

The European Union's New Security Policy

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The overall trend is that the EU is taking the formulation of a comparatively more independent security policy a lot more seriously than before after this month's series of interconnected events involving the US. It'll remain a work in progress and one which will likely take a lot of time to produce tangible results, but the gears are now in motion and might lead to a series of flagship projects aimed at enabling the bloc's members to more confidently ensure their collective security.

Major American Moves

Three interconnected events from the past month will greatly influence the EU's future security policy. These are the West's [panicked withdrawal](#) from Afghanistan, the US' assembling of the new trilateral [AUKUS](#) military alliance with Australia and the UK, and America's [withdrawal](#) of its Patriot missile defense systems from Saudi Arabia.

The first prompted leading officials to propose the creation of a so-called “[Initial Entry Force](#)” (IEF) of 5,000 troops comprised of its members' militaries to serve as the proverbial tip of the spear during crisis situations like the one that recently transpired in the war-torn South Asian state. The second showed that the US is still cutting secret security deals behind its nominal EU “ally's” back, which includes backstabbing the bloc's influential French member by [poaching](#) a AUS\$90 billion submarine deal with Australia from it. The third development shows that America's security assistance to its allies can't be taken for granted anymore.

The China Factor

What ties all three of these events together is the US' obsession with “containing” China. In pursuit of this grand strategic goal and with an eye on the finite resources that it can rely upon to this end, America is compromising on some of its traditional allies' security in order to redirect its focus from the EU, South Asia, and West Asia to East and Southeast Asia. This explains its decision to pull out of Afghanistan despite sharp criticisms from its Western coalition partners, work behind its European allies' back in order to prioritize the formation of a new military alliance in the Asia-Pacific, and abandon Saudi Arabia in spite of continual drone and missile attacks against the Kingdom from Yemen's Ansarullah (“Houthi”) rebels.

The US simply cannot operate on all three of these fronts at once with equal focus like before since the former unipolar world order is fading and giving way to the emerging multipolar one in which America's relative capabilities have decreased.

This is extremely concerning from the standpoint of the EU's traditional security concerns since its pertinent policies are predicated on the presumption that the US will always provide the bloc with reliable military support through NATO's Article 5. While America still claims that it'll remain loyal to that legal obligation, questions are swirling throughout Brussels about whether Washington is truly sincere with such pledges in light of the three earlier mentioned developments over the past month. These fears are influencing the bloc's gradual formulation of a comparatively more independent security policy. This is of course a lot easier said than done due to the colossal logistical, political, and technical obstacles involved, but it's nevertheless a trend that deserves to be analyzed a bit more at length even if it'll still take a long time to unfold in any seriously tangible way.

The EU's Interest In "Missile Defense"

The IEF is a step in the direction of meeting some of the EU's most immediate envisioned security needs, but among the most comprehensive ones in the minds of its decision makers is the issue of so-called "missile defense". Thus far, this was assumed to be ensured by the US in order to protect the bloc from relevant threats allegedly coming from Iran and North Korea, though Russia has always claimed that America's justification for the deployment of such systems in Europe is nothing more than a smokescreen for clandestinely undercutting its nuclear second-strike capabilities. Moscow has explained these concerns by pointing to how unlikely it is that either of those two countries would target the EU, even US military assets within it, and drawing attention to the fact that Washington could also deploy offensive weaponry at those sites under the cover of supposedly being "defensive" ones in order to enhance its nuclear first-strike capabilities against Russia.

Be that as it may, two decades' worth of incessant information warfare against EU decision makers and their people alike have convinced the vast majority of them that "missile defense" is one of the continent's top security concerns. This means that it could very well figure as the flagship project of the bloc's forthcoming comparatively independent security policy that it's in the long process of formulating. After all, in their minds, the US is becoming too unreliable of a partner as evidenced by President Joe Biden practically continuing most of his predecessor Donald Trump's geopolitical policies with respect to Afghanistan and Australia, both of which show how little American leaders care about their European allies' concerns. Saudi Arabia is the exception in this comparison since Trump was fully committed to its security while Biden is backtracking on it presumably in pursuit of a more comprehensive regional deal with that Kingdom's Iranian rivals.

The Strategic Importance Of The Saudi Precedent

The Saudi case study is extremely important from the perspective of the EU's "missile defense" concerns though since prior reports proved that America's pertinent systems there [failed to perform](#) as expected. While Patriots are supposed to have a somewhat different function from the other equipment deployed as part of the US' "shield" in Europe, it still set a very troubling precedent by showing that America's wares can't be fully relied upon. If "missile defense" is to become the flagship project of a comparatively more independent EU security policy in the eventual future, then its members will have to commit massive

amounts of time, money, and effort towards improving upon the shortcomings of their much more technological advanced American ally's systems, but this prediction shouldn't automatically put people off. Cynically speaking, all of those hefty investments might actually be regarded as something positive from the position of EU politicians.

Ulterior Motives

If the bloc strives for unity between its members, then they'll all have to make some commitment to this project, which could deepen integration between their permanent military, intelligence, and diplomatic bureaucracies ("[deep state](#)"). The EU's military-industrial complex also aims to become globally competitive, and with various dimensions of "missile defense" emerging as a need for many countries, it could eventually pay off handsomely if the bloc credibly enhances its capabilities in this respect and becomes a leading exporter of such systems in the future. The financial investments to this end could also provide many high-paying jobs to qualified specialists who'd have to pour years' worth of their lives into learning the difficult ins and outs of "missile defense", which is such an extremely tricky science that not even the US has been able to perfect it despite being decades ahead of the EU in terms of research, testing, and battlefield experience.

Perhaps most importantly from a grand strategic perspective, any moves in the direction of independently ensuring the EU's security needs as the bloc's decision makers understand them to be (irrespective of whether observers agree with them such as when it comes to the contentious issue of "missile defense") would accelerate the emergence of the Multipolar World Order by bolstering the continent's credentials as a separate pole of influence/power in this system. As it presently stands, the sovereignty of most EU members and the bloc as a whole is questionable since most are regarded as being under American control, with France possibly being the only major exception but also Germany too to a lesser extent at least when it comes to Nord Stream II. The Franco-German condominium could thus strive to become the dual core of multipolar processes within the EU, using the shared goal of "missile defense" as the means to militarily advance this across the bloc.

"The Polish Problem"

There were previous concerns that Poland and the "Three Seas Initiative" that it leads could stand in the way of this goal by being exploited as a pro-American wedge for dividing the bloc between its Eastern and Western members. Those worries might be mitigated though in light of [America's abandonment](#) of this aspiring Central & Eastern European (CEE) leader. Washington waived most Nord Stream II sanctions without informing Warsaw of this decision in advance, and the US and Germany continue to wage their [joint Hybrid War on Poland](#) in order to oust its conservative-nationalist government [for ideological reasons](#). If Poland's ruling party falls like some expect it to eventually do, then the country would be fully captured by the German "deep state", thus neutralizing the chances that the US could exploit it as a wedge. This suggests that Biden's ideological crusade against Poland is actually counterproductive in the long term, though his strategists have yet to realize it.

The so-called "Polish Problem" could also be resolved without regime change if Warsaw decides to wean itself off of Washington as its primary security partner after feeling betrayed by its ally's [pragmatic engagements](#) with Moscow as of late. Berlin is no better from Poland's perspective, especially that of its ruling conservative-nationalist party, but Warsaw might wager that it's less risky to depend on regional allies through a more concentrated security framework than on its transatlantic one. This calculation seems

unlikely though as long as Poland's ruling party remains in power, but it can't be discounted that such thoughts might be circulating through its strategic community at the moment in light of the three interconnected events that were touched upon earlier in this analysis. The US' laser-like focus on "containing" China is arguably occurring at the expense of some of its European allies' security concerns, which might inspire Poland's gradual security recalibration.

Concluding Thoughts

The overall trend is that the EU is taking the formulation of a comparatively more independent security policy a lot more seriously than before after this month's series of interconnected events involving the US.

It'll remain a work in progress and one which will likely take a lot of time to produce tangible results, but the gears are now in motion and might lead to a series of flagship projects aimed at enabling the bloc's members to more confidently ensure their collective security. The IEF will probably be the most immediate outcome while efforts towards collaborating on the EU's own "missile defense" systems could potentially be a long-term one, especially when considering the US' abandonment of Saudi Arabia and the poor performance of its pertinent equipment there before that. Looking forward, the path ahead will be long, difficult, and expensive, but the EU might have finally turned the psychological corner when it comes to eventually ensuring its own security.

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