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"La politica estera e di sicurezza dell'Unione europea "

Il Segretario generale della Convenzione ha ricevuto dal Sig. Lamberto Dini, membro della Convenzione, il contributo ripreso in allegato.

EUROPEAN CONVENTION

**Contribution by
Senator Lamberto Dini
on the subject**

The European Union's Foreign and Security Policy

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The views regarding the priority aims of this *nth* reform of the Treaties of the European Union may not be convergent yet. On one point, however, there seems to be broad agreement: the necessity of giving the European Union the instruments it needs in order to have a credible foreign, security and defence policy.

Various factors have contributed since the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Europe to focus attention on this need, which Europeans had always been hesitant in addressing, owing to their different traditions, varied membership of military alliances and possession or non-possession of nuclear weapons.

New facts have increased the awareness of the EU countries in this field: the challenge of terrorism; the impatience of the United States with Europe's shortcomings; the revision of the Atlantic Alliance in terms of aims and geographical scope; and recognition that a political Europe is inconceivable without a security and military dimension.

Europe is still doing a balancing act between national interests and common interests; it has succeeded in putting the euro on the world scene but it does not yet have a credible political identity. Its common foreign policy has been satisfied with rare and always fragile successes. Collective defence would need agreed guidelines and much larger financial resources.

In addition to its traditional defence tasks, the Atlantic Alliance is called upon to face crisis situations within much larger perimeters, to deal with more widespread threats that are sometimes without a face, to operate with heterogeneous coalitions. This requires Europe to be able to act more coherently, both inside and outside NATO.

To take up the international challenge or become bit players, this is the dilemma facing Europeans. We are celebrating NATO's triumph in the Cold War with the co-optation of yesterday's enemy. But at the same time we must recognize the risk of NATO being absent from the battlefields of the new war and, above all, from the strategic decisions of the new world order.

In the first place, the new NATO must be reformulated by the Europeans, because they have the greatest need for it. They cannot sit passively by and see it slowly decline or survive in purely formal terms, without a political and strategic foundation. It is the Europeans who must establish a new relationship with the United States on the basis of an enhanced capability, otherwise their autonomy and room for manoeuvre will be severely diminished.

The European Union can help to reduce the risks inherent in the unilateralism of the only remaining superpower, it can help to reconcile global power with the commitment to democracy on a world scale. This means sharing power and making it easier for others to exercise power; it means making democracy and justice, as well as economic development, the keystones of a foreign policy that must be centred on interdependence and guided by multilateralism.

The unilateralist temptation to which the United States is subject is accentuated by a fundamental factor: the overwhelming scale of American power. America is the "new Rome", but on a global level and its military spending is equal to that of the ten countries ranking after it taken together. The founding fathers of the American Constitution believed that too much power should not be concentrated in any one branch of government and created a system of checks and balances to prevent this from occurring. The same criterion should be applied to States in the international system. It is therefore right to say that America must be flanked by strong partners that can prevent it from succumbing to temptations and making mistakes. Europe is the obvious and natural candidate for this role. It is absurd that the solution of every conflict in every part of the world should be exclusively at the initiative of the United States. The problem, as Chancellor Schroeder has recalled, is not that the United States is too strong. "It is Europe that is too weak".

The European Union runs the risk of falling behind Russia as an ally of the United States. Russia has drawn close to NATO with the new procedures inaugurated at the Pratica di Mare summit, taking advantage of the crucial help it is giving the United States in the war against terrorism, while the majority of European countries is hard pressed to make a contribution and their inadequate cohesion could bring the importance of the European pillar into question.

Here again the events of 11 September have accelerated a process that President Putin had already initiated. For Russia, integration with the richer and more advanced nations is the only way a country that is still backward by western standards can achieve lasting growth. Russia's interests are now inextricably bound up with its drawing closer to the western camp. This coincides with the strategic priorities of the European Union. Despite the difficult transition from the state to the market, Russia's size and geographic position, military potential and intelligence services make it an important partner. Putin has made a courageous choice, considering the opposition of the military establishment, the unenthusiastic reaction of public opinion, the country's very identity, the inheritance of a totalitarian power that cannot be eliminated from one day to the next, and the age-old peculiarity of the Russian world: for centuries Asian when seen by Europeans and European when seen by Asians. But the only alternative to the country's present opening would be an unsustainable turning in upon itself. Thus, Russia provides an additional stimulus to that of the United States for a more assertive European foreign and security policy.

Harold Macmillan once said that England's relations with America were like those Greece had had with Rome. Today, the metaphor can be applied to the European Union, especially as regards certain parts of the globe, such as the Islamic world. The peoples of the third world have two great fears: the first is that they may be excluded from the process of modernization, left out of the trade in the goods and cultural resources that give rise to contemporary prosperity and create the conditions for democracy; the second is that the integration inherent in the process of modernization will be at the expense of their national identities. Europe thus has a role to play in establishing a dialogue, a

task that is made easier by its geographical closeness to and knowledge of the areas in crisis.

This is especially true for the Middle East and the spiral of violence and intolerance that seems to be driving out all prospects of peace. It is up to Europe, in concert with the United States, to impose the force of reason. Terrorism frustrates every attempt at pacification, obscures the distinction between the intransigent and the moderate, needs an absolute external enemy. The European Union can foster the emergence of a Palestinian leadership no longer exposed to coercion and oriented towards a compromise. It can overcome the extremist Arab refusal of the mere existence of the state of Israel and the support that this refusal is ultimately capable of extorting from the entire Islamic world.

If these are the geopolitical conditions for the European Union to have a role in the world, it is necessary to draw the appropriate conclusions at the institutional level. This, in fact, is the Convention's task: to shape a coherent solution that conforms with the lessons of necessity. There are various points where the Union must innovate with respect to the existing Treaties.

In the first place, apart from purely military matters and questions concerning defence, majority voting should be introduced in the Council for foreign policy decisions. Sometimes essentially marginal issues drag on from one Council meeting to another for lack of unanimity. In this context as well, the threat of a vote would make it easier to reach unanimity rather than isolate the more reluctant countries, as the experience of the Union teaches us.

Clarity and authority can be increased by reducing the number of voices charged with expounding the Union's position. The proposal to bring together in a single person, albeit with different roles and mandates, the present High Representative and the Commissioner (or the Vice-President) responsible for external affairs could contribute to this. It would not be a question of communitizing foreign policy, which would be too audacious a step for the moment, but of giving one person

two separate mandates: one from the Commission and the other from the Council, for the matters for which it is competent.

The external representation of the Union would also gain in clarity if the Union itself had legal personality, so that it could conclude Treaties and international agreements.

The Union should have just one position in multilateral organizations, from the leading financial institutions to all those operating within the ambit of the United Nations, including the Security Council itself. In the International Monetary Fund the quotas of the EU countries outweigh that of the United States, but their combined influence is less. A European seat in the Security Council does not appear feasible at present, but it is possible to imagine, as an intermediate step, a mechanism for close consultation among the permanent and temporary European members of the Council that would ensure they expressed a single policy.

The European Union, in the face of the new challenges, especially the use of military force far from its own frontiers, suffers from two limitations. On the one hand, it is too small with respect to the far-reaching coalitions required to counter terrorism; on the other, it is too big and heterogeneous, especially in the light of its future enlargement. Only a minority of countries in such a large Europe will have the political will and the material means to take part in military actions. For this reason it is necessary for the concept of closer cooperation, unfortunately left out in Nice, to be included in defence policy. This will permit variable coalitions, acting on a mandate from the Union, to take part in international operations according to the will and capability of the individual member countries. It would also make it possible, at some later date, for the Treaties to be supplemented by the mutual defence commitment that is contained today in the remaining clauses of the Treaty of the Western European Union, which could then be totally eliminated. Lastly, it would create the conditions for cooperation in the arms industry among the countries that are really capable of participating.