1. Name

Benoît Gomis

2. Organisation

Chatham House

3. Type of Organisation

Think Tank

6. What subject area of the Foreign Policy Report does your evidence relate to?

Security and Defence

7. What are the comparative advantages/disadvantages of working through the EU in the area you wish to comment on, rather than the UK working independently?

The biggest disadvantage of working with the EU on security and defence is the necessity to compromise with several member states with different visions on the role and future of the EU in this field, and what each country should contribute. In terms of the EU itself, it is not good at military deployments, especially when they require a quick response. For instance, EU Battlegroups have never been used, even though several crises that have emerged in recent years matched their criteria for engagement, such as the recent crisis in Mali. Their deployment of course largely depends on the Member States' willingness and agreement to do so. However, by being a member of the EU, the UK can influence others, and ensure that potential duplications with NATO – a key issue in this era of budgetary austerity - are avoided. The sheer size of the UK, which alone accounts for 22% of EU defence spending, gives the country a strong tool for influence. In addition, the EU brings a clear added value through its small and targeted civilian missions, including on tasks such as ceasefire enforcement, border control, election monitoring and police training.

8. In what areas of global affairs does the EU add value or deliver impact or not on behalf of the UK?

Crucially, the EU is most valuable in promoting free trade and good governance across the world, especially amongst its member states and candidate countries – this has had key positive repercussions in defence and security, as it has helped spread peace and stability across Europe. In defence and security, the EU has a strong comparative advantage on civilian missions. Thanks to its range of tools (e.g. economic, diplomatic and 'soft power' broadly speaking), the EU brings an added value in conflict prevention through its aid and development programmes. It can also be particularly effective on small and targeted missions, including election monitoring, border control and police training. Additionally, the EU can be a useful international framework that provides anonymity and legitimacy to the UK for politically sensitive negotiations and operations, e.g. cooperating with Russia and China on maritime security for example. The EU does not add value for first military responses to a crisis: national or bilateral interventions (e.g. Libya 2011, Mali 2013) can be put together more quickly and NATO can then provide command structures to take over if needed. The EU lacks the capacity to deliver on this, and rather than trying to set up an EU Operational Headquarters (OHQ) which is likely to face strong political oppositions, it should focus on civilian tasks instead – e.g. police training (see EUTM Mali).

9. How effective is the EU at combining its foreign, defence, economic and civil contingency policy instruments to deliver best effect in foreign policy? What, if anything, should it do differently?

Defence and security is an area with a high degree of sovereignty, which makes it difficult to get joint action at EU level. Institutional reforms can help build mutual trust and understanding. However they won't help achieve significant change in particular policies; only political change within Member States can. Institutionally speaking, the EU is not effective enough. One of the key reasons is that some of the biggest member states have fought against the establishment of a strong and effective External Action Service, and have strived to appoint apolitical, discreet and consensual figures at its head. The most urgent thing to do differently would perhaps be to focus on more focused civilian missions and capabilities instead of duplicating already existing military structures within NATO. There are also institutional impediments that prevent the EU from tackling today's complex security challenges effectively. Security issues like terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking have clear interlinkages with military conflicts (e.g. West Africa, Sahel, Balkans) yet they do not fall within the remit of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Further cross-institutional cooperation is clearly needed. Nonetheless, ultimately, the EU's effectiveness in defence and security can only be substantially improved with the willingness of key EU member states to tackle this issue together.

10. How effective are the EU's delivery mechanisms? Would any changes make them more effective, and if so, which ones and why?

There is too much disconnect between national audiences and the European Parliament (EP). Linking national parliaments to the EP could be a useful step forward. Overall, there is also a widespread sentiment that the EU's institutions are too big and cumbersome. At a time when most national governments have to decrease their budgets, the fact that the EU is so reluctant to do so is difficult to understand for local populations within its member states. To tackle this issue, an independent review of EU institutions' resources (i.e. What is most needed? What could we spend less/more on?) would be very useful. More specifically, decision-making and funding mechanisms for CSDP operations could be improved. These procedures should be much more flexible, as recommended by the Lisbon Treaty. For instance, Permanent Structured Cooperation should be reviewed and revamped in light of recent developments (e.g. Lancaster House Treaties between France and the UK outside of the EU/NATO frameworks; failures of EU/CSDP in Libya and Mali, including EU battlegroups).

11. Would a different division of EU and Member State competence in a particular area produce more effective policies? If so, how and why?

The balance of powers or competences between the EU and member states is already clearly leaning towards member states in defence and security policy, given the nature and sensitivity of the topic. Therefore calling for the repatriation of powers in this field would not be appropriate. On the other hand, sovereignty should be shared more willingly between member states, either on a bilateral basis (e.g. Belgium/Netherlands naval cooperation and asset sharing; defence cooperation in the Visegrad group or Nordefco; Franco-British Lancaster House treaties), through NATO or through the EU. However, any change in competence should be done in close coordination with NATO structures. Additional incentives for EU member states to contribute to defence and security efforts are needed, whether it is via the EU, via NATO or both. The limited support by Germany to the Libyan and Malian operations (either financially or operationally) is a good example of the current problems.

12. How might the national interest be served by action being taken in this field at a different level e.g. regional, national, UN, NATO, OECD, G20 – either in addition or as an alternative to action at EU level?

The majority of competences in the defence and security area are already at the national level. More competences could be transferred from countries to the EU, or from the EU to NATO and others, but this depends on the crisis/problem the UK or other member states wish to tackle. For instance the French lead over operations in Mali was sensible, given the urgent need for action, and France's knowledge and links in that area. Whenever the US is more heavily involved, the NATO framework is the most appropriate one. Overall, the EU is an important and relevant entity that can complement other frameworks mentioned in the question and regional organisations (e.g. ECOWAS, African Union).

13. What future challenge/opportunities might we face in this area of policy and what impact might these have on the balance of competence between the UK and the EU?

There are a number of challenges in this area: - Further paralysis due to mistrust, misunderstandings and lack of common goals between member states - A spill-over effect from political disagreements on other issues (including the future of the Eurozone and how to cope with economically struggling countries) - General loss of political faith in the EU - Further decrease in defence and security spending at a national level leading to a loss in capabilities and/or specialisation in an uncoordinated way In terms of opportunities: - Given these strategic and political issues, a focus on bottom-up, low-key initiatives where the EU can add value in a pragmatic and targeted way is most needed. - Budget pressures create an incentive to cooperate and share capabilities with others, and an opportunity to reassess the EU/NATO division of labour.

14. Are there any general points you wish to make which are not captured above?

- Politics: Much of the defence and security developments within the EU should be seen through the lens of politics within member states. Most competences in defence and security in fact lie within Member States so the future of the EU in this field greatly depends on national decisions. Rather than substantial and pragmatic advances, most national actions regarding EU/CSDP also reflect a political stance on the EU as a whole (shaped by domestic politics and strategic aspirations). This is too often underestimated and should be part of any review trying to reassess the role of Europe, its future and the role of the UK within it. The security and defence issues should not be seen in isolation with the domestic political context, political leadership and the actions of political personalities in this domain. After all, the EU is not a state but a group of states with divergent interests and agendas. - Industry: There needs to be a substantial review of the state of the European defence industry, given recent developments – e.g. wide-ranging budget cuts in the US and Europe; the failed BAE-EADS merger; Franco-British rapprochement – and what opportunities/challenges there are for the UK; tensions between the EDA and the European Commission. - Impact of budgetary pressures / FRUK: While both the EU and NATO have argued for pooling and sharing / smart defence, in other words, 'doing more together with less', both entities should also look at duplications that have been created because of the lack of cooperation between the two entities. Frustration over the difficulty, cost overruns and delays of multilateral procurement programmes (e.g. A400M) have led countries to cooperate within smaller clusters, with countries of similar size, defence budget and strategic aspirations. This is one of the reasons why France and the UK in particular decided to work together on a bilateral basis – precisely because it was not the EU. France and the UK hold the keys to closer cooperation in security

and defence across Europe, once the Lancaster House treaties are fully implemented in 2016. Opportunities for add-on projects with other countries exist, but their scope and extent are yet to be determined. The robustness of the Franco-British partnership on these issues (and its usefulness for other countries in Europe) will largely depend on their political relations, a key driver to the creation of the November 2010 partnership in the first place.