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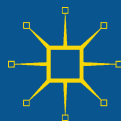
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and William E. Paterson



FRAMING THE EU GLOBAL STRATEGY

A Stronger Europe in a Fragile World

Nathalie Tocci



Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics

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A Stronger Europe in a Fragile World

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To Diego and Kike
Without whom none of this would have been possible

FOREWORD

Reading Nathalie's book, all the images and memories of these two years came back to me—but one above all: the incredibly intense days between the decision of the UK voters to leave the European Union and the European Council of June 28th where I presented the Global Strategy. This book testifies the unprecedented collective effort that has led to the text of the EU Global Strategy for foreign and security policy: over fifty public events in all Member States, countless rounds of consultations with governments, institutions, think tanks, experts and European citizens from all walks of life. All such work suddenly came into question after the “Brexit” vote.

I will never forget the hours after the referendum, the conversations with Nathalie and with my staff, with the presidents of the European institutions, with ministers from most Member States and with our British friends. Through those hours, we realised the decision we were taking was not simply about the European Council's agenda, it was not about procedures, nor was it about getting the best media coverage for the Strategy. We all realised there was one thing Europe could not afford after the vote, and that was uncertainty. With the British referendum, the need for a common strategy was even greater than before.

We needed—and we still need—to look beyond this self-induced crisis of European integration and to focus on what binds us together: the shared interests and the values driving our common foreign policy; our unparalleled strength, as the First-World economy, the largest global

investor in humanitarian aid and development cooperation, a global security provider with a truly global diplomatic network. We need to focus on the immense untapped potential of a more joined-up European Union. We need to move from a shared vision to common action.

As Nathalie shows, throughout the process, the need for a Global Strategy became clearer and clearer to all. And six months after the presentation of the document, the twenty-eight Heads of State and Government have approved my proposals for implementing the Strategy in the field of security and defence. It is a major leap forward for European cooperation—and eventually, integration—on defence matters. The process leading to the Global Strategy has helped build consensus on a set of concrete measures and on their rationale. Instead of getting stuck into never-ending ideological debates or exhausting negotiations on revising the Treaties, we moved pretty steadily from principles to practice—to finally get things done, where it really matters.

The implementation of the Strategy is now under way in all sectors, from fostering resilience to public diplomacy, from a more joined-up development cooperation to a rethinking of global governance. The European Union of security and defence can be a major building block to relaunch the process of European integration, but it cannot be the only one. Europe can deliver on our citizens' and our partners' needs only when it acts as a true Union, at national and European levels, with our hard and soft power, in our external and internal policies alike. Europe delivers only when it is united.

In the days following the British referendum, the ultimate decision on whether to move forward with the presentation of the EUGS belonged to me—but the process leading to the decision was truly collective, just like the whole process leading to Global Strategy. We did it the European way. The process had to be inclusive, taking into account as many voices as we could. At the same time, inclusiveness had to go together with incisiveness: we had to avoid getting stuck on reciprocal vetoes, aiming for the most ambitious outcome. I believe the Strategy manages to be both inclusive and incisive. It shows a united and decisive Union, Europe at its best.

It would be impossible to recall all the people who contributed to this work. My heartfelt thanks go to Javier Solana, for his guidance, encouragement and inspiration. Nathalie holds a very special place in this story: she has my gratitude not only for the incredible work she has done but

also for the energy and the patience she has put in it, for our long conversations, her good spirits and her own “resilience”. She has set up, steered and accompanied this collective process, step by step. This book tells the story of the Global Strategy from a unique and privileged perspective. It provides the reader with a special insight into the debates and the decisions that shaped up the Strategy. In times of disillusion and disenchantment, it tells a different, true story about our Union: the positive story of a Union that delivers, together.

Brussels

Federica Mogherini

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Many are the people I should thank, not just for this book but also for all the work that went into the story that it tells. The list would be very long, far too long, so let me limit it to those who made a tough two years of work not only possible but thoroughly enjoyable. Let me thank my closest colleagues in the EU strategic reflection process, Alfredo Conte from the Strategic Planning Division of the European External Action Service, Enrico Petrocelli from HRVP Federica Mogherini's Cabinet and Antonio Missiroli, the director of the EU Institute for Security Studies. Ours was an all-Italian team that came about more by coincidence than by design. I couldn't have been luckier to work with such a fun and committed group, each one of us with his or her added value. I would also like to thank Robert Cooper, the main author of the 2003 European Security Strategy, both for his advice on how to handle the strategic reflection and for his precious comments on this manuscript. Heartfelt thanks to the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), my home base. IAI was incredibly generous with me: not only did it live with the fact that its deputy director was often at large in these years, but also my colleagues in the Institute helped me enormously behind the scenes with the content of the Strategy, each one in his or her area of expertise. The biggest thank you goes to Federica Mogherini, for the opportunity of a lifetime. The task she entrusted me with was enormous. I did my very best to live up to her expectations and trust in me. Last and most important of all, I want to thank all my family, and above all

my husband Enrique and my son Diego, for their patience, love and understanding each and every day over these years. Without them, I would have never been able to seize the opportunity that Federica gave me. It is to them that this book is dedicated.

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Introduction

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

I recall the first conversation with Federica Mogherini on what was to become the EU Global Strategy (EUGS) in September 2014. At the time, she was the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, recently designated by the European Council as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HRVP). I was her advisor on strategy, juggling my time between the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and my job as the Deputy Director of the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) in Rome.

When I asked her whether she might be interested in embarking on a revision of the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS), her response was immediately and unambiguously positive. In fact, she often complained about the tendency of political leaders in Europe to constantly jump from one crisis to the next. Already back then, there was no shortage of crises in and around Europe. The summer of 2014 was hot in Ukraine, Syria, Gaza and Libya, to mention a few, and European leaders were constantly flying from one capital to the next, scrambling at once to make sense of what was going on and do the best they could to extinguish the multiple fires. Those fires still burn. In most cases, they have spread. The crises of 2014 have been joined by many others, be it the self-styled “Islamic State of Iraq and Syria” (ISIS) also known by its Arabic acronym Da’esh, the war in Yemen or the relentless sequence of terror attacks in Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Tunis, Dhaka, Istanbul and Baghdad,

among others. Reacting to crises is a hard and unavoidable fact of political life. But is tactic and reaction the only way forward? To paraphrase Sun Tzu, while a strategy bereft of tactic is the slowest route to victory in foreign policy, isn't tactic without strategy just the noise before defeat? Sun Tzu's dictum clearly resonated with Federica from the very start.

I resumed the conversation with her in January 2015, when I began my work as her Special Advisor with the specific responsibility of coordinating the work on a new Strategy on foreign and security policy as well as reaching out to the broader foreign policy community, including think tanks, universities and civil society groups. Over the last two years, much of my time has been spent on what became the EU strategic reflection process, which gave birth to the EU Global Strategy, alongside my work at IAI. The Strategy was presented and welcomed by the European Council in June 2016, formally replacing its predecessor, the 2003 ESS. As I wrote this book in the fall of 2016, the EU was making its first steps on the implementation of the EUGS.

THE AIM OF THIS BOOK

Both the ESS and the EU Global Strategy have and are still receiving considerable academic and policy interest. The ESS has been the subject of a prolific academic and policy literature. Studies on the ESS have spanned political science, international relations and European studies, as well as being dissected in countless doctoral dissertations over the years. Detailed exposés include Bailes (2005), Biscop (2005), Biscop and Andersson (2008), de Vasconcelos (2009) and Biscop (2015). These and other works are “must-read” pieces for any student, scholar or practitioner wishing to understand the ESS, as well as its follow-up, the 2008 Implementation Report (HR 2003, 2008) and more broadly European foreign policy. True to tradition in European studies, a rich literature is already developing rapidly on the EU Global Strategy. The EUGS was still hot off the press when several journal special issues went to print, for instance (The International Spectator 2016; Dijkstra 2016).

This book does not aim to recount this rich literature. Instead, by taking as its reference point the ESS, this book tells the story of and behind the EUGS, tracing the troubled journey which took the EU from one major strategic document to its sequel thirteen years later. This journey is made by comparing the political context (the “why”), the strategy-making process (the “how”), the actual content (the “what”) and the

respective follow-ups (the “what next”), underpinning these two major EU strategic exercises and documents.

I have written this book as the outcome of a very personal experience as a scholar at the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) and as Special Advisor to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HRVP). On behalf of HRVP Federica Mogherini, I coordinated the work and drafted both the 2015 EU strategic assessment (see Annex A) and the 2016 EUGS (see Annex B). It is because of this practical experience, that as a scholar, I wanted to share my thoughts with students and fellow academics and analysts. Why does an international player like the European Union produce a foreign and security policy strategy? How does it do so? What does its strategy say? And how does the EU aim to pursue it? By taking these basic questions about any strategy as its starting point, this book tells the story of the EUGS, compared to its predecessor, the ESS.

It has been 13 years since the EU produced its first foreign policy strategy—the 2003 ESS—under then High Representative (HR) Javier Solana. However, the EU Global Strategy, as the title itself suggests, is the first of its kind. It is a document drafted by a High Representative who is the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Council (including the informal Defence Council and the Development Council) *and* Vice-President of the European Commission: it is a process and a product that has brought together *both* the EU Member States and the European Commission. Whereas Javier Solana presented a European *Security* Strategy because he was “only” the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and *Security* Policy of the Union, Federica Mogherini set out to produce a far more comprehensive EU *Global* Strategy, making full use of the multiple hats entrusted to her by the Lisbon Treaty. Generally, it is states that produce strategies. Moreover, such strategies normally focus only on security, even if broadly construed. In this case, the EU is neither a state nor an international organisation, but a hybrid mix between the two. Furthermore, the strategy that it produced was not limited to security but encompassed all dimensions of foreign policy in the broadest sense. The complexity of this exercise can only be fully grasped through an inside lens into the process.

Added to this, the strategic reflection which gave birth to the EUGS did not involve only official stakeholders. The two elements of my job description—as the coordinator of the EUGS process and responsible for

outreach to think tanks—were always meant to be connected. The strategic reflection was meant to and did involve virtually all Member States including governments, ministries and parliaments, as well as the broader foreign policy community, from academia to think tanks, and from civil society to the media. The EUGS was followed closely also outside the Union, from Washington, Tokyo, Brasilia, Canberra and Moscow to places closer to home such as Ankara, Oslo, Tunis, Tbilisi, Kiev and Belgrade among others.

This book tells the inside story of this adventure, seeking to make students and scholars, practitioners and interested observers within and outside the EU aware of the politics, the process, the content and the future perspectives of the EUGS, compared to the ESS. This book includes in its annexes the two texts produced by the EU strategic reflection: the June 2015 strategic assessment and the June 2016 EUGS. It reproduces these two documents—without their respective executive summaries—for easy reference to the reader, given they are often cited in this work. As said, the aim of this book is precisely to tell the story of and behind these two documents.

But the rationale of this book does not stop here.

This is and has been a deeply enriching experience for me. Entrusting a project of this magnitude to an outside scholar was certainly not an obvious, less still an uncontested, choice by the HRVP. I distinctly remember the vocal insistence of one senior official to set up an “editorial committee” for the drafting of the Strategy. According to my interlocutor, the proposed members of such an Editorial Committee would have been, other than myself, several (male) retired diplomats. The motivation behind the suggestion was fairly obvious: How could the HRVP entrust the coordination and drafting of such a document to an outsider of the institutional machinery? I never felt any personal animosity towards myself, quite the contrary. I rather read this as an understandable, perhaps inevitable, instinct from any institutional body—in this case the European Union—to contain if not expel a foreign element. When, with the backing of the HRVP of course, I resisted the attempt of being surrounded by a group of experienced men that would control my work, I saw a look of sheer panic in the eyes of my interlocutor. All he could mutter was “but Nathalie, you cannot do this alone...what if you get ill?!”

Thankfully that did not happen. Over the last two years, I often felt like a fly, alighting here and there on the institutional ointment of Brussels, and now and then getting caught in it. I had privileged access

to the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Commission, the Council and the Parliament, as well as to the politics and institutions of Member States, and interested external countries. I consulted all 28 Member States—including governments, ministries and parliaments, travelling to most capitals. The EUGS took me close to home, to Serbia, Turkey, Georgia, Norway and Israel, and further afield to the USA, Japan, Brazil and Australia, and I consulted with organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). I was part of a vibrant debate within the wider foreign policy community, from academia to think tanks, and from civil society to the media.

As a privileged player in this process, and yet as an outside observer of the official machinery and a scholar in “normal life”, I wanted to use the lens of the EUGS, and its comparison with the ESS, to tell a broader story about the European Union’s foreign policy and its functioning, both internally and vis-à-vis the outside world. My hybrid role as an insider and outsider gave me access to and knowledge of a wide range of complex structures and actors, all the while remaining sufficiently detached from official processes to retain, I hope, an external observer’s eye on what surrounded me. This book reflects this hybrid nature: while written by and for students and scholars, it does not look like a classic scholarly piece of work. I rather used implicitly my academic background to recount a personal practical experience at the heart of EU foreign policy making. It is precisely in view of this hybrid nature and experience that I hope this book will make a contribution to the literature on the European Union.

All the insights gained from this intense process cannot be captured in a twenty-page document: the EU Global Strategy itself. I feel enormously privileged to have been entrusted this role by the HRVP. The very least I can do is share this experience with interested readers.

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