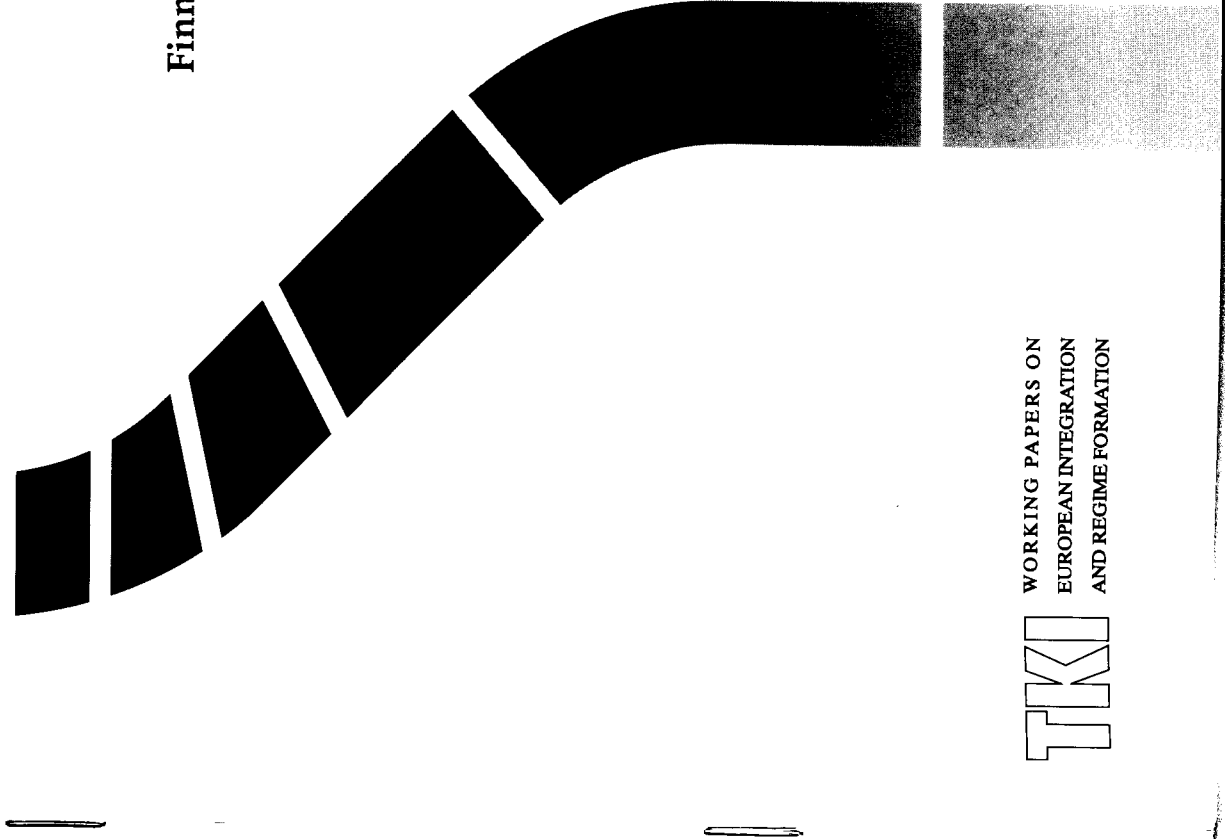




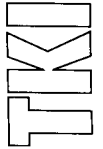
**THE EU 'NEUTRALS',
THE CFSP AND
DEFENCE POLICY**

Finn Laursen

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AND DEFENCE POLICY**

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South Jutland University Centre**

This is an expanded version of a paper originally prepared for delivery at the Fifth Biennial International Conference of the European Community Studies Association, Seattle, Washington, USA, 29 May - 1 June 1997.

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1 INTRODUCTION'

The European Union (EU) is trying to develop a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). According to the Treaty on European Union (TEU), or Maastricht Treaty, the CFSP 'shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence' (art. J. 4).

The defence dimension was controversial when the Maastricht Treaty was negotiated in 1991 and remained a controversial issue during the 1996-97 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) which reviewed the Treaty.

The purpose of this paper is to study this defence dimension of the EU, in particular the attitudes of the EU's 'neutral' member states. But we will also look at two other member states which have had hesitations about the EU's defence dimension, viz. the UK and Denmark.

The reason for including a brief coverage of the British position in this paper is theoretical. In line with liberal intergovernmentalist theory (Moravcsik, 1993), we believe that the bigger powers have decisive influence on the outcomes of intergovernmental conferences within the EU. During the IGC the smaller 'neutral' countries and Denmark sheltered behind the British attitude. As long as there was no greater convergence of national positions among the bigger member states they could continue to do so.

When the TEU was negotiated there was one 'neutral' member state, viz. Ireland. But the latest enlargement added three 'neutral' member states, viz. Austria, Finland and Sweden. These 'neutral' countries are neither members of NATO nor the Western European Union (WEU). Three of them, Austria, Finland and Sweden do take part in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. The UK and Denmark are both members of NATO and while the UK is a member of the WEU Denmark is not. Both have been 'minimalists' in respect to the EU's defence dimension, emphasising the primacy of NATO.

Given the hesitancy of the 'neutrals' and the 'minimalists' what are the chances of developing the EU's defence dimension? Can we detect or expect some convergence of interests? Can these states block the development of

the defence dimension? Or, will the remaining EU members move ahead leaving the 'laggards' on the sideline? Would a new 'flexibility' clause in the Treaty make the development of such a 'hard core' in European defence policy more legitimate? The latter question concerning 'flexibility,' however, will not be analysed in detail in this paper (see e.g. Laursen, 1994b, 1997).

2 THE MAASTRICHT COMPROMISE

The Maastricht Treaty stipulations concerning EU defence policy can be found in art. J.4, i.e. within the second pillar of the EU on CFSP (Title V of the Treaty). These stipulations include the possibility of eventually framing a defence policy 'which might in time lead to a common defence.' The article assigns a special role to the WEU:

The Union requests the Western European Union (WEU), which is an integral part of the development of the Union, to elaborate and implement decisions and actions of the Union which have defence implications (art. J.4.2).

Further, the Maastricht Treaty accepted the special status of Ireland and required compatibility with NATO policies:

The policy of the Union in accordance with this Article shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States and shall respect the obligations of certain Member States under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework (art. J.4.4).

The Maastricht Treaty was a compromise between divergent views. It was negotiated soon after the end of the Cold War.

When Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand had suggested the convening of an Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union in April 1990, they said that one of the objectives should be to 'define and implement a common foreign policy' (Text in Laursen and Vanhoonaeker, 1992: 276).

An Italian proposal of 18 September 1990 proposed 'to transfer to the Union the competences presently being exercised by the WEU.' This would imply the following commitments:

- ◆ approve the principle of a security guarantee among Member States;
- ◆ extend our consultation and our coordination to defence and security matters and examine all practical measures to this end;
- ◆ involve the Defence Ministers and their representatives in the deliberations of the Union on matters related to security and defence;
- ◆ concert our policies on crises outside Europe insofar as they may affect our security interests, including the possibility of joint initiatives aimed at ensuring the respect of relevant decisions of the UN Security Council;
- ◆ consult and coordinate our policies in the field of disarmament and arms control, with a particular reference to negotiations in the framework of the CSCE process;
- ◆ develop industrial and technological cooperation in the military field;
- ◆ consult on arms sales to third countries (Text in Laursen and Vanhoonaeker, 1992: 292).

A Franco-German proposal that CFSP should extend to all areas of external relations implied 'the aim of setting up a common European defence system in due course without which the construction of European Union would remain incomplete.' More concretely:

The possibilities given by the Western European Union should be put to use. WEU would become the cooperation channel between Political Union and NATO with a view to ensuring mutual reinforcement of European or trans-Atlantic security structures (Text in Laursen and Vanhoonacker, 1992: 333).

So the French and Germans did not go as far as the Italians. Instead of merging the WEU with the EU they wanted to use it and make it more operational.

Early in the negotiations, in February 1991, Italy again proposed that the WEU should be merged with the EU. In order to develop a common defence policy gradually there should be

... close and harmonious co-ordination with the activities of the WEU, with a view to enlarging and reinforcing the WEU and gradually integrating it into the Community/Union, and merging the WEU with the Community/Union, possibly in 1998. To this end, the WEU [should] be placed under the authority and the aegis of the European Council (Text in Laursen and Vanhoonacker, 1992: 322-324).

But merging the WEU with the EU turned out to be a too radical proposal in 1991. The Italians eventually realised that. In October 1991 they sponsored a Declaration on European Security and Defence together with the UK:

Political union implies the gradual elaboration and implementation of a common foreign and security policy and a

stronger European defence identity with the longer term perspective of a common defence policy compatible with the common defence policy we already have with all our allies in NATO (Text in Laursen and Vanhoonacker, 1992: 313-14).

It referred to the 'special relationship' between Europe and the United States as 'a key element of the European identity.' The transatlantic relationship was seen as 'an integral part of the broader idea of Europe which is reflected in the CSCE process.' The WEU should become the defence component of the Union as well as the European pillar of the Alliance. The Anglo-Italian declaration also suggested that the members of the WEU should develop a European reaction force 'capable of responding flexibly in a range of possible circumstances outside the NATO area.' Such a reaction force would be 'autonomous, separate from the NATO structure.' It would have its own planning cell and political control would be exercised by WEU Ministers.

Within a few days, the Anglo-Italian declaration was followed by a Franco-German initiative, which said that the CFSP 'in the long term, would include a common defence,' and which further stated that the WEU should be seen as 'an integral part of the process of European Union' (Text in Laursen and Vanhoonacker, 1992: 417-18).

In the end the Maastricht compromise borrowed from these different proposals. The position of WEU in the Maastricht Treaty is equidistant between NATO and the EU, as the European pillar of the former and the defence component of the latter.

The Maastricht Treaty foresaw a review conference in 1996. This 1996-97 IGC should *inter alia* 'examine whether any ... amendments need to be made to provisions relating to the common foreign and security policy' (art. J.10). More specifically the defence dimension should be reviewed:

With a view to furthering the objective of this Treaty, and having in view the date of 1998 in the context of Article XII of the Brussels Treaty, the provisions of this Article may be revised as

provided for in Article N(2) on the basis of a report to be presented in 1996 by the Council to the European Council, which shall include an evaluation of the progress made and the experience gained until then (art. J.4.6).

3 THE NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

The end of the Cold War altered the European security environment. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and eventually the Soviet Union collapsed at about the same time as the Maastricht deal was struck in December 1991. The Soviet threat that had dominated the Cold War era was gone, but new conflicts, including ethnic and national conflicts in Eastern Europe emerged. Yugoslavia started breaking apart during the Maastricht negotiations. How should Europe's security institutions adapt to the new situation? What kind of peace-keeping or peace-enforcing activities might be required and who should be responsible for such activities?

NATO started adapting at the Summit in London in July 1990. The adaptation first included a reduced forward presence and reduced reliance on nuclear weapons. Diplomatic contacts with Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) were established. The following year at the Summit in Rome in November 1991 the Heads of State and Government adopted a document entitled 'The Alliance's Strategic Concept' (NATO, 1995: 235-248). According to this document there were still risks in the new Europe, including 'instabilities that may arise from the serious economic, social and political difficulties, including ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes' in Eastern Europe. NATO would maintain a collective defence capability, but the political side of the Alliance's activities was becoming more important.

At the Council meeting of NATO in Brussels on 17 December 1992 the Alliance defined two new principal functions:

1. projection of stability in Central and Eastern Europe and in Central Asia through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) which had been set up in December 1991,
2. crisis management and peace-keeping on a case-by-case basis and under the aegis of the UN (Dumoulin, 1994c).

Important new developments in NATO strategy took place at the Brussels summit in January 1994. It was preceded by a Council meeting in Brussels on 2 December 1993, where the ministers expressed their total support for the European security and defence identity and a close cooperation between NATO and the WEU based on transparency and complementarity (Dumoulin, 1994b). At the summit itself in January 1994 the Clinton Administration confirmed its support for the idea of developing a European security and Defence Identity (ESDI). The concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) was advanced in order to find a way to transfer NATO forces, means and logistics to European control in cases where NATO decides not to take part.

The Declaration of the Heads of State and Government adopted in Brussels on 10-11 January 1994 said that the meeting had renewed the Alliance 'in light of the historic transformations affecting the entire continent of Europe.' They confirmed 'the enduring validity and indispensability' of the Alliance. The emerging European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) was seen as 'the expression of a mature Europe.' It would strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance and 'enable European Allies to take greater responsibility for their common security and defence' (*NATO review*, February 1994: 30).

More particularly, the summit declared:

We ... stand ready to make collective assets of the Alliance available, on the basis of consultations in the North Atlantic Council, for WEU operations undertaken by the European Allies in pursuit of their Common Foreign and Security Policy. We support the development of separable but not separate

capabilities which could respond to European requirements and contribute to alliance security (*NATO review*, February 1994: 31).

NATO also reaffirmed its offer to support, on a case by case basis, peace-keeping operations under the authority of the UN Security Council or under the responsibility of the CSCE, 'including by making available Alliance resources and expertise.' This, as well as assisting participation of non-NATO partners in joint peacekeeping operations under the new Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, required continued adaptation of command and force structure. So did the use of military capabilities for WEU operations:

As part of this process, we endorse the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces as a means to facilitate contingency operations, including operations with participating nations outside the Alliance.... The Council, with the advice of the Nato Military Authorities, and in coordination with the WEU, will work on implementation in a manner that provides separable but not separate military capabilities that could be employed by NATO or the WEU (*NATO review*, February 1994: 31).

NATO established three working groups to study different aspects of the CJTF concept. On the WEU side an ad hoc political-military group associated with the planning cell is working on the CJTF concept (Dumoulin, 1994b: 257).

In practice it turned out to be difficult to develop the CJTF concept. How autonomous, read European, and how much controlled by NATO, read the United States, should these forces be? Should the decision to make CJTF available to the WEU be taken by the NATO Council? Or should the Europeans have the right to use the forces they contribute to NATO within the WEU without asking NATO? What happens when CJTF include American satellite intelligence, heavy transport planes or AWACS? Who will pay? (Dumoulin, 1994b: 258-59).

Some clarification took place at the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Berlin in June 1996. After that meeting NATO's Assistant Secretary General for Defence Planning and Policy, Anthony Cragg, wrote that the CJTF concept would allow the WEU to conduct operations under its auspices, without having to duplicate the capabilities held collectively by NATO. He explained:

... the WEU could request the use of a CJTF headquarters for an operation under its command. Following a decision by the North Atlantic Council, a CJTF headquarters nucleus could be activated for the WEU's use. The task force itself would have a WEU commander and would be under the political control of the WEU. In addition to a CJTF headquarters, other Alliance assets could also be transferred to the WEU with the approval of the North Atlantic Council, for its temporary use under details to be finalized, depending on the requirements of the operation. During the conduct of a WEU-operation there would be consultations between the North Atlantic Council and the WEU Council and monitoring by the North Atlantic Council of the use of NATO assets (Cragg, 1996: 10).

Adaptation of the WEU to the new security situation in Europe started after the Maastricht summit in December 1991 to prepare it for the role assigned to it in the Maastricht Treaty. At the time of the Maastricht summit the member states of the WEU also adopted a 'Declaration on the role of the WEU and its relations with the European Union and with the Atlantic Alliance.' The WEU would develop as the defence component of the EU and as the European pillar of NATO. In particular, the WEU would (1) formulate a European defence policy and carry forward its concrete implementation through the further development of its own operational role; (2) promote the introduction of joint positions of its members into the Alliance's consultation mechanisms (WEU, 1995: 13). The WEU also decided to transfer the seat of its Council

and its secretariat from London to Brussels; this happened in January 1993.

The WEU Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence met at Petersberg outside Bonn in June 1992. In order to strengthen the operational role of the WEU they decided to establish a planning cell and make military units available for the WEU. These have become known as FAWEU (Forces Answerable to the WEU). The missions of the WEU, apart from common defence in accordance with article V of the modified Brussels Treaty, would now also include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making (WEU, 1993a and 1993b; Dumoulin, 1993). The latter have now become known as the Petersberg tasks.

In the new Europe 'soft security' type missions like the Petersberg tasks were becoming more important. The traditional 'collective defence' and strategic deterrence functions were becoming less important, it appeared.

In connection with this paper this raises the question: If the 'neutrals' keep having problems with joining a collective defence organisation like NATO, could they take part in a European organisation for humanitarian action, peace-keeping, and crisis management? If the Petersberg tasks were to become the most important functions in a new WEU, why shouldn't the 'neutrals' be able to join that part of the activities?

Without going into details with the adaptation of the WEU let us quote the critical evaluation given by a group of experts towards the end of 1994:

The WEU is still nowhere near ready to think about setting up an actual force projection capability endowed with the necessary intelligence, command and logistical resources. Work has not progressed as far as the study stage even on the operational role of the WEU, far less on the necessary resources (High-level group of experts on the CFSP, 1994: 4).

It seems fair to say that the WEU's operational capabilities remain weak today. ESDI therefore depends on the concept of CJTF. Whether it will be used

remains to be seen, however. This will require European leadership and American acceptance. The Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a NATO-led force. It brought NATO together with 16 non-NATO countries from Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Included were 12 PFP Partners, from Austria, Finland and Sweden among the 'neutrals' on one side to Russia on the other side (Smith, 1996: 14). But would this coalition of the able and willing have been put together without American leadership? Probably not.

According to Michael Stürmer the CJTF concept has been unable to deliver anything:

It is suffering from its inherent weaknesses – the absence of a credible player to represent Europe and the need to seek US approval for the use of NATO hardware and infrastructure, even for those actions without US involvement (Stürmer, 1996).

At the moment the WEU still has 'only' 10 members. Neutral EU members and Denmark have become observers. NATO members that are not members of the EU, Norway, Iceland and Turkey, have become associate members. The 10 CEECs that are candidates for EU membership have become associate partners.

4 THE PREPARATION OF THE IGC '96

In preparation of the IGC '96 all EU institutions prepared reports and a so-called Reflection Group of representatives from the member governments, the Commission and the European Parliament was set up to prepare a report for the conference.

The Commission Report was critical of the operations of the second pillar in general. Concerning the connection between the EU and the WEU the Commission said that it had not operated satisfactorily. 'The connection has been used rarely and with limited success.'

In practical terms, the use made of Western European Union so far in joint actions under the common foreign and security policy has been limited to the provision of a policing contingent for the administration of Mostar (European Commission, 1995: 69).

The WEU was supposed to complement the CFSP. But the security and defence dimension had 'yet to take effective shape' (European Commission, 1995: 70).

The Reflection Group acknowledged the shortcomings of CFSP but could not agree on the causes of these shortcomings. A majority saw structural problems. Others found the problems in lack of political will.

Concerning security and defence the Reflection Group noted the new security environment:

The end of the cold war has meant changes in the issues facing defence. Nowadays, together with the conventional aspect of defence as a safeguard for **territorial integrity**, increasing significance attaches to a **new aspect** centering around internal civil strife, protection of minorities, human rights violations, ecological disaster risks, irresponsible use of new technology, etc. (Reflection Group, 1995: 30)

The report referred to the next enlargement which would bring 'a quantitative and qualitative change in the Union's security and defence.'

The basics of the Maastricht compromise seemed to remain valid, however:

As regards **territorial defence**, the Group is agreed on the vital importance of NATO's role. The message must be pressed home to our allies that the Atlantic Alliance is and will remain an essential component of collective security in Europe. It is for the **WEU** to develop a **European security and defence identity** progressively as the European pillar of NATO. That European defence identity also needs to be able to respond to the new

aspect of defence through the tasks defined in the Petersberg Declaration (Reflection Group, 1995: 30).

Consensus should remain the rule in defence matters, the Reflection Group agreed. However, to avoid paralysis the Group suggested the application of some flexibility, namely 'the rule that no-one can be obliged to take part in military action by the Union, nor can anyone prevent such action by a majority group of Member States.' The laggards should accept what has been called a coalition of the willing. Further, 'States not participating should show solidarity with the action taken, both financially and politically' (Reflection Group, 1995: 31).

Concerning EU-WEU relations there were divergent views: 'A minority school of thought in the Group holds continued autonomy for the WEU to be the only option possible for the foreseeable future since it allows defence matters to be kept clearly within the intergovernmental sphere, etc.' We may presume that this group included the UK. More specifically,

a number of members, chiefly representing countries which are not members of the WEU, do not think a merger feasible, at any rate not in the foreseeable future. The reason for this is that their countries' special position does not allow them to take on all of the obligations under the Brussels Treaty, in particular the automatic territorial guarantee in Article V. On the other hand, they do seem prepared to give favourable consideration to participation in the Petersberg tasks (Reflection Group, 1995: 31).

However, despite the 'minimalism' of the UK, Denmark and the 'neutrals' there was a majority in favour of gradually integrating the WEU in the EU:

... a majority of members see the way to the establishment of a genuine European security and defence identity as lying in the progressive integration of the WEU into the EU with its two potential aspects: territorial defence under the Article V guaran-

tee and the new aspects of defence (Petersberg tasks). Such a merger follows logically from the Treaty and is the only means of achieving consistency between political union, foreign policy and defence (Reflection Group, 1995: 31).

A merger of the EU and WEU would reflect 'all-round solidarity.' Some members suggested establishing a timetable, others thought it sufficient to set a date for discussing a final merger in the future. Some members suggested intermediate arrangements between autonomy and integration, making the WEU subordinate to the EU. It was also suggested that the Petersberg tasks could be included in the Treaty. Certain states could be given a temporary derogation in respect to territorial defence. This could be done through a protocol to the Treaty.

5 THE ATTITUDES OF THE 'NEUTRALS'

What then happened to the positions of the 'neutrals' after the IGC got under way in the spring of 1996?

Ireland

Ireland was the first 'neutral' country to join the European Communities in 1973. Membership was accepted by a referendum on 10 May 1972, where 83% of the Irish voted in favour of membership. The then existing European Political Cooperation (EPC) was outside the Community framework and did not deal with defence issues. This was emphasised by the Irish government at the time. So Irish neutrality, which was a way to express the country's sovereignty and independence from the UK, was not affected (Van Wijnbergen, 1992: 128).

Irish politicians were critical of the Genscher-Colombo proposal in 1981 which included the idea of developing a European security policy. During

the Falklands crisis the *Fianna Fáil* Government would not support economic sanctions against Argentina because such sanctions were considered to conflict with neutrality (Van Wijnbergen, 1992: 129).

Within EPC the London Report in 1981 added 'political aspects of security' to what could be discussed. The Solemn Declaration of Stuttgart of June 1983 – the meagre outcome of the Genscher-Colombo proposal – changed this to 'political and economic aspects of security.' In the Dooge Report prepared in 1985 Senator Dooge of Ireland included a footnote saying that Ireland did not agree to the inclusion of security and defence.

EPC was given a treaty basis in the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986. The SEA confirmed that EPC included discussions of 'economic and political aspects of security' but not defence as such. The Irish Supreme Court ruled that the provisions concerning EPC in the SEA could not be ratified without a constitutional change by referendum. The SEA was accepted by a referendum in Ireland in 1987, where military aspects were decoupled from the political and economic aspects of security through declarations. 69.6% voted in favour (Van Wijnbergen, 1992: 130).

The Maastricht Treaty which turned EPC into CFSP added defence policy. It too was accepted in Ireland by a referendum. There was a Yes-vote of 69% on 18 June 1992. The most controversial issue in the debate was actually not defence policy, but abortion. The phrase that the Union's defence policy 'shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States' and the fact that actions with defence implications are referred to the WEU contributed to making it possible for the government to secure the Yes-vote (Van Wijnbergen, 1994: 181).

During the preparation of the IGC '96 the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs Dick Spring addressed the Paasikivi Society in Helsinki on 3 October 1995. Among the challenges he mentioned the EU's contribution to the preservation of international peace and stability. The establishment of CFSP had been 'an important step in equipping the Union with the capacity to pursue these aims more effectively' (Spring, 1995: 5). The development of CFSP was one of the key issues at the IGC. Coming to the questions of

security and defence he said that Ireland and Finland had much in common. Both countries

- ◆ have always contributed to efforts to enhance collective and cooperative security through the UN and the OSCE;
- ◆ have contributed to international peacekeeping efforts above and beyond what might be expected of countries of our size;
- ◆ share a strong commitment to the rule of law, human rights, disarmament and development issues; and
- ◆ have remained outside military alliances (Spring, 1995: 11).

He referred to the end of the Cold War, which had reduced the risk of nuclear confrontation, but Europe's security remained uncertain. He believed that Europe now had 'a unique opportunity to develop a security architecture that avoids the dangerous divisions of the past.' Referring to the Maastricht Treaty he said that a key question was the consideration of the 'eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence.' Ireland's approach to these questions at the IGC would be based on a number of principles, *inter alia* the following:

- ◆ The primary objective of the common security and defence policy must be the preservation of peace in accordance with UN and OSCE principles
- ◆ EU security and defence arrangements must form part of a comprehensive cooperative security framework in Europe, and must not lead to new divisions in Europe
- ◆ European security and defence policy must be compatible with

Ireland's objectives in the areas of disarmament and arms control

- ◆ The outcome of any negotiation that would involve Ireland's participation in a common defence policy will be put to the people in a referendum. This will ensure that Ireland's policy of military neutrality remains unchanged, unless the people themselves decide otherwise (Spring, 1995: 13).

The latter point of course opens the possibility of a change in Irish policy, should the negotiation dynamics of the IGC make it necessary.

In 1996 the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs published a White Paper on Foreign Policy. In the section on international security it said that 'the majority of the Irish people have always cherished Ireland's military neutrality.' That policy had served Ireland well. The Government, therefore 'will not be proposing that Ireland should seek membership of NATO or the Western European Union, or the assumption of their mutual defence guarantees' (Ireland, 1996: 118-119). Ireland's observer status in the WEU was mentioned and in a reference to the Petersberg tasks it was stated: 'It is desirable and right that Ireland should be prepared to make a contribution to such requests in areas where it has a proven capacity and experience' (Ireland, 1996: 139). However,

participation in humanitarian and peacekeeping operations through the WEU would not involve Ireland in defence commitments of any kind under the WEU treaty and would not therefore have implications for our policy of military neutrality (Ireland, 1996: 140).

So remaining militarily neutral was still the Irish policy.

Austria

Austria had its neutrality accepted by all big powers in 1955. Neutrality allowed Austria to remain outside the East-West conflict in Europe.

In June 1992 when Austria was seeking membership in the EU the Austrian government declared its preparedness 'to participate in the CFSP and its dynamic development actively and in a spirit of solidarity.' Referring to the role assigned to the WEU in the Maastricht Treaty the Austrian government added: 'On the occasion of its accession to the EU Austria will draw the appropriate conclusions from this fact' (quoted from Kaiser, 1995: 421). After the 1994 election the government announced that it would become a WEU observer from 1995.

Austria joined the EU on 1 January 1995 together with Finland and Sweden, accepting thus Title V of the Maastricht Treaty.

According to one student of Austrian defence policy, 'Austria tends to give up its neutrality more and more to be part of a new European security system' (Gärtner, 1995: 130).

In the Austrian position paper to the IGC four priority tasks are mentioned in respect to CFSP:

- ◆ strengthening the coherence between the various aspects of external relations
- ◆ developing joint planning and analysis capacities
- ◆ improving the efficiency of decision-making and the ways in which CFSP decisions are implemented
- ◆ progress in the development of a common security and defence policy, especially by enhancing the capacity for action in the areas of conflict prevention, crisis management, peacekeeping measures, disaster relief and humanitarian action (Austria, 1996: 3)

On the latter point Austria will 'work towards its full participation in effective European security structures.' By joining the EU Austria has also committed itself to a common defence policy:

Under this policy and in the interests of further convergence between the EU and the WEU Austria at the Intergovernmental Conference will *inter alia* advocate that the WEU can be subordinated to explicit guidelines or instructions of the Union for the purpose of what is known as the 'Petersberg tasks' (Austria, 1996: 13).

All this suggests a rather flexible Austrian position.

Finland

Finland is the one country among the 'neutrals' that joined in 1995 that had the clearest security reasons for seeking membership of the EU after the end of the Cold War had made this step possible. Finland has a 1,200 km border with Russia.

'The development of the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy is still a sensitive issue for a formerly neutral country such as Finland,' wrote a researcher at the EU Secretariat of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Helsinki (Stubbs, 1996: 13). We notice the words 'formerly neutral'.

In September 1995 the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs published a memorandum concerning Finnish points of view with regard to the 1996 IGC. In a brief section on the defence issue it was stated:

All the EU Member States consider that inter-governmentalism and unanimous decision-making be the main principles guiding the handling of defence issues. At this point, it is not thought necessary to extend military cooperation beyond the Petersberg tasks. The question of setting up a common defence (Article J.4) is therefore unlikely to be dealt with at the IGC (Finland, 1995).

This was of course an early prediction from the Finnish side. Should it turn out to be correct it might be convenient for the 'formerly neutral' country.

A report to the Parliament by the Council of State in February 1996 was a little more specific:

It is beneficial from Finland's perspective that military crisis management is part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, in which all of the Member States participate on an equal footing in the making of decisions. All EU Member States should have an equal opportunity to participate also in the implementation of decisions relating to crisis-management operations conducted within the CFSP. Nevertheless, a Member State's right to decide independently in questions relating to its security must be respected. The objective must be effectiveness of collective action by the Union. At the same time, the right of each Member State to decide independently whether to participate in an operation must be ensured. The capability of the Union will become more effective as the coverage of the Common Foreign and Security Policy increases. This will strengthen the security of the Union and its Member States.

In the definition of relations between the EU and the WEU it is important from Finland's perspective that the political leadership role of the Union is guaranteed. The WEU should be an instrument of the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, an instrument with the aid of which decisions relating to military crisis management are implemented. In Finland's view, implementing this objective is one of the central tasks of the IGC in the CFSP area (Finland, 1996: 41).

Many words, yet leaving some doubts about the actual Finnish positions. Finland is positive towards CFSP and in some respect also towards the WEU.

by including the Petersberg tasks in the Treaty (CONF/2500/96: 80). The text therefore included proposals for closer institutional relations between the EU and the WEU, incorporation of the Petersberg tasks in the Treaty and a confirmation that decisions in this area would be based on unanimity.

In a paper from the European Commission's IGC Task Force dated 5 March 1997 the following was said about the IGC discussions of the defence issue:

Discussions are more clearly focused than expected. The Petersberg missions will be incorporated into the Treaty, though the final wording has not yet been settled. This would enable the military non-aligned countries to take part in these missions, alongside the WEU countries, and bring closer the situation in which political decisions are taken by the Union and implemented by the WEU. There are plans for stronger links between the EU and the WEU, though the idea of gradually integrating the WEU into the EU is on hold for the moment (European Commission, 1997).

In a note from the Danish Foreign Ministry to the Europe Committee of the Danish Parliament dated 10 March the negotiation situation in respect to security and defence was outlined this way: The Dutch Presidency wants to write the Petersberg tasks into the Treaty and establish closer institutional links with the WEU. The Presidency's position was seen as being close to the position of the four neutral members. France, Germany, Italy, the Benelux countries, Spain and Greece wanted to go further, while Portugal expressed itself in careful terms and the UK argued against changes in the relations between the EU and WEU. The Foreign Ministry concluded: It therefore seems that the outcome of the continued discussions especially will be decided by the firmness of the British attitude, since, in this area, contrary to certain other areas, it does not seem possible to establish 'flexible' solutions without the UK (Denmark, 1997).

A note of 19 March 1997 from the Dutch presidency included a new article

