1 *Introduction: CSDP, strategic actorness and security governance*

A strategic approach may be necessary to produce conditions of stability which will make possible continuing peace; but other, more positive measures, are needed to create peace itself.

Sir Michael Howard (1983a)

Some 50 years after the Treaty of Rome set out a framework for lasting peace through integration on a continent that had fostered two devastating wars in less than 30 years, the EU has developed into a regional institution with military ambitions that extend well beyond Europe. Since the birth of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in Saint-Malo in 1998, the Union has carried out more than 20 crisis management operations, six of them military.[1] It has also endorsed the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) and its 2008 update, which in many ways represented the missing link that sought to give the CSDP a sense of purpose and direction (European Council 2003d, 2008c). Since military force is often seen as indicative of statehood, these developments raise questions regarding our understanding of the EU as an international actor. A number of labels have subsequently been introduced to describe the nature of the EU's actorness or power, including partial or composite actorness, (still) civilian power, soft power or normative power. However, rather than explicitly or implicitly using statehood as a yardstick or focal point for studying the CSDP, or having to resort to the kind of normatively laden 'labelling' that has dominated parts of the debate on the CSDP, this book adopts the concept of a *strategic actor* to allow an independent assessment of how any actor, state or non-state, may purposefully prepare for and apply the use of military force. The question that it sets out to answer, therefore, is whether the EU, since it falls short of statehood yet has moved beyond being merely an intergovernmental organisation, has become a *strategic actor*; i.e. one that (1) has the capacity to formulate common security interests, and (2) can

generate relevant capabilities, which (3) it has the resolve to use to promote common interests.

In answering this question, realist and intergovernmental theories, which are still viewed by many as providing valid explanations for the lack of inter-state cooperation on issues such as security and defence, or so-called 'high politics', arguably fall short (see e.g. Gegout 2002; Hyde-Price 2004; Matlary 2009; Moravcsik 1993, 1998; Rynning 2003). To proponents of these theories the rapid and far-reaching evolution of the CSDP represents in many respects an anomaly, or as Jolyon Howorth remarks (2007: 235): 'For realists, ESDP [now CSDP] continues to defy the rules of the international game.' This raises the question: what approaches *are* appropriate for understanding the CSDP? One approach that has been applied to other areas of EU policy is the concept of *governance*. So far security and defence have been kept firmly outside the orbit of a so-called 'governance turn in EU studies', since in this particular domain states are often seen to remain the dominant, if not only actors. However, an evolving scholarship on *security governance* has opened up new avenues of research that may also benefit the study of the CSDP (see Norheim-Martinsen 2010).

By venturing down some of these avenues, and seeing them in relationship with strategic actorness, this book forges a conceptual link between traditional strategic studies, on the one hand, and the insights of the so-called governance turn in EU studies, on the other. That way we are able to utilise the instrumentality and clarity of the strategic approach in *structuring* the analysis, while retaining an understanding of the unique character of the EU in how we *approach* it.

This first chapter proceeds by discussing the two key concepts employed by the book: strategic actorness and security governance. It then clarifies the conceptual relationship between the two, before showing how they provide the structure for the rest of the book.

Conceptions of the EU as an international actor

The idea of the EU as an international actor has always been a question of whether the EU can be seen as something more than the sum total of its Member States. The famous quip about the EU as an 'economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm', suggests that it certainly is an economic actor, but that it lacks the ability to be(come) an assertive actor in the military domain.[2] Indeed, security and defence have

been contested issues throughout the history of the European integration project. In 1952, the treaty on the European Defence Community (EDC) was signed after an initiative by French Defence Minister René Pleven, but the treaty was never ratified by the French Parliament and, therefore, never came into force (see Dinan 1994: 8). Although several subsequent initiatives were launched throughout the Cold War period, security and defence remained predominantly NATO's domain. It was only when the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was included in the Treaty on European Union (TEU), agreed in Maastricht in 1991, that the 'progressive framing of a common defence policy' (TEU, art. J.4) became a stated objective of the EU.[3]

At least prospectively, this added a new dimension to the European integration project that would take it in the direction of an international actor without the usual reservations, i.e. that it had economic clout but lacked 'hard power'. The move towards a closer political union spurred, on the one hand, a renewed theoretical debate concerning the question of whether 'actorness' could be bestowed on an international institution in the first place, and whether it is feasible to talk about 'partial actorness' or 'composite actorness' short of statehood (Allen and Smith 1990; Bretherton and Vogler 2006; Engelbrekt and Hallenberg 2008; Ginsberg 1989, 1999, 2001; Peterson and Sjursen 1998; Piening 1997; Rummel 1990; Sjöstedt 1977; Smith 2001; Taylor 1979). On the other hand, since up to the early 1990s the actual impact of the European Community (EC) clearly had not matched its ambitions, Christopher Hill (1993) took a more pragmatic approach to the actor question. He conceptualised the EU's international role as a function of what it had been talked up to do and what it was actually able to deliver (Hill 1993). This he referred to as a 'capability–expectations gap', which he saw as having three main components: the ability to agree, resource allocation, and the instruments at the EU's disposal (Hill 1993: 315). Hill argued that if the EU was to be a more credible international actor, the gap had to be closed, which meant that European foreign policy had to be demonstrated in actual behaviour rather than aspirations or prospects (see also Hill 1998, 2004). As a non-static concept by which EU foreign policy can be monitored, Hill's capability–expectations gap has remained a helpful conceptual tool for the study of the EU's impact and role in international relations (see Hill and Smith 2011 in particular). Taking a similar pragmatic approach, this book seeks to contribute to this tradition by focusing

specifically on the acquisition and use of military force and how this affects the overall role of the EU as an international actor.

However, the plans for a prospective military role for the EU represented a move that, to some minds, meant that the very image that it projected to the outside world had to be redefined. As the CSDP was realised, there was a reappraisal of a 20-year-old debate concerning the EU's status as a 'civilian power' by a number of commentators questioning whether the Union could still remain one even if it acquired military capabilities (Smith 2000; Stavridis 2001; Telo 2006). The term 'civilian power', introduced by Francois Dûchene (1972), was initially subjected to heavy criticism by, amongst others, Hedley Bull (1982, 1983), but gained salience together with the growing acceptance of notions of 'soft power' in the early 1990s (see Nye 1990, 2004; Nye and Keohane 2001). At this time, the EU debate was mirrored by a parallel debate on Germany as a civilian power in view of the gradual re-employment of its armed forces abroad after reunification (see Maull 1990, 2000).[4]

With the addition of a military dimension to the EU in 1999, some argued that the Petersberg tasks, which were taken over from the Western European Union (WEU) and describe the functional parameters for the kind of military tasks that the EU might carry out, were still within the remit of a civilian power, since collective defence and nuclear capability remained the privilege of NATO (Joergensen 1997; Smith 2000). Others argued that the Union retained essential characteristics of a civilian power and that the turn to military force did not fundamentally change this perception (Cornish and Edwards 2001). Still others argued that the military dimension muddled the Union's 'distinct profile' as an actor with a civilian international identity (Whitman 2006; Zielonka 1998).

Over the years, the debate has maintained its distinctly normative character, as the CSDP has shown more practical results. For example, in a revision of the notion of 'normative power' that he introduced as a term that could capture the EU's ideational impact on international affairs, Ian Manners backs away from his original conclusion that the EU can be both a normative power and a military power (Manners 2002, 2006).[5] Having observed developments under the CSDP between 2002 and 2006, he argues that although 'it is tempting to think that the EU can have-its-cake-and-eat-it-too in militarizing its normative power', it is, at the same time, 'unfeasible that either Turkey or Russia

would be as receptive to norm diffusion if they believed that EU battle groups or combat forces would soon be peace-making in Kurdish areas or Chechnya' (Manners 2006: 183, 194). Manners, therefore, warns against treating the acquisition of military capabilities as being unquestionably positive for the EU, since it may harm other instruments of power.

Regardless of any normative judgements that could be passed on developments towards a heavier military role, it is not feasible to imagine that the EU has remained or can remain unaffected by these developments. They do, on the one hand, sit uneasily with the 'old' image of the EU as a limited civilian power, and, since military force is associated with statehood, it tends to invoke fear among those who do not want to see a federal Europe in the making. On the other hand, using statehood as an implicit yardstick tends to produce too easy dismissals of the potential salience of the CSDP, especially by those who choose to compare it to, for example, the military might of the United States. None of these perspectives appears particularly helpful. Instead, this book adopts the concept of *strategic actorness* to ensure an independent assessment of how any actor, state or non-state, may purposefully prepare for and apply the use of military force.

The EU as a strategic actor

The traditional research trajectory through which the use of military force has been studied has been strategic studies, a field that today, to the regret of some, has become a marginalised subfield of security studies (see e.g. Betts 1997). Strategic studies, as Hew Strachan has pointed out, 'flourish more verdantly in schools of business studies than in departments of international relations', but, as he goes on to say: 'Strategic studies are not business studies, nor is strategy … a synonym for policy' (Strachan 2005: 34). Betts' and Strachan's call for the reinstatement of the theories and models of strategic studies as a useful trajectory through which to study the connections between security and military force comes across as pertinent advice, insofar as security itself has become a notoriously elusive term due to the proliferation of 'new' threats in the post-Cold War security environment.

The current state of security studies is the result of a 20-year-old debate between those who have wanted to restrict the use of the term

to traditional threats and those who have argued for an expansion into various new domains, such as human rights, environmental issues, etc. (Ayoob 1995; Buzan *et al.* 1998; Haftendorn 1991; Katzenstein 1996b; Krause and Williams 1997). There are, indeed, good reasons to limit the use of the term security. While many realists claim that widening it diverts the focus away from the more serious threats (Deudney 1990; Freedman 1998; Walt 1991, 1998), others argue that the act of *securitisation* elevates issues, such as, for example, immigration, to a state of emergency, which allows policy-makers to bypass normal principles of a democratic society, such as legality, transparency, parliamentary scrutiny, etc. (see e.g. Huysmans 1995, 1998; Waever 1995, 1998, 2005). The general expansion of the security research agenda is still largely irreversible, insofar as policy-makers, not academics, define what they regard as security (Kolodziej 2000: 20). Or, to paraphrase Alexander Wendt: security is what states, and a growing number of other actors, make of it.[6] However, because of the current state of security studies, the strategic approach may help us in our assessment of the various security measures taken by different actors in their efforts to further what is perceived to be in their best interests, especially in the context of the 'hazy continuum' of contemporary peace operations where the use of military force is often hard to relate to any specific threat (Moore 2003).

If we take Clausewitz's traditional definition of strategy – 'the use of engagements for the object of the war' – as a starting point, it may at first sight seem somewhat narrow for a contemporary security environment, in which the term war is rarely used, and military force, at least when applied alone, is perceived by many as obsolete in the face of the security challenges of the day (Clausewitz 1976 [1832]: 128).[7] Yet, as Colin Gray argues, Clausewitz's original definition easily lends itself to an 'expansion of domain so as to encompass policy instruments other than the military' (Gray 1999a: 17). As he goes on:

> The cardinal virtue of the Clausewitzian definition of strategy is that it separates those things that must be separated. Anyone who reads, understands and accepts the Clausewitzian definition will never be confused about what is strategic and what is not … Armed forces in action, indeed any instrument of power in action, is the realm of tactics. Strategy, in contrast, seeks to direct and relate the use of those instruments to policy goals. Clausewitz, therefore, is crystal-clear in distinguishing between action and effect and between instrument and objective.[8]

The essence of strategy, therefore, boils down to the extent to which any instruments of power – military or non-military – further a perceived political end. Military power is not strategic per se. It is the linking of military power to political purpose that is strategic. Hence, the EU's perceived focus on 'soft power' or non-military instruments is not necessarily less strategic than the manifestly more militaristic approach demonstrated, for example, by the United States. Strategy is about ends and means, or specifically how they are linked. Accordingly, we can conceptualise a strategic actor as one that (1) has a capacity to formulate common security interests (ends), and (2) can generate relevant capabilities (means), which (3) it has the resolve to use to promote common interests.[9]

The first appeal of this definition is the way it reflects the central ends–means quality of strategy. It indicates, for example, that capabilities are not objective entities, but must be seen to reflect certain security interests and how they ought to be pursued. Secondly, by focusing on the relationship between ends and means rather than the character of the means (i.e. civilian or military) as the defining factor of actorness, the categorisation, and hence the problems of accommodating different forms of power projection inherent to the ongoing debates on what kind of actor or power the EU is, are avoided. Thirdly, the definition is parsimonious, which is a central criterion by which theoretical concepts are measured (see Underdal 1983).[10] And finally, the three criteria – ends, means and resolve – allow an assessment of developments within the CSDP against three more or less clearly identifiable benchmarks. Accordingly, it is possible to use the concept to monitor the CSDP, while at any given point in time being able to come up with some conclusions regarding the status of the EU as a strategic actor. In line with Hill's abovementioned conceptualisation of an international actor, strategic actorness is, therefore, treated as a matter of 'level of' rather than 'either/or'.

However, to most people the very notion of actorness would also rest with some minimum intuitive qualities, or some form of ideational presence or personality. András Szigeti singles out 'identity' as one such quality, arguing that being an actor 'presupposes that the given institution has an independent, non-elusive and fairly permanent identity that is not merely the sum of the identities of its constituents' (Szigeti 2006: 22). Likewise, Giovanni Grevi argues that, 'in the case of the EU – a collective international actor bringing together 27 member states – the

claim to "actorness" depends crucially on its internal institutional and normative features' (Grevi 2009). Also within the strategic studies tradition, the idea that an actor, whether a state or another polity, acts within the context of its identity(/ies), history, norms, ideas, etc., has been subject to a 30-year-old debate on *strategic culture*, a concept that has received renewed interest in the EU context (Cornish and Edwards 2001, 2005; Heiselberg 2003; Hyde-Price 2004; Longhurst and Zaborowski 2004; Martinsen 2004; Matlary 2006; Meyer 2006; Norheim-Martinsen 2007; Rynning 2003).

The EU debate has largely circled around whether the EU has a strategic culture or not, which is a question that seems to defy a contemporary understanding of strategic culture, and, therefore, does not benefit from how strategic culture can be used as an analytical tool. The key point is that strategic culture cannot be treated as a criterion for a strategic actor, since all behaviour is ultimately cultural behaviour.[11] Instead strategic culture ought to be treated as a precondition or a set of boundaries within which any strategic actor operates. Given this premise, studying certain elements of an EU strategic culture may, therefore, help identify some fundamental parameters that may constrain or facilitate a strategic actor's room for manoeuvre. We shall, therefore, return to this issue in Chapter 2 of the book.

In any case, the very notion of being a strategic actor requires the presence of something more. This something may come in the shape of a dominant or hegemonic power that is able to impose its will on the organisation and give it a sense of purpose or direction (see e.g. Foot *et al.* 2003). This has arguably been the case in NATO, which as the intergovernmental organisation par excellence, nevertheless, has proven capable of strategic action due to the hegemonic role of the United States in the Alliance (see e.g. Layne 2000). The EU lacks a hegemonic United States. Many would argue that, being an intergovernmental organisation, it lacks even a minimum sense of political leadership (see e.g. Toje 2008b). However, the abovementioned something may also come in the shape of some shared normative, institutional and/or other feature that set it apart from a traditional alliance or organisation. We must identify and test these to be able to show that the EU, in the area of security and defence, has moved beyond formal intergovernmental constraints and may, thus, be capable of strategic action. This requires an approach that allows us to investigate mechanisms and processes other than those that follow from a purely

intergovernmental approach. In the current literature the concept of *governance* appears a particularly appropriate one for the subject matter at hand.

The governance turn in EU studies

Since the 1990s, various notions of governance have become a central approach in studies of the EU (see e.g. Bulmer *et al.* 2007; Christiansen and Piattoni 2003; Hooghe and Marks 2001; Jachtenfuchs 2001; Jachtenfuchs and Kohler-Koch 2004; Kohler-Koch and Eising 1999; Marks *et al.* 1996; Tallberg 2003b). This so-called 'governance turn in EU studies' follows a general trend in *International Relations theory* away from a focus on states and hierarchical modes of policy-making towards horizontal networks within and beyond the state (Hix 1998; Pierre and Peters 2000; Rosenau and Czempiel 1992). Its origins are found within the field of political science and public policy analysis, where it describes the setting, application and enforcement of rules that guide the distribution of public goods (see e.g. Powell 1990; Scharpf 1993). It is held that this can be accomplished, often more effectively than in hierarchical systems, through policy coordination in horizontal networks or markets. Today, governance has become a widely used catchphrase to describe the dispersion of authority and increased complexity of social and political interaction that follows in a globalising international system (Hewson and Sinclair 1999; Karns and Mingst 2004).

Governance typically involves 'various actors, including both public and private institutions and organisations, civil society and individuals acting in the framework of institutions' (Raik 2006: 80). It may include 'any form of coordination of interdependent social relations', ranging from centralised state control to self-regulation (Jessop 1999: 351). However, it is often contrasted to government, or conceptualised as a *move* from government to governance, pointing towards a relative weakening of the state as the primary actor in international relations. In this view, the transfer of authority to the regional or international level does not necessarily 'represent a substitution of the state as central authority by international institutions, which would suggest centralisation at a new level, but typically marks the dispersion of political authority between governments and their international organizations' (Krahmann 2003a: 12). As such, the governance perspective does not represent a

fundamental break with state-centric approaches, but focuses instead on the interaction, formal and informal, of various actors, both private and public, at different levels within and beyond the state. It has been argued, therefore, that governance is particularly well-suited for describing the functioning of the EU, since 'the governing of the Union takes place without a single authority and in the framework of a complex and multi-layered set of rules and norms' (Raik 2006: 81).

Essentially, the governance turn in EU studies has marked a shift away from the traditional integration theories towards treating the EU as an evolving, yet fairly stable, policy-making system (Wallace 2005). Instead of looking at the EU as a product of functional spillover or intergovernmental bargaining, the governance approach in its most extreme form 'treats the shape of the system as an independent variable explaining its policies' (Raik 2006: 81). This constitutes an important shift of focus, which has generated new insights into other domains of EU policy. But because of the general exclusion of security and defence from the governance research agenda, studies of the CSDP have so far not been able to profit from these insights.

However, a growing literature on 'security governance', which has sought to extend the general governance turn in International Relations to include also traditional 'high politics' (Kirchner 2006; Kirchner and Sperling 2007a, 2007b; Krahmann 2003a, 2003b, 2005; Schroeder 2006, 2011), seems to suggest that a similar expansion of the governance turn in EU studies may be pertinent. A co-written article from 2004, in which a team of scholars set out the governance of European security in five general features, presents itself as an appropriate starting point (Webber *et al.* 2004). Indeed, the Europeanisation of security accomplished through EU-led initiatives is one of three cases that are examined to demonstrate the utility of security governance for understanding security in post-Cold War Europe. The other two issues are the transformation of NATO, and what the authors refer to as the relationship between forms of inclusion and exclusion in governance (see also Webber 2007). The five features of security governance refer to:

I. heterarchy, or the existence of multiple centres of power;
II. interaction of multiple actors, both public and private;
III. formal and informal institutionalisation;
IV. relations between actors that are ideational in character; and
V. collective purpose

(Webber *et al.* 2004: 4–8)