to the development of the EPC were favored over radical ones that infringed on the sovereignty of member states. Bretherton (2006, 165) argues that “the EPC compromised highly formalized, multi-level, intergovernmental cooperation.” Furthermore, the EPC fared best when dealing with ‘routine matters’ of foreign policy. The Balkan crises at the end of the Cold War revealed the shortcomings of the EPC.

It is crucial to understand that the EPC represented a process through which European leaders hoped to bring about greater coherence in the foreign policy area. De Gaulle’s departure from the political scene allowed for talks on European political unity to take place. Member states agreed to consult and find common ground on foreign policy issues, but they were unwilling to cede national sovereignty and decision making to a supranational body. John Oudenaren (2000, 277) states that the “EPC led to the development of a ‘European reflex’ in national decision making” because member states would consult one another when confronted with an international crisis or policy issue. However, the author acknowledges the fact that the practical results of the EPC were almost nonexistent. Most of the EPC actions were verbal, and
consensus was often difficult to reach, as was the case during the 1973 Arab oil embargo in which each European state pursued its own policies in order to protect its interests.

In addition to the EPC which was launched after the Hague Summit, the European leaders in 1969 created the Luxembourg Report which represented a timid start to the European centralization process. However, the representatives present at the summit acknowledged the “sensibilities of the member states on foreign policy cooperation” (Smith 2002, 67). The main goal of the report was that states would consult one another regarding international issues of major concern, and when “feasible and desirable,” take joint action to solve common problems (Smith 2002, 67). These objectives were non-binding on member states because the document was not ratified by either the Community or the national legislatures. Foreign policy cooperation would be accomplished on an intergovernmental basis, outside the EC framework. The Luxembourg Report represented the first attempt at institutionalization and it created standards for future developments regarding European foreign policy.

In 1973 European foreign ministers met in Copenhagen to assess the accomplished objectives since the 1970 summit and to affirm their desire for further political integration. One issue was at stake however, namely European Community’s relationship with the United States. As the European leaders sought to define EC’s role in the world, the transatlantic relationship came into the spotlight. Hazel Smith (2002, 73) acknowledges this tension by stating that the European Community was “anxious to assert its independence and at the same time, to preserve US security leadership.” The Europeans felt comfortable with the military protection that the US was providing but they did not want the US to become central to their political development. However, in terms of European political integration, the Copenhagen Report is important because it signaled to the outside world that cooperation on foreign policy had become a reality.
The report also reinforced the decision-making procedures established in the Luxembourg Report and emphasized the powerful role that the foreign ministers of member states played in establishing the course of EC’s foreign policy.

In the same year as when the Copenhagen Report was created, the European political leaders drafted the Document on the European Identity which was motivated by the Community’s desire to speak with one voice in international relations. The document was also a response to attempts by Henry Kissinger, Nixon’s National Security Adviser, to draw a new Atlantic Charter between the US and Europe. However, Kissinger’s comments regarding EU’s junior status in the transatlantic relationship offered a further incentive for the Europeans to seek a new global identity separate from that of the US. The document stated the importance of the transatlantic friendship for the European Community, but affirmed Europe’s desire to be regarded as an equal partner in the relationship. The European leaders also asserted the fundamental elements that stand at the basis of European unity which must become central to any state wishing to join the Community. The document outlined the principles of representative democracy, the rule of law, social justice, economic progress and respect for human rights which are at the core of European history and would represent the basis of EC’s external actions. Although it aimed to identify common European values and affirm EC’s greater role in the world, the Document on European Identity was also the first of a series of attempts by the European Community to define its increasingly powerful economic and political status in relationship with its most important ally, the United States. Nevertheless, Europe’s heavy reliance on US military protection prevented the Community from taking a stronger stand against the United States. This “sometimes contradictory” relationship was not clarified until twenty years later, in the Maastricht Treaty (Smith 2002, 78).
Second Stage (1981-1993)

According to Hazel Smith (2002, 85), the second part of the EU foreign policy development lasted from 1981 to 1993 and could be labeled as “giving foreign policy a treaty base.” This period was characterized by increasing attempts to institutionalize foreign policy agreements and was defined by the 1987 Single European Act and the 1993 Treaty on European Union. The first effort to institutionalize the Community’s increasing involvement in foreign policy came about in 1984 when an Italian statesman by the name of Altiero Spinelli proposed the European Parliament Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union. Spinelli was an advocate of European federalism and he designed a common institutional framework, establishing that certain decisions would be taken by the Union alone, while others would be handled in cooperation by member states and the Union. Foreign policy however, would still be conducted by states in an intergovernmental manner. As Smith (2002, 87) stated, “the proposal did not suggest any transfer of sovereignty to the Union on foreign policy,” because member states would still retain the dominant role in decision-making. Although the proposal did not pass, its importance consists in the ideas that it proposed which would eventually become central to the 1987 Single European Act and the Treaty on European Union.

The document that would provide a treaty basis for the European Political Community and would combine and reform the positions adopted in the Treaty of Rome with those in the EPC was signed in 1987 and it was known as the Single European Act (SEA). The treaty’s main objective was to advance the creation of a European Union. Its main aim was that member states would “consult each other on any foreign policy matters of general interest” (Smith 2002, 92). States were encouraged to seek common ground in their policies and adopt ‘European’ positions
whenever possible. Furthermore, member states were advised not to make decisions that would inhibit the Community from acting in a cohesive manner. However, it is important to observe that no enforcement mechanisms were created in the treaty and that adherence to the established provisions was purely voluntary. In the words of Smith (2002, 92), “the short-term aims of the treaty were simply to codify the consensus agreed in the previously agreed reports.” Some of the commitments that governments did make concerned formal meetings between the foreign ministers of member states which would take place four times a year in order to discuss foreign policy matters. Nevertheless, even with the ratification of the Single European Act which bound member states by legal agreement to consult with one another, ultimate responsibility for foreign policy remained with individual states.

Unlike the Single European Act which only codified previously approved agreements, the Treaty on European Union or the Maastricht Treaty, ratified in 1993, introduced new objectives for the Community’s foreign and security policy. Its language was more direct and cooperation among member states was no longer only encouraged but rather expected. Title V of the treaty introduced provisions on a common foreign and security policy including “the framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence” (Smith 2002, 97). Furthermore, the treaty represented a dramatic turn in the way member states viewed the Union’s capabilities in the foreign policy realm. For the first time, the states admitted in writing that the EC/EU is endowed with the authority to carry out a common foreign policy, not just simply encourage intergovernmental cooperation (Smith 2002, 97). The main motivation behind the treaty was that the Union achieve an “influential and visible role” in the world (Smith 2002, 97). To meet that goal, the document makes that “member states shall consult and shall ensure conformity in their national positions, and they shall avoid actions that may damage the Union’s
effectiveness in international relations” (Smith 2002, 97). The focus is on the word “shall,” which implies a certain degree of obligation upon member states to find common ground and cooperate on foreign policy matters. Furthermore, the treaty makes reference to the commitment that member states make to represent the European Union’s positions in international meetings and forums. The document refers especially to Great Britain and France which are permanent members of the UN Security Council and who commit to “ensure the defence of the positions and the interests of the Union” (Smith 2002, 98). The Council is responsible to ensure compliance, although such action is very difficult to enforce. In regards to Europe’s relationship to the United States, the treaty makes clear that the stipulations about a common defense and security policy would not interfere in any way with member states’ commitments to NATO.

The Maastricht Treaty, ratified in 1993, abolished the EPC and replaced it with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) for which general objectives were outlined. In the words of Oudenaren (2000, 280), the treaty created “stronger legal commitment on the part of the member states to develop a common foreign policy.” Nevertheless, despite a stronger language and greater expectations that member states would cooperate, Bretherton (2006, 168) acknowledges that the goals espoused in the Treaty on European Union were too general and thus the treaty proved disappointing in practice. However, Bretherton admits that the treaty did eliminate the uneasiness surrounding topics related to a common military system. Before the creation of the CFSP, any reference to military and defense was considered taboo. Therefore, Maastricht Treaty’s “reference to military security in the TEU represented an important departure from the exclusively civilian character of the European Community and the essentially political nature of EPC” (Bretherton 2006, 168).
Third Stage (1993-Present)

The final component in Hazel Smith’s analysis of the development of a common European foreign policy takes into account the recent changes that have taken place as the world entered into the twenty-first century. This period is characterized by a European Union whose attention shifted from global foreign policy matters to eastward expansion. The possibility of enlarging the Union represented both an immense opportunity and a challenge for European leaders as most states applying for admission into the EU had been under communist governments for half a century. Nevertheless, this period, as defined by Smith (2002, 100), is one in which a common foreign and security policy begins to represent the status quo. The treaty that came into fruition in this period was the Amsterdam Treaty, which was signed in 1999. The document further strengthened common foreign and security policy procedures, but it did not bring about any significant changes to the philosophical argument of the Maastricht Treaty. Just like the treaty before it, the Amsterdam Treaty stressed the importance of continued cooperation between member states and the duties of each state to represent the Union’s views in international decision-making forums. Institutionally however, the treaty created new organizations and procedures to deal with the foreign policy aspect of the Union. The major innovations of the Amsterdam Treaty were the creation of a Policy Planning Unit for the common foreign and security policy and the creation of a secretary-general within the Council Secretariat to deal with the CFSP (Smith 2002, 101). While the Policy Planning Unit was given the authority to monitor developments in the CFSP, the Secretary-General of the Council was named the ‘High Representative’ for foreign and security policy. Javier Solana, the former Spanish foreign minister, would become the first High Representative and would represent the
interests of the Union abroad along with the EU President and the president of the Commission. The appointment of the astute and experienced Solana by European leaders signaled their honest desire to improve the foreign policy aspect of the Union.

The European leaders, aware of the EU’s geopolitical limitations, sought to define EU’s foreign policy in the twenty-first century by establishing the Union as an economic powerhouse, exercising “soft power” in its external relations. Therefore, they created the document entitled “A Secure Europe in a Better World” in 2003. The document affirms Europe’s willingness to take on greater global responsibilities as its economic power increases and its member states’ interests converge. The report also outlines the global threats that Europe is facing due to an increasingly interconnected world, and affirms EU’s affinity for, and belief in effective multilateral action (European Security Strategy, 2003). As James Rubin (2008), author of “Building a New Atlantic Alliance” states, “for Europeans, international institutions and multilateral diplomacy are not a choice but a way of life.” Nevertheless, the document stresses the EU’s need to develop a more pronounced political role in the world. Although it has made significant progress in the foreign policy area, the EU must continue to strengthen present institutions which will allow it to respond to international crises quicker and with greater authority. Only by becoming more active will the Union be able to carry a greater political weight in international relations. Furthermore, the report also acknowledges the need for the EU to become ‘more coherent’ in its external policies. Such a degree of unity can only be achieved when member states advocate and incorporate ‘European’ policies into their own national policies, thereby acting in partnership with supranational European institutions.
The Transatlantic Alliance since the End of World War Two

After examining the historic evolution of a common European foreign policy with its challenges and successes, this paper continues by analyzing the ways in which the transatlantic relationship was impacted by such developments in Europe. This section observes not only the changes in attitudes between the two regions but also the essential adjustments in American and European policies towards one another. Overall, the United States has encouraged European integration since its initial stages although there have been times of tension as US administrations and European leaders often had divergent views about world order. One of the main causes of this gap in expectations was based on the realities of that time. While Europe was attempting to unify and increase its political role on the world stage without vital military backing, the United States was a superpower in the traditional sense, possessing a highly skilled and advanced military and commanding respect across the world due to its hard power and its willingness to use it. Therefore, Europe has become the main advocate of international treaties and multilateral solutions to global problems through effective diplomacy and humanitarian aid, while the US came to be associated with unilateralism and military intervention when its self-interests were at stake. Nevertheless, the transatlantic alliance has been at the center of both Europe’s and US’ interests and it has remained an important partnership despite frequent tensions and disagreements between the two powers. As the 2003 European Union’s report entitled “A Secure Europe in a Better World” (2003, 13) makes clear, the transatlantic alliance is “irreplaceable.”
Cooperation and Tension in the 1980s and 1990s

The reality today is that the US-EU alliance is interdependent politically, economically and culturally, sharing similar values and histories. The United States “has been and continues to be, by far the most important of the Union’s partners in the industrialized world” (Smith 2002, 126). Furthermore, in terms of military security, Smith (2002, 127) continues by stating that “NATO remains the paramount security institution in Europe.” Smith (2002, 127) divides the relationship between the United States and the EU in two time periods; the first one from 1969 to 1989 was characterized by “contradiction and conflict;” the second period from 1989 onwards was marked by “cooperation and division of labor.” However, these labels are overly general, as both periods witnessed varying degrees of conflicts and disagreements as well as warm and supportive relations between the two regions.

With the creation of the European Political Community and the Luxembourg Report in 1970, Europe was becoming more assertive on the world stage. Furthermore, the 1973 Document on European Identity was enacted in order that Europe would be able to speak with a unified voice, independently of the United States’ policies and interests. Therefore, the 1970s were characterized by an increasingly self-reliant Europe, although this was not the case in military terms. NATO, under US leadership, was still the main provider of security to Western Europe against Russian intentions. Despite this fact, European ambitions of achieving greater influence in international relations were often met with suspicion from the United States. The US still regarded Europe as relatively weak and incapable of producing unified outcomes yet feared any attempts by the European leaders to exercise greater independence from its military and political protection. However, in slight defiance to the US, the Europeans refused to support the war in Vietnam and were more willing than the Americans to engage in trade relations with the
communist nations in Eastern Europe. As the original six countries forming the European Community were conducting enlargement talks with Britain, Denmark, Ireland and Norway in 1971, the US, under Nixon’s leadership, eliminated the Bretton Woods monetary system. This action infuriated the European leaders mainly because of the unilateral manner in which the US acted. This decision by the United States prompted the European governments to seek even greater unity and ponder on the possibility of a Western European monetary system. Even Great Britain, often regarded as the mediator between the US and continental Europe, realized that it could not depend exclusively on its American ally and that it needed a closer relationship with Europe. In this regards, American anxieties about European instincts for greater self-reliance met with European worries about US’ interests in seeing an economically and politically stable Western Europe.

In 1973 the US-European relationship experienced increased tensions as the Yom Kippur War was being waged between Israel and the Arab states, which eventually led to the Arab oil embargo. The Arab states significantly reduced their oil supplies to Western Europe on the premise that they were supporting Israel and the United States. As a result, the European Community issued a statement in which it asserted its position, independent of the US, on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Smith 2002, 131). The document stated Europe’s support for both sides and called for a resolution of conflict to take place within the UN framework. Europe therefore demonstrated its affinity for multilateral action and its desire to be seen as independent from the United States in certain areas of foreign policy. Furthermore, Henry Kissinger’s remarks about Europe as having a regional role to play and being a junior partner to the US did not help in bridging the gap that had already been created between the two sides.
Furthermore, the 1980s, when Ronald Reagan was in office, were also marked by strains between the US and Europe mainly because of a difference in ideology that the two regions espoused. The European leaders were increasingly wary of America’s unilateral manner of dealing with other powers such as the USSR, without consulting its allies. However, one must realize that the European states were not always united and often did not pursue the same policies or speak with one voice. Therefore, the US would often find it easier and more efficient dealing with individual states in a bilateral manner without seeking advice from the often slow and ineffective bureaucracy in Brussels. Moreover, in relations with Eastern Europe and especially during the crisis in Poland in which the government hardliners were taking a strong stand against any opposition movement, the US and Europe were often at odds. The US favored sanctions and opposed inducements, while the European Community did not enforce sanctions and was willing to aid the region in order to induce the Polish government to cooperate with its demands. However, once communist governments in Eastern Europe began to crumble in 1989, the US and Europe “were pushed into a much more collaborative relationship than that which had been evidenced in the 1970s and 1980s” (Smith 2002, 135). The fall of communism represented an opportune political landscape for both the US and the EC, an event that brought them closer together and gave way to a new era of partnership and cooperation.

The period identified by Hazel Smith from 1989 onwards represented a time of closer consultations between the two partners despite the fact that the common enemy, the Soviet Union, had vanished from the political scene. Nevertheless, it was also a period in which the European dream of unity was momentarily shattered and the US leadership, politically and militarily, became indispensable in solving any global crisis. Probably the most important security issue outside Europe in the 1990s was the Gulf War of 1990/91. The war demonstrated
US’ undisputed leadership but it also demonstrated EC’s inability to act collectively. This realization by the European leaders prompted the creation and ratification of the Maastricht Treaty two years later. Furthermore, the Gulf War represented a turning point in the transatlantic alliance because it displayed the reality of an unequal partnership between the US and Western Europe despite European attempts at greater independence during the 1970s and 1980s. Smith (2002, 136) states that the Gulf War exposed “a security alliance, not of two cohesive partners, but of the United States and twelve disparate actors.” Additionally, the war in Yugoslavia was another proof of the failures of the EC/EU foreign policy and the need for American leadership under NATO’s umbrella. The experience in Yugoslavia demonstrated to the EU member states that diplomacy without military capability is often futile.

However, the immediate post Cold War period was also a time in which subsequent US administrations recognized the EC’s importance when dealing with economic and political issues. Thus, both George Bush Sr. and Bill Clinton encouraged further European integration and a closer transatlantic partnership by signing bilateral agreements in 1990 as well as in 1995. The 1995 New Transatlantic Agenda acknowledged the US and EU’s leading roles in the world by stating that “for over fifty years, the transatlantic partnership has been the leading force for peace and prosperity for ourselves and for the world,” and affirmed each member’s commitment to work in a multilateral fashion in order to address global problems (US Mission to the EU, 1995). Furthermore, the Agenda also referred to military security by reiterating US and EU’s commitment to maintain NATO as the supreme military body providing protection to the region. The Agenda further proclaimed that “NATO remains, for its members, the centrepiece of transatlantic security, providing the indispensable link between North America and Europe” (US Mission to the EU, 1995). The signing of the 1995 New Transatlantic Agenda represented US’
decision to acknowledge Europe’s “pivotal role as the centre of the new politico-security architecture emerging in post-Cold War Europe” (Smith 2002, 138). Thus, the 1990s witnessed the emergence of an internationally recognized collective Europe, albeit with institutional flaws such as concrete enforcement mechanism that often hampered it to act in a coordinated manner.

Reforming the Alliance in the Post Cold War Era

Since the end of the Cold War the US and the EU have struggled to construct a viable strategy within their partnership since the common enemy, the USSR, that united them in the second part of the twentieth century had disappeared, and with it, the military threat. However, the two regions have acknowledged that their partnership is based not just on self-interested goals or ideological beliefs but rather on deeply shared values and a common history, referred to as ‘acquis Atlantique.’ Both the United States and Europe value democracy and liberty along with a respect for human rights and the rule of law, among others. Furthermore, the US has realized since the Cold War and especially since September 11, 2001 that it needs a strong and united Europe to effectively fight terrorism, restructure failed states and stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction especially to rogue states and terrorist organizations. The EU has developed into a truly civilian force and it has become the main provider of humanitarian aid and state reconstruction efforts. On the other hand, the EU realized early in the 1990s that American leadership is indispensable and valuable to maintaining global order. Although the two powers may not agree on every issue, there is a commonly accepted belief that the transatlantic alliance must be strengthened in order for it to continue to be a force for good in the world.

Both the United States and the EU acknowledge the importance of the transatlantic alliance in maintaining global stability. Andre Moravcsik (2003, 81) states that the transatlantic
relationship still remains the “most important diplomatic relationship in the world.” Although there have been disputes between the two regions especially in the 1970s and 1980s, with France as America’s biggest critic, the transatlantic alliance has managed to remain intact since its creation. Ivo Daalder (2001, 554) asserts that “rough patches in US-European relations are neither infrequent nor allowed to fester for long.” Conflicts arise mainly when US administrations favor unilateral approaches to solving crises around the world and fail to take into consideration European viewpoints. Nevertheless, although some scholars have predicted that the transatlantic alliance would grow further apart as time goes on, Daalder (2001, 564) confidently states that “the worst bilateral relationship between the United States and a European country (France) is still much better, deeper and more significant than the best bilateral relationship the United States has with any country in Asia (Japan).”

One of the main conflicts that arose between the two powers since the end of the Cold War has centered on the Iraq War. In light of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Europeans stood behind the Americans in solitude and jointly agreed to invoke Article V of the NATO Charter, declaring war on those groups and states responsible for the attack. Article V (NATO 1949) makes clear that any attack on one of the NATO members is considered an attack on all members. Hill (2004, 145) believes that the act of solidarity displayed by the European leaders and public alike was genuine. Nevertheless, as America waged war against Iraq, European attitudes began to change and divisions within the Union started to appear to the surface. Great Britain and the Netherlands, long self-proclaimed Atlanticists, decided to support US’ intervention while France and Germany formed an opposition camp and refused to consent that military intervention was required. Therefore, since Europe was once again split in their foreign policy, President Bush adopted a ‘divide and conquer’ strategy through which he dealt
bilaterally with those European states willing to aid his ‘war on terror.’ In order words, after years of encouraging European efforts to integrate politically, the US was now willing to divide Europe and use its weaknesses for its own interests. This strategy, however, was mainly possible due to Europe’s inability to speak with a common voice, proving the limitations of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Nevertheless, John Peterson (2004), author of “America as a European Power: The End of Empire by Integration?” states that the strategy employed by Bush during the Iraq War is counterproductive to both sides. According to his argument, any viable coalition needs the credibility that the collective EU brings in diplomatic relations.

Thus, the Iraq War proved to be a defining moment for European foreign policy, as the strength of the CFSP was being tested by Europe’s most important ally, the United States. Although the Europeans were depicted as being much less united than they have claimed to be before the war, the Iraq crisis did not eliminate the importance of the CFSP. Christopher Hill (2004, 160) believes that in the long term, the Iraq War actually strengthened the CFSP and prompted the Europeans to prevent any future divisions from taking place. In the words of Hill (2004, 161), “September 11 sharpened the existing contradictions in European foreign policy-making, and made them more visible, but it neither created significant new divisions nor rendered solidarity unworkable.” As the European Union remains a complex “community of sovereign, yet closely intertwined democratic states and peoples,” with each state pursuing its own interests in the world as well as working with other European states to advocate for similar goals, the CFSP remains a relevant tool for Europeans for the foreseeable future (Maul 2005, 793).

Smith (2002) regards the period from 1989 onwards as a time in which Europe and the United States cooperated more effectively but also divided their goals and policies to fit their
respective powers and capabilities. Other scholars join Smith (2002, 135) in labeling this phenomenon, in which both powers acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses and act accordingly, as a “division of labor.” Andrew Moravesik (2003, 81) argues that what has taken place within the transatlantic relationship since the end of the Cold War can be analyzed through the “comparative advantage” lenses. In other words, the United States, as a military power has often decided to act unilaterally and strike in a preemptive manner as was the case during the Iraq War, while Europe, lacking a cohesive and impressive military force, has relied mainly on its soft power - its attractiveness to other nations - to achieve its goals. As Hanns Maull (2005), author of “Europe and the New Balance of Global Order” states, the EU is able to exercise influence in the world not through what it does but through what it represents. Its integration process, which has eliminated the prospects of war on the continent and ‘tore down’ borders between the European nations through the common economic market, has been a powerful testimony to other regions attempting economic and political integration. According to Maull (2005), EU’s successful integration confers it a greater legitimacy and authority in international relations. Therefore, it is not Europe’s political heavyweight or its military backing that confers it authority in the world, but rather its powerful market, its capital and technology resources and its soft power (Maull 2005).

On the other hand, the United States has often been at the opposite end of the political continuum in this relationship, exercising a strong independent will in international relations and imposing its objectives through a display of hard power: military, economic and technological. America’s size and relative isolation from other states coupled with its exceptionalist tradition in foreign policy allow the US “to deny the necessity of multilateral compromise and to call instead for a more Americanist approach to world politics” (Wallace 2001, 34). Therefore, it is no
surprise that conflicts and tensions have been prevalent between the two regions once the uniting factor, the USSR, had vanished. Nevertheless, Europe has acknowledged the historic, geographical and political factors that have influenced American foreign policy over the centuries. In a similar way, the US has come to regard Europe as equally important in this relationship, due to its global influence through its soft power. Therefore, it seems logical to assert that one power needs the other in order to maintain global balance. Moravcsik is convinced that in order for the Atlantic alliance to remain stable and modernize, the US and the EU must complement each other. He states that “complementarity, not conflict, should be the transatlantic watchword” (Moravcsik 2003, 75).

Conflicts in a relationship often arise not only because of different views on policies and ways to achieve them, but also due to internal imbalances between the two parties forming the relationship. The United States, victorious after the Second World War and the only power capable of facing the Soviet Union, has viewed its role in the transatlantic relationship as somewhat superior to that of Europe. Although it was willing to help the European states to reconstruct economically after the war, the US was careful to maintain leverage in its relationship with what become the European Community and later the EU. Because of its military presence in Europe, the US demanded that it have a seat at the European decision making table. However, the European leaders, especially the French, have often resented US’ influence and attempted to construct an independent European military defense system. Europe’s main goal throughout the second part of the twentieth century in regards to the transatlantic relationship, expressed in an EU report “A Secure Europe in a Better World,” has been to acquire “an effective and balanced partnership with the USA” (European Security Strategy 2003). Economically, the EU has achieved equality with the United States and the US has since been
more open to take into account the European point of view economically. Therefore, one might expect that if Europe were to build a military defense system which would rival that of the US, the transatlantic relationship would finally reach the desired balance. However, such a course of action has not been pondered seriously by European leaders and it has generally received widespread criticism from scholars writing on the subject such as Hanns Maull and Andrew Moravcsik.

Nevertheless, a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has been proposed by French and British leaders and has finally come into fruition in 1999. European leaders have been very careful, however, to maintain their loyalty to NATO. Their explanation for the creation of the ESDP was to provide military assistance in places “where NATO as a whole is not engaged” (Smith 2002, 19). The Americans have been, at times, skeptical of European efforts to create a united military system outside NATO boundaries, but the European lack of real commitment in this area has generally dissipated American anxieties. First of all, the EU is well aware of the member states’ commitments to NATO and their own national defense systems and is careful not to infringe upon those responsibilities. Secondly, Europeans, in general, are unwilling to increase their military spending, a trend that is likely to remain true in the near future according to analysts. In the words of Moravcsik (2003, 83), who dispels the argument that a strong European military system would bring equality into the transatlantic relationship, “a common European force with the capacity to wage high-intensity, low-casualty war around the globe remains a pipe dream.” Lastly, the European have developed over time a sort of reflex in regards to NATO, coming to the conclusion that it is profitable and certainly more comfortable to rely on American-led NATO forces even when their course of action runs contrary to that of the Europeans. Moravcsik recommends that if Europe desires to gain greater military legitimacy
in America’s eyes, it should increase its role in NATO and fight along American forces, not in competition with them.

Therefore, in light of present conditions, it seems reasonable to assert that US will remain largely a military heavyweight in international relations, while Europe will continue to be portrayed as a civilian power. The ‘division of labor’ and the ‘comparative advantage’ arguments seem best suited for a successful transition into the twenty-first century for the transatlantic alliance. Europe is a civilian power, and it has contributed to peacekeeping more than the US has, using its economic power to aid states that were on the brink of failure (Moravcsik 2003, 78). America, on the other hand, is a military power and has therefore employed a different strategy, combating terrorist organizations in rogue and failed states. As US fights terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan, Europe becomes an indispensable ally that could aid the US in post conflict reconstruction and monitoring. The Atlantic partnership would become equal when “each side would profit from being responsible for what it does best” and “American military power and European civilian power are deployed together at targets of mutual concern” (Moravcsik 2003, 81-84). Thus, the US must resist the temptation to label the EU as a second rate power, while the EU must abandon any attempts at military greatness outside NATO structures. One question arises however concerning the role that the newly ratified Lisbon Treaty is likely to play in the near future in shaping Europe’s ambitions of becoming a stronger global player. Studying the specific provisions within the treaty pertaining to EU’s foreign policy represents the first step in determining the changes that the Lisbon Treaty will bring about.
Provisions in the Treaty of Lisbon

European leaders, although acknowledging the EU’s strengths and weaknesses relative to the United States and valuing their partnership with America, have attempted throughout time to construct a somewhat independent course through which they would be able to assert greater European power on a global scale. This ambition is evident with the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, which despite its weaknesses, represents the pinnacle of the European process of political integration. It further symbolizes the success of European leaders in convincing the citizens of Europe that a new treaty is necessary for the well-being of Europe. After failed attempts in 2005, when both the Dutch and the French rejected a new all-encompassing EU Constitution, the European leaders re-evaluated their ambitions and drafted a treaty in 2007 that would contain the same provisions as the constitution but would not replace previous treaties. The new treaty was ratified by all of the twenty-seven members of the Union and entered into force on December 1, 2009. As Anthony Luzzatto Gardner (2010, 105) states, the Lisbon Treaty “will be the EU’s last significant institutional reform for the foreseeable future.” Therefore, a close examination of the Treaty’s provisions regarding EU’s external policy is important to understanding where the EU is heading and how it plans to proceed in that direction.

The aim of the treaty is to create a stronger, more powerful Union. Elmar Brok, the German politician instrumental in creating the new diplomatic service within the EU, expresses the European leaders’ collective desire for such an outcome by stating: “[W]e must make Europe a global player, not just a global payer” (External Relations 2009). However, the success of the Lisbon Treaty depends on whether member states of the EU commit to the integration process or “focus instead on maintaining their own national prerogatives” (Gardner 2010, 105). The Lisbon Treaty has the potential to further unite European foreign policy and allow the Union to develop
into an even more cohesive force in international relations. However, for such outcomes to become a reality, states must choose to sacrifice their national pride and sovereignty in favor of a supranational decision-making body.

First of all, the Lisbon Treaty introduces new positions within the structure of the EU’s foreign policy such as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and a new President of the Council, which aim to give the Union more coherence and legitimacy in international forums. The post of the High Representative was created in order to provide the EU with a permanent foreign minister, embodying the collective interests of the Union and its CFSP. The person chosen to take on the role of the High Representative will serve a five-year term and will be aided by the European External Action Service, representing a staff of 3,000 diplomats and administrating a budget of four billion Euros (Gardner 2010, 108). However, by choosing the relatively inexperienced Catherine Ashton as the new High Representative, the European leaders have failed to prove through their actions that they are willing to invest greater authority in the foreign policy area. This view is supported by Anthony Gardner (2010, 110) who states in his article that Ashton’s appointment “signaled that EU leaders want the high representative to be their servant, not their rival.” Furthermore, the creation of a new two-year term President of the Council would give anyone the impression that EU’s foreign policy has finally reached the last stages of its consolidation process. However, the lack of specifications on what his concrete duties are and ambiguity regarding the relationship between the High Representative and the President prove that “for all of its virtues, the Lisbon Treaty has not fully streamlined the EU’s leadership” (Gardner 2010, 112).

Despite the imperfections of the newly created positions within the EU structure, the Lisbon Treaty brings into focus other important aspects related to foreign policy. Its provisions
however are similar if not identical to those present in the Maastricht Treaty. The Lisbon Treaty makes clear to member states that cooperation and coordination in respect to the Union’s foreign policy objectives must become standard practice. The Treaty’s Title V labeled as “General Provisions on the Union’s External Action and Specific Provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy” states that the EU’s actions abroad will be guided by the same ideals which prompted the creation of the Union itself, namely “democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the United Nations Charter and international law” (European Union 2007, Ch. 1, Art. 21). However, in order for the Union to be able to implement these values in its external actions, cooperation among states is necessary. The Council, the Commission and the High Representative will ensure cooperation and consistency among state and Union policies.

Furthermore, Article 21 of the Treaty affirms EU’s commitment to a multilateral approach to foreign policy, especially within the framework of the United Nations (European Union 2007). It would be incongruous if the EU, which represents the principle of multilateralism, would be unsupportive of the UN’s joint approach to solving global problems. Article 24 (European Union 2007) asserts EU’s main goal of constructing a common foreign policy, namely to represent “a cohesive force in international relations.” Therefore, no action must interfere with the Union’s actions and it must not “impair its effectiveness” in the world (European Union 2007, Art. 24). Member states are required to merge their national policies with those the Union adopts in a spirit of “loyalty and mutual solidarity” (European Union 2007, Art. 24). The Treaty also makes clear that if the Union were to achieve greater influence and a more powerful voice in international relations, it would only be possible if states comply with the EU’s
goals and objectives. Loyalty and cohesion seem to represent the key themes in the Treaty’s positions on EU’s external policies.

Also included in Title V of the Treaty is the somewhat vague statement that first appeared in the Maastricht Treaty about the possibility of a European common defense system. Article 24 begins by stating that the Union will oversee all areas of common foreign policy, even the “framing of a common defence policy that might lead to a common defence” (European Union 2007). This future prospect remains an ambiguous statement about a long debated ‘European’ dream. Nevertheless, the Treaty clarifies that a common defense system will in no way interfere with member states’ provisions and responsibilities within NATO. However, the Treaty stipulates the creation of the European Defence Agency, which will coordinate military spending and technological innovation among states’ defense capabilities. The role of the agency, according to the Treaty is to “identify operational requirements, promote measures to satisfy those requirements, contribute to identifying and, where appropriate, implementing any measure needed to strengthen the industrial and technological base of the defence sector” (European Union 2007, Art. 42). Such provision, despite an unclear mandate and time table, embodies the Union’s success over time in eradicating fears about an overly powerful supranational body such as the EU. It symbolizes furthermore the willingness of European leaders and states to exercise a greater, more cohesive military role in the future. However, it is unclear whether the European promise not to interfere with the responsibilities of NATO will hold true over time.

Ultimately, the Treaty of Lisbon brings some important changes to the structure of the European common foreign and security policy. In addition to creating two new positions, a permanent President of the Council and a High Representative, which are meant to streamline
EU’s role in international forums and organizations such as the UN, the treaty also mandates that states conform their national policies to those of the EU. Nevertheless, due to a lack of enforcement mechanisms and the unwillingness of large states such as Great Britain, Germany and France to subordinate their national priorities and adopt those of the Union, foreign policy decision making within the EU “remains intergovernmental rather than supranational” (Gardner 2010, 110). Even with the ratification of the Treaty, member states will retain control of their defense policymaking and it will depend on them whether they agree to provide military resources to EU missions. However, in relationship with the United States, the EU will likely be able to provide an even stronger and more coordinated undertaking in sharing global problems. Since it appears that the EU security policy will not undermine the role of NATO, the United States should resist the temptation to view the Lisbon Treaty with suspicion, but rather encourage Europe to develop a greater role within NATO structures. Europe’s military responsibilities within NATO would be consolidated in the near future due to European efforts in integrating member states’ defense systems through the European Defence Agency. Nevertheless, it still remains true that each state must voluntarily comply with the requirements elaborated in the treaty and act in the interests of the Union, out of ‘loyalty and mutual solidarity.’

**Conclusion**

The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty represents a new opportunity for the European Union to exercise a greater role in the world both politically and economically. The advent of the Obama administration symbolizes the opening of a new era in the transatlantic relationship, one based on equality of roles with a greater emphasis on multilateral structures and organizations.
The US is a military, economic and political power, albeit in relative decline, while the EU is becoming a more assertive civilian force, using its soft power as an effective diplomatic tool. Nevertheless, in the face of an increasingly interdependent and globalized world, the US and the EU have similar interests, namely combating terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and expanding political and economic freedom (Schnabel and Rocca 2005, 64). Therefore, it becomes cliché, albeit true, to assert that both powers need one another. Since the end of the Cold War, the US and the EU have acted in a manner synonymous with the ‘division of labor’ concept and have used their best attributes to achieve their interests and maintain global order. Although transatlantic crises have been cyclical events throughout the post-World War Two period, especially when US presidents pursued unilateral policies, the transatlantic relationship has never been seriously tarnished.

The main arguments of this paper regarding the evolution of a common European foreign policy and the dynamic of the transatlantic relationship can be summarized in the following points:

- The EU has been attempting to centralize its foreign policy system, while at the same time being careful not to threaten member states’ sovereignty.

- Although it has integrated economically far more quickly and successfully, the EU has nevertheless managed to create a more unified foreign policy structure since 1970 when the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was first established.

- The EU still remains a largely intergovernmental structure even after the passage of the Lisbon Treaty which, in the case of foreign policy, has streamlined EU’s leadership.
• The Lisbon Treaty has the potential to bring about greater coherence to EU’s external policies and subsequently increase Europe’s political role in the world.

• The transatlantic relationship, although plagued by frequent disagreements and conflicting views, has nevertheless remained intact since the end of the Second World War.

• Lastly, the transatlantic alliance must abandon its Cold War mentality and adopt a complementary approach in which each region uses its relative powers to overcome mutual global challenges.

The Obama administration, which promised to break away from George Bush’s often unilateral policies, has been welcomed by the Europeans. With the advent of a multilaterally-prone American administration, the EU is set to bring about equality in the transatlantic relationship and achieve greater recognition from America. However, in early February, President Obama cancelled his bi-yearly trip to Europe, a long-held tradition between the two partners. This decision has raised questions and concerns among the Americans and Europeans alike. Obama’s emphasis on America’s unique relationship with Asia and his efforts to bridge the gap in relations between the US and China have slightly annoyed the Europeans, who recently have had their hopes dashed by Obama’s decision to cancel the US-EU summit.

Obama’s choice of action, however, comes in sharp contrast with his initial statements about the transatlantic partnership, in which he asserted that America wanted a strong ally from Europe and looked forward to continuing its partnership with the EU. Obama’s decision could reflect a diminished interest on the US’ part in the transatlantic alliance or America’s impatience with Europe’s inability to speak with one voice. Nevertheless, the frenzy created by the media around this topic must be analyzed from a critical point of view; one must not conclude that Obama’s
decision to cancel the summit reflects the administration’s decrease in interest in the Atlantic Alliance in the long run. It should constitute, however, a warning call to European leaders that President Obama is a pragmatist who is less interested in who speaks for Europe and more interested in whether Europe is willing to “commit and to deliver” (BBC 2010). In other words, the United States desires Europe’s assistance more than its mere advice.

With a newly ratified Lisbon Treaty, the EU might attempt to achieve greatness in its own right, independent of the United States. The transatlantic relationship has been characterized by mutual trust as well as suspicion and frustration. American administrations have often adopted ambiguous approaches to European developments in the foreign policy and defense security domain. On the one hand, the US has been, and still is, encouraging Europe to “shoulder more global economic responsibility,” while remaining skeptical of moves towards an independent foreign policy that may not align with America’s (Wallace 2001, 20). In this sense, the transatlantic alliance continues to remain a ‘special’ one. Europe too, has often been torn between the conflicting desires of its leaders regarding the transatlantic relationship. While France and Germany have advocated a more independent and assertive foreign policy path, other states, such as England and the Netherlands, have supported a closer alliance with the Americans. Thus the EU leaders, while attempting to construct a common ‘European’ foreign policy, have also been very careful to assure their transatlantic partner that their relationship remains intact and would not be affected by such structural changes. Nevertheless, as the Lisbon Treaty becomes the status quo within the EU, it is important for the European leaders to heed Wallace’s advice and “resist the temptation to climb up the bully pulpit” (2001, 31).

European foreign policy has come a long way since its initial stages after the Second World War, but it has nevertheless remained a largely intergovernmental process. According to
Christopher Hill (2004, 160), the EU is still characterized by a ‘dialectical relationship’ between national interests and ambitions on the one hand and “the perceived need for solidarity” emphasized by EU leaders on the other. The Lisbon Treaty represents a collective effort of European states to combine their forces and create a stronger, more reputable Union. It is also a statement to the US and the rest of the world that for the foreseeable future, EU states will continue to value national sovereignty in matters of foreign policy. In the words of Anthony Gardner (2010, 119), the Lisbon Treaty will most likely provide greater coherence and consensus among European states but such outcomes will be “evolutionary, not revolutionary.” This realization allows for the US to act decisively and to modernize the transatlantic relationship in a way that is beneficial for both powers. However, the Obama administration must give greater emphasis to the transatlantic alliance and offer the Europeans a sense of continued security and equal cooperation for this to occur. The US and the EU must become counterparts, not counterweights, consolidating their relationship in order to protect the interests and values of the West in an ever-changing world.
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