



Security and Defence Cooperation in the 21st Century: What Issues, What Models?

26 June 2018

International seminar

organised by PhD candidates, who are funded through the International Relations and Strategy programme, with the support of the Directorate General for International Relations and Strategy (DGRIS) of the French Ministry of the Armed Forces and the Institute for Strategic Research (IRSEM)

1. Call for papers

The last French Strategic Review of Defence and National Security stresses the usefulness of defence partnerships (Revue stratégique, 2017). In particular, it highlights the benefits of articulating national and shared interests, as well as strategic autonomy and defence agreements. Thus, cooperation in security and defence matters seems to be of increasing importance in the current international context, characterised by the security-defence continuum.

Although the United Kingdom, one of the leading military powers in Europe (Heisbourg, 2016, Biscop, 2016), decided to leave the European Union (EU), the EU now seems to be ready to deepen its common security and defence policy. Member States have recently committed themselves to increasing their defense efforts and taking on more responsibility for their own security policies. This translates into the recent signing of the Permanent Structured Cooperation project (PESCO), which is a decisive step in overcoming the obstacles of regional cooperation and in helping to find common answers to the continent's main security challenges (PESCO notification 13/11/2017).

This renewed enthusiasm for security and defence cooperation at the EU level easily expands into the broader question of the role that historic military alliances, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, play at the global level. Although maintained, they are today no less discussed and sometimes even called into question. France's initial refusal to intervene in the Syrian conflict, as well as the United States' recent questioning of the Iranian nuclear agreement show the weakness of alliances and, hence, security and defence cooperation. This is further compounded by the return of power politics, especially between China and the United States (Campbell, 2016; Fels and Minh Vu, 2016; Allison, 2017), and budgetary constraints within European countries (Fabbrini et al., 2014; The Military Balance, 2017). The emergence of new actors with hegemonic ambitions, such as China, Russia, India, Turkey and Iran, has exacerbated this weakness. Joint Russia-China military exercises in the Baltic Sea in July 2017 are just one example of this return of power politics.

Contributions from all disciplines (Economics, Geography, History, Law, Political Science, Sociology...) are highly welcome. The ambition of this seminar is to understand how security and defence cooperation operates in the 21st century. We are particularly interested in the various challenges and forms of current and future defence cooperation, be they bilateral, multilateral or international. The main questions we wish to address are:

- Why do we cooperate and how do we cooperate effectively in the 21st century?
- Is today's cooperation on security and defence matters different than it was in the last century (Jervis, 1978)?
- How does defence cooperation, often planned in the medium and long term, match with countries' domestic political agendas?

In other words, the seminar aims at understanding how defence partnerships are currently being redefined (Vaissière, 2003).

2. Topics

The aim of this seminar is to bring together a group of researchers and practitioners from all disciplines in the theoretical field of security and defence studies. In order to better comprehend the issues raised by defence cooperation in the 21st century, we wish to focus our reflection on the following two topics:

2.1. Topic 1: Why do we (not) cooperate?

The first topic considers the reasons, the costs and benefits as well as the aims of security and defence cooperation in the 21st century. Why do we cooperate today: is it for political, economic, strategic or operational reasons? What are the purposes of these partnerships? Here we also consider what the choice of non-cooperation implies. Is it a symbol of isolationism to maintain strategic autonomy or is it a politico-economic choice to avoid additional costs?

2.2. Topic 2: Lessons learned

The second topic considers the advantages and disadvantages as well as the successes and failures of security and defence cooperation in the 21st century.

How is cooperation put in place, and how is it maintained? Who are the actors involved in this process? Do states prefer to act in specific ways or to cooperate in specific areas?

How do we measure the effectiveness of defence cooperation? Have evaluation criteria evolved and, in turn, changed the opportunities for cooperation? What are the lessons learned from the different partnerships initiated since the beginning of the 21st century?

3. Schedule

Proposals for papers should not exceed one page and may be written in English or French. They should mention the title of the paper and specify the topic in which the paper fits. Proposals should be sent, together with a short biography of the author(s), to the address doctorantsris@gmail.com before 15 February 2018.

Deadline for submitting proposals:

15 February 2018

Selection of proposals:

15 March 2018

Deadline for sending final papers:

31 May 2018

The selected papers will not exceed 30,000 signs and will be accompanied by an abstract of 750 signs, in English or in French

Organising Committee

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