

## Taking Stock: 50 Years of European Diplomacy\*

David Spence

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### Summary

The assumption that the European Union is creating a new diplomacy begs many questions. However, it is clear that the role of national diplomats in the integrative processes has changed dramatically during the last 50 years, producing a blueprint for a new form of European diplomacy. It is apparent that European diplomacy has been characterized by the existence of two broad but distinct diplomatic career paths, each with a separate and specific mindset, and that there are, arguably, two identifiable epistemic communities of European diplomats — national and supranational — sometimes cooperating willingly, sometimes reluctantly, in an interplay between national and EU diplomacy. Against this background, in the short term a ‘variable geometry’ of representation is likely to continue, as member states refashion their networks of representation, influenced by a combination of international involvement, perceptions of national need and, at times, the unwelcome dictates of diminishing national resources. But a new European diplomacy already exists alongside the old, and its distinctive feature is the withering away of explicit national interests.

### Keywords

diplomacy, Europe, national diplomatic systems, Europe’s foreign policy framework, national diplomats, Euro-diplomats, diplomatic careers, representation, epistemic community, Common Foreign and Security Policy, European External Action Service, Lisbon Treaty, ministries of foreign affairs

### Introduction

Fifty years after the Treaty of Rome heralded European economic and political integration, national diplomacy continues to exist, but it has arguably undergone

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\* I would like to thank several EU member state ambassadors in Geneva, a former Head of a Commissioner’s Cabinet and British ambassador, Professor Brian Hocking and Dr Jozef Batora for helpful comments. In addition, several seasoned diplomats have read the text and have all demonstrated an agreeable absence of righteous certitude about developments in EU diplomacy. Practitioners underlined the futility of theoretical ‘ideal types’ and ‘epistemic communities’. And while some academics have welcomed this means of conceptual delineation, they too have hesitated as to the pertinence and value of its application to diplomats. I contend that even if there are in practice a host of ‘swingers’ between the two broad categories of European diplomats identified in the text, there is arguably at least heuristic advantage in making the distinction between the two. So I have let the perhaps amateurish use of these conceptual terms stand, in readiness for subsequent (hopefully) insightful debate. Needless to say, the views expressed in this paper are mine alone and do not in any way engage or represent the views of the European Commission.

enough significant adaptation to warrant concern for its future.<sup>1</sup> This article reflects on the stakes for diplomats in the integrative process by which national diplomatic systems and national interest-based policy-making have transmogrified during the last 50 years, producing a strikingly innovative blueprint for a new form of European diplomacy. It assesses the implications of ‘integrating diplomats’<sup>2</sup> and the effects of Europe’s emerging foreign policy framework both on diplomacy’s institutional structures and diplomats themselves. It argues that European diplomacy has become characterized by the existence of two broad but distinct diplomatic careers, each followed by diplomats *stricto sensu*, yet with different mindsets — national and supranational — cooperating, sometimes willingly, sometimes reluctantly, in an interplay between national diplomacy, EU diplomacy and the ambitions of the Lisbon Treaty. The article argues that a ‘variable geometry’ of representation is likely to continue in the short term. Member states are refashioning their networks of representation, influenced by new thinking on international involvement, perceptions of national need and the unwelcome dictates of diminishing national resources. The article concludes that there already exists an embryonic new European diplomacy, alongside existing national diplomatic systems. This new European diplomacy is based on two premises: the decline of specific ‘national interest’ outside the EU; and complementarity between two distinct diplomatic epistemic communities — national and European.

### Integrating Diplomats?

General changes in diplomatic practice since the Second World War are legion.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, diplomats worldwide are wont to stress the continuity rather than the change in their role, and this notwithstanding their own ministries’ engagement in managerial reviews that are designed to meet the challenges of this change. Management change is itself evidence of official recognition of new diplomatic imperatives. In the EU’s member states, there is a distinctly additional context to general changes in diplomatic methods and the level of relevance, if not respect, of ministries of foreign affairs within the ministerial hierarchies of modern states. The impact of the European Union on national foreign policy-making is paramount.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. Bátora, ‘Does the EU Transform the Institution of Diplomacy?’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2005, pp. 44-66.

<sup>2</sup> B. Hocking and D. Spence, *Foreign Ministries in the European Union: Integrating Diplomats* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), pp. 3 and 32-33.

<sup>3</sup> D. Newson, ‘The New Diplomatic Agenda: Are Governments Ready?’, *International Affairs*, vol. 65, no. 1, 1999; and A.K. Henrikson, ‘Diplomacy’s Possible Futures’, *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2006, pp. 3-27.

<sup>4</sup> Hocking and Spence, *Foreign Ministries in the European Union*.

Whatever the formal diplomatic arrangements involved, the context of the EU's current contribution to world affairs needs to be stressed. Having bequeathed the world with a functioning diplomatic system, which they once commanded, managed and exploited, the EU's member states are today obliged to contend with an international system that they no longer dominate, whose norms and values are often only reluctantly those of European civilization, and where powerful, continent-sized states make for unbalanced diplomatic partnerships. In short, Europe's diplomats inhabit a non-European world. They have more in common with each other than with non-European diplomats, and their relations with each other are less and less diplomatic in the traditional foreign ministry to foreign ministry sense. They are frequently more concerned with the implications of shared domestic policies and policy-making than with punching national foreign policy weight within the EU and in the outside world. Indeed, inter-state regional coordination is now incontrovertibly the *sine qua non* of effective foreign policy for the modern European state, with inter-governmental foreign policy — the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) — increasingly viewed as the sole means for European states even to hope to play the power political game at a global level. As one academic puts it:

Claims that Europe is one institutional step away from global power feed into a profound sense of denial afflicting many in the 'Old Continent'. How long is it, really, since the states of Europe, either individually or collectively, could decisively shape global politics?<sup>5</sup>

Separate from specific European developments, an important general issue for diplomacy is clearly the fate of the national diplomat. One British ambassador has significantly alluded to important changes in diplomacy resulting from the acceleration of communications through air travel, the Internet and 'the CNN factor'. The issue is whether 'a jet-set world need(s) the pedestrian any more?' and whether 'the diplomatic bag, plus the author of its contents, is doomed to extinction?'<sup>6</sup> National diplomacy has also come under the auditing and management efficiency microscopes of national governments worldwide. Diplomats everywhere regret the decline of the diplomatic grandeur of yesteryear. They have been party or at least witness to fundamental changes in their tradecraft, engendered largely by general trends in international relations. But in European states, European integration's requirement to raise diplomatic sights from the national to the European level and the EU's increasingly key contribution to international affairs form a specifically European context of opportunity and constraint. And this context is one of ever-increasing complexity.

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<sup>5</sup> Anand Menon, 'EU is a Soft Power, even with Lisbon', *European Voice*, 25 September 2008.

<sup>6</sup> G. Jackson, *Concorde Diplomacy: The Ambassador's Role in the World Today* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981).

## The International Context of European Diplomacy

The seemingly disinterested nature of the EU's post-national external governance, distinguished from the arguably partisan nature of its individual member states (such as the UK in Sierra Leone and France in the Ivory Coast), enables it to mediate where individual state actors may not. Indeed, accusations that its 'actor-ness' hides self-interest are rare, if non-existent. The EU's global reach enables it to act in any region of the world with the support of its now half-century presence on the ground through Commission delegations. Likewise, its readiness to offer both sizeable short-term crisis action and extensive long-term technical support is clearly beguiling for its less fortunate partners. And the increasing alignment of its administrative ability with the military strength of member states in the service of humanitarian crisis and conflict management — from the Balkans through West Africa to the Congo — are all examples of increasingly robust comprehensive EU intervention abroad. Intervention involves governance packages, including not only assistance aimed at efficient governance in general, but direct contributions to security sector governance through both advocacy and practical support for military or policing operations. The EU's ambition to provide such diverse forms of intervention is a product of its economic weight, its undoubted, yet still largely latent, political weight and its ambition to extend its military strength.<sup>7</sup> As the European Council concluded in December 2008:

Over the last ten years, the European Union has established itself as a global political player. It has assumed increasing responsibilities, as witnessed by its ever more ambitious and diversified civilian and military operations in the service of effective multilateralism and peace.

The EU's military strength, is increasingly judged by capabilities rather than military action, by talk of headline goals and capability commitments rather than by troop surges,<sup>8</sup> and as High Representative for CFSP Javier Solana himself argues:

<sup>7</sup> The European Council agreed a report from High Representative for CFSP Javier Solana in December 2008 that stated, *inter alia*: 'For military missions, we must continue to strengthen our efforts on capabilities, as well as mutual collaboration and burden-sharing arrangements. Experience has shown the need to do more, particularly over key capabilities such as strategic airlift, helicopters, space assets, and maritime surveillance. These efforts must be supported by a competitive and robust defence industry across Europe, with greater investment in research and development'. See *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: Providing Security in a Changing World*, Council of Ministers 17104/08, 10 December 2008. The EU's military profile extends abroad, for example, to EURORECAMP, a tool to help the African Union (AU) validate the African Standby Force (ASF) by 2010. This falls within the framework of the European Union's action plan to strengthen African capabilities. See [www.armaniamfrica.org](http://www.armaniamfrica.org).

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of military underpinnings of EU power, see C.J. Bickerton, 'Realpolitik for an Ethical Age? Exploring the Functionality of EU Foreign Policy', *CFSP Forum*, vol. 7, no. 1, January 2009. For details of headline goals and capability conferences, see J. Howarth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).

Defence cannot stay outside the European integration processes anymore. It is politically desirable and economically necessary. [...] Increasingly, the distinction between civilian and military will become less relevant. [...] We are currently reorganizing our strategic planning capability in this way. We are exploring how the development of our capabilities can be used for both civilian and military purposes.<sup>9</sup>

The facts belie the belief that the EU is, as a former UK Ambassador put it, ‘the world’s principle under-performing asset’.<sup>10</sup> The combined Gross Domestic Product of the EU member states is larger than those of the United States or Japan. With 8 per cent of the world’s population, the EU accounts for 25 per cent of the world’s GDP. Fifty-nine of the world’s top 100 multinational corporations are European. The EU’s contribution to aid, both developmental and humanitarian, stands at 60 per cent of all aid. The EU’s total population of half a billion relatively prosperous citizens, and thus its internal market, is greater than that of any other advanced country or similar regional grouping. The EU’s euro is the second international currency, and the degree of policy integration — indeed ‘supranationalization’ — is further advanced than in any other attempt at regional integration. The EU contribution to the United Nations is higher than that of the United States or Japan. The EU, through the European Commission, sits in the G8, the G20 and the Middle East Quartet and holds meetings in *troika* format with the most powerful international actors. Almost 100,000 EU troops are engaged worldwide in peace operations, and uniformed officers are an increasingly present feature of EU Council meetings, and not only in the military committee.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the potential for effective EU influence has clearly grown, and one counterpart of this potential is the growing expectation abroad and at home that EU diplomats, whether national or EU officials, speak with one voice — an expectation mirrored by the inexorable process of CFSP expansion formalized in successive treaty adjustments. In sum, as Jean Monnet argued long before Europe’s economic and political weight had reached twenty-first-century proportions: ‘*Nos pays sont devenus trop petits pour le monde actuel à l’échelle des moyens techniques modernes, à la mesure de l’Amérique et de la Russie d’aujourd’hui, de la Chine et de l’Inde de demain*’.<sup>12</sup>

In terms of Europe’s evolving diplomacy, the EU’s relevance for geographical concerns — such as the Middle East or Africa — and functional issues — such as trade, arms issues, terrorism or the environment — structures the foreign policies of small member states and creates incentives and constraints for their diplomats.

<sup>9</sup> EDA Conference entitled ‘Helicopters — Key to Mobility’, address by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for CFSP and Head of the European Defence Agency, Brussels, 10 March 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Sir Peter Marshall, quoted in UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, ‘Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty’, HC 120-1, 2008, p. 42.

<sup>11</sup> The figures above are taken from a speech by Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner to the *Zigarrenclub* in Vienna, 20 October 2008, entitled ‘*Ein globales Europa: Aktuelle Herausforderungen der EU-Aussenpolitik*’.

<sup>12</sup> From Jean Monnet’s speech of 9 November 1954, quoted in J.M. Barroso, ‘Speech Celebrating 50 Years of the European Commission’, 7 November 2008, Rapid Database 08/593.

Why would Lithuania have an ‘interest’ in African affairs if not because it is called upon, as an EU member, to contribute to policy in the framework of the CFSP? But this is not only about the smaller states. The same constraints and incentives exist for the larger states. What are UK interests in francophone Africa? Does the closing of UK missions there demonstrate a British Foreign Office perception of declining bilateral relevance, despite the fact that some purely national tasks for large states — such as maintaining close bilateral relations as a permanent UN Security Council member — thereby become more complex? Actually, there may not be many quantifiable UK interests, for example, in francophone Africa; indeed, in national terms there may only be strong French national interests there. But there are *European* interests everywhere, if only because the EU has inherited many of the obligations and perceived moral debts from European states’ colonial past and has thus been encouraged to manage a non-national-interest-based development policy through a series of agreements with developing countries, such as the current Cotonou Agreement. In practical terms, ‘Europe’, through the European Commission, runs extensive aid and assistance programmes throughout the world, and it coordinates relations with other regional organizations and the UN — all tasks involving perspectives of little *direct* relevance to strict national interests. The relevance may well be discernable beyond European nation-states, at the level of the EU. But EU aid and technical assistance currently escape accusations of self-interest, and the EU is thus somewhat akin to George Soros, whom former Prime Minister of Macedonia Branko Crenvenkowski is said to have described as follows: ‘States have interests and no principles. You have principles, but no interests’.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Fate of National Diplomacy and the Growth of EU Diplomatic ‘Actorness’**

Where, then, does national diplomacy stand? The most common narrative on the fate of national foreign diplomacy within the EU assumes that European integration was originally the intellectual and bureaucratic property of ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs), but that domestic ministries gradually came to occupy the national bureaucratic terrain in most areas of European policy. The adjustment of the relative weight, responsibilities and prominence of domestic ministries in European affairs meant that the central role of MFAs as ‘gatekeepers’ of domestic ministerial responsibilities changed fundamentally.<sup>14</sup> On this hypothesis, within the EU the power and responsibilities of MFAs have clearly declined. Yet paradoxically, new EU coordinating roles for MFAs have simultaneously strengthened

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in G. Soros, *The Age of Fallibility* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006), p. xi.

<sup>14</sup> D. Spence, ‘The Coordination of European Policy by Member States’, in M. Westlake and D. Gallo-way (eds.), *The Council of the European Union* (London: John Harper, 2004), pp. 297-324.

the central role of MFAs in terms of their relations with the domestic arena.<sup>15</sup> So the decline of MFA-orchestrated bilateralism within Europe was counterbalanced by an increase in a separate MFA responsibility located in their EU departments — namely the monitoring and *coordination* of domestic policy departments' handling of EU business. Yet, at a higher level, there was a further significant counter-trend: a distinction was made between coordination as information-sharing and coordination as the authoritative resolution of inter-ministerial disagreement. The consequence was removal of the highest level of domestic coordination of international policies from MFAs to central coordination structures such as the UK Cabinet Office, the French *Secrétariat Général des affaires européennes* or to the offices of heads of government, such as the *Bundeskanzleramt* in Germany. In parallel, bilateral embassies within the European Union and the terms of reference of their diplomats began to be redefined.<sup>16</sup>

Yet the evolution of the so-called 'gatekeeper' role of MFAs in relation to the expanding external responsibilities of domestic ministries proved to be not the most significant component in the overall evolution of Europe's national MFAs. Rather, it was the growing relevance of the EU level of *foreign* policy-making — that is, the making of policy towards the 'abroad' of the EU — that became crucial for the development of both national and European diplomacy. There was thus a further dynamic within the EU: between the general decline in relevance of national foreign policy (and hence of national diplomacy) in a globalized world, and the strengthening of EU member state MFAs, born of the incentive/constraint of participation in world politics as a concomitant of Europe's emerging status as an international actor. Some even view the EU as a potential superpower<sup>17</sup> that may come to 'run the twenty-first century'.<sup>18</sup> In more practical terms, the growing salience of EU policy in world affairs has broadened the agenda of both small and large EU states to encompass areas outside their immediate 'national interest', and thus obliged them to expand resources that were dedicated to foreign affairs beyond the point where purely national added value might have been identified. In sum, small and large member states have therefore (albeit variable and unequal) stakes in the CFSP and, significantly, the CFSP may have led to a strengthening of MFAs and national diplomacy, precisely in order for

<sup>15</sup> D. Spence, 'The Evolving Role of Foreign Ministries in the Conduct of European Affairs', in B. Hocking and D. Spence, (eds.), *Foreign Ministries in the European Union: Integrating Diplomats* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> A particularly sophisticated re-think of foreign ministry roles is outlined in the 'Paschke Report', a management review of the *Auswärtiges Amt* [German Foreign Office]. See Karl T. Paschke, *Report on the Special Inspection of Fourteen German Embassies in the Countries of the European Union* (Berlin: Federal Foreign Office, September 2000). The original German version of the report was published in Enrico Brandt and Christian Buck (eds.), *Auswärtiges Amt: Diplomatie als Beruf* (Opladen: Verlag Leske & Budrich, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> S. Haseler, *Super-State: the New Europe and its Challenge to America* (London: IB Tauris, 2004); and J. McCormick, *The European Superpower* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> M. Leonard, *Why Europe will Run the Twenty-First Century* (London: Fourth Estate, 2005).

national diplomats to participate effectively in EU foreign policy-making — and this even at a time when the general global trend seemed to be the declining relevance of MFAs, and when ministries of finance everywhere were constraining MFAs to shed their embassies and reduce staff.

There are three relevant research questions posed by these developments. The first is *how* CFSP created a constraint and incentive structure that obliges both small and large member states to invest increased resources in order to punch their weight within the CFSP. Second, analysis would be helpful of the *extent* to which changes in national diplomatic systems are the result of European integration. Third, the crucial question is whether the *interplay* between national and European diplomatic arrangements is a zero-sum game, with national diplomacy declining as EU diplomacy grows; or alternatively a positive-sum game in which EU-level structures combine with national arrangements to produce a new kind of umbrella regional diplomacy within which independent national diplomacy can co-exist.

There are several features of European diplomatic life of relevance to the answers that research may throw up. On one reading, if the Lisbon Treaty is ratified, certain state roles within the EU are set to disappear. Council presidencies, for example, have hitherto provided the administrative and political lead in CFSP matters. A problem here has been that most of the time member states simply do not have permanent diplomatic presence in most capitals around the world and the diplomatic tasks of presidencies there fall to others. If all EU meetings on foreign affairs are soon, *pace* the Lisbon Treaty, to be chaired by the High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission and his/her support staff downstream, the occasional presidency role for national foreign ministries is not merely seriously affected. 'Running the presidency', which was hitherto an important and prestigious element of national input to European policy-making, actually disappears. This may be thought to be evidence of a zero-sum game, but it is also simultaneous evidence of a positive-sum game. An important objective of the Lisbon Treaty is ensuring continuity of chairmanship and political initiative — in the interests of the diplomacy of all member states as well as the EU itself. Nonetheless, most presidencies have undoubted difficulties in some issue areas, since they are not represented in given countries or are weakly resourced in given functional areas, and thus cannot contribute meaningfully to informed EU policy-making in these areas without considerable support from the Council Secretariat, the Commission or another member state. The case of valiant Slovenia running the presidency in the field of disarmament — with no national arms of which to speak, no seat on the UN Security Council and non-membership of the UN Conference on Disarmament — is one of many that bear witness to the tribulations of presidential office without extensive national resources.

At a systemic level, it is arguably dysfunctional for the European Union if a country runs the presidency with no more than a handful of embassies in a 190-



state world. The chairmanship function is hard to fulfil without an independent source of political reporting and the insights of briefings that lend credibility and confidence to chairing skills. In many places, such as in Rangoon or Abidjan, there are only four or five EU member state missions (usually France, Germany, the UK, Spain and Italy alongside the ubiquitous European Commission). Here, there is perhaps no great strain on a 'local' presidency to undertake national functions, in addition to extensive coordination, chairing and representation functions of the EU. But what about local visibility of EU diplomacy? Do host countries really understand why the country holding the EU presidency in Brussels is not the EU presidency in their country? Handing presidency work permanently to an EU delegation is supposed to end this anomaly of 'presidency' roles not falling to the 'presidency country'. It would clearly create the managerial continuity that modern MFAs in principle seek, and it would lighten the load of comprehension for host states. But national visibility and the enhancement of competence through presidential responsibility is quite clearly diminished.

A separate EU internal issue is coordination between the three distinct pillars of EU policy-making. To enforce concrete political measures taken in the second pillar (CFSP), whatever the diplomatic structures involved, first pillar (EC) and third pillar (justice and liberty) treaty articles and methods are necessary — economic assistance, sanctions, human rights, migration and changes in trade policy. The obvious need, indeed treaty requirement, to coordinate the three areas of policy-making constrains the EU's institutions and MFAs to play a careful role.<sup>19</sup>

These are but some of the practical reasons behind the Lisbon Treaty's proposal to create a joint European External Action Service (EEAS).

But if there is a need for empirical research on how EU foreign affairs has already influenced national diplomatic systems, it would certainly seem that there has not been an enormous leap in the geographical and functional spread of foreign policy for the larger member states. There is more EU-based work and thus increased resource allocation to EU decision-making, however. For the smaller states, contributing meaningfully to EU foreign policy-making has created a new requirement to cover areas where there are often no identifiable national concerns and where there is often no embassy structure to assist in information-gathering, advocacy and policy formation. Ironically, financial pressures in the 1980s and 1990s led all MFAs in the European Union to embark on administrative reform. Pressure for budget cuts arose precisely at the time when several new states were created within the larger Europe as the Soviet Union disaggregated. The increased diversification of foreign policy actors (including the inexorable rise of

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<sup>19)</sup> The Treaty on European Union mentions in various places the obligation to coordinate policy. For example, Article J.2 obliges member states to ensure their action in international organizations. Article J.6 covers cooperation between diplomatic and consular missions. Article C requires consistency in external relations, security, and economic and development policies. Meanwhile, Article 228a of the Treaty of Rome links economic sanctions to a prior CFSP decision.

non-governmental organizations) increased pressure on the foreign policy-making process. There was a resultant need for expanding foreign services rather than their contraction.

Recently joined EU member states have been mindful to secure their new-found sovereignty, rather than to relinquish it, even if the survival of perceptions of national interest despite diminishing diplomatic opportunity is a hindrance to increased European integration. National politicians and publics largely believe that *national* responses are still appropriate. French policy in francophone Africa, British military operations with the United States, Baltic policies towards their Russian neighbour, Greek policy towards Turkey, the issue of Cyprus, or UK and Spanish interests in Gibraltar are all examples of vibrant national interests. And they are also cases where a minority of one can prevent the emergence of EU common policy — for understandable reasons of national interest. In sum, national interests frequently take primacy over EU ‘solidarity’ and thereby render EU leadership in international affairs at best fraught with obstacles, if not impossible.

Yet counterbalancing this continued salience of purely national interests are changes in individual policy areas, where there is the real prospect of specific policy responsibility being formally transferred to the European level. This may not always boost exclusive EU competence, but consular affairs, which are currently under intense discussion,<sup>20</sup> or international aid, energy or environmental policies are all cases in point. The global economic crisis of 2009 heightened the relevance of calls to rise beyond the horizon of the nation-state in Europe. As UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband put it:

[...] today's global age is fragile. It is a fragility born of the fact that while our economy has gone global, our politics remain primarily national. The sense of powerlessness that breeds can either force us to scale back our economic life and embrace protectionism and nationalism. Or it can inspire us to scale up our political institutions to match the continental and global reach of our economies.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, the current High Representative for CFSP Javier Solana has consistently expressed the need for growing awareness of the advantages of togetherness, arguing that EU representation needs review, that more coordination of ministerial visits abroad, more assistance to himself, his personal representatives and the European Union's Special Representatives (EUSRs) are required. There is thus seemingly a clear case for more synergy between member state embassies and Commission delegations, more intelligent use of EU weight and influence in international organizations, enhanced CFSP instruments and more flexible access to CFSP funds. The issue of *how much* synergy provides fertile ground for politi-

<sup>20</sup> Ana Mar Fernández, ‘Consular Affairs in the EU: Visa Policy as a Catalyst for Integration’, *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2008.

<sup>21</sup> See ‘Debate on an EU Fit for Purpose in a Post-2009 Global Age’, 9 March 2009, available online at [www.fco.gov.uk/en/newsroom](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/newsroom).

cal inventiveness. Significantly, European diplomats themselves do not hold common views, and academics — unhampered by loyalty to a political cause or bureaucratic nicety — are nonetheless challenged by the various functional, geographical and level-of-analysis issues involved.<sup>22</sup>

### **Modern European Diplomats: Competing or Collaborating Epistemic Communities?**

Europe's diplomats consist of the officials of member state MFAs, the European Commission and the Council Secretariat. In principle they share assumptions about the nature of diplomacy, for they are all 'diplomats'. Yet in fact they display divergent views on the nature of Europe's potential diplomatic role in international affairs. There are seemingly two diplomatic epistemic communities in Europe — not merely one broad community of officials working in general ways in the same profession, as one author argues.<sup>23</sup> They are distinct epistemic communities in that they consciously endeavour to attain specific *systemic* goals, unlike particular subgroups within the diplomatic profession, such as the 'Arabists' in the UK Foreign Office. These subgroups also endeavour to reach specific goals, and it may be tempting to describe them as a kind of epistemic community, but it makes more analytic sense to see them as *advocacy* groups within the profession, rather than as an epistemic community. The goals of an epistemic community concern *systemic* change, rather than policy advocacy relating to a specific function (such as human rights, multilateralism or arms control) or geographical region (such as the Middle East). In fact, studies based on the epistemic communities approach underline that a common policy enterprise by a group of individuals with shared causal beliefs and systemic motivation is different from a simple advocacy coalition. In sum, the advocacy coalition approach is certainly less appropriate for the study of the European diplomatic community, for there is more at stake than a simple functional or geographical personal interest.

The two ideal-type belief systems and consequent careers of Europe's diplomats can be usefully summarized as national careers and Euro-careers. These two ideal-typical epistemic communities have their own *Weltanschauung* [comprehensive worldview]. They are national diplomats and Euro-diplomats. Each has different loyalties, different understandings of national interests and European interests and distinct views on how to formulate, agree and advocate for these interests. Given the changing nature of diplomatic challenges, a key future issue is whether

<sup>22</sup> M.E. Smith details some of the analytical complexity in 'Researching European Foreign Policy: Some Fundamentals', *Politics*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2008, pp. 177-187.

<sup>23</sup> I differ here from Cross's assumption that diplomats in European states per se are an epistemic community, holding instead that European diplomacy encompasses two specific epistemic communities within the overall European diplomatic community. See M.K.D. Cross, *The European Diplomatic Corps: Diplomats and International Cooperation from Westphalia to Maastricht* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007).

the restructuring of diplomacy in Europe that was announced in the Lisbon Treaty will actually promote a new post-national European diplomatic system<sup>24</sup> and whether, in turn, we may one day witness an integration of these two career paths — an evolution from the current system of consciously Europeanized national diplomacy into a new and specific form of European diplomacy. In 2009 this remains a future that dare not speak its name, as member states and the EU institutions tread increasingly cautiously in the wake of the Irish referendum, which rejected the Lisbon Treaty. Yet what can be said is that both national and Euro-diplomats will in any case continue to operate within a Europeanized political framework, for as the December 2008 European Council put it: ‘The European Council reaffirms that the Treaty of Lisbon is considered necessary in order to help the enlarged Union to function more efficiently, more democratically and more effectively, including in international affairs’.<sup>25</sup>

If two such epistemic communities exist, even in broad theoretical terms, this is not to say that these are two permanent groups of diplomats that are fixed in form and content forever. What characterizes the current state of EU diplomacy is that these two ideal types often merge in practice, with participants crossing from one group to the other, even with changes in mental horizons accompanying career moves. The two groups of individuals frequently work in parallel and yet remain complementary. So one should not conjure up an image of disputative diplomats on two sides of a globe arguing the toss about the merits and demerits of the Westphalian system, the Lisbon Treaty and the mythical status of the first and second pillars, the need for a CFSP Joint Action, where a Community development policy might suffice, or whether the Commission President or the External Relations Commissioner should be present, speak or instigate policy at major international events from global warming to assistance to Georgia. An assumption of internecine conflict between the two ideal-type diplomatic communities would be misguided. Yet with this caveat, in broad terms Euro-diplomats do, however, function in a psychological environment of almost total change from the precepts of ‘traditional’ national diplomats.

While the epistemic community of diplomats, which I term Euro-diplomats, focuses on and is professionally an integral part of pro-integration developments in European foreign policy-making, the other community, national diplomats,<sup>26</sup> exhibits an arguably more traditional view of national and European interests. National diplomats slot into a national diplomatic career that is similar to that of their predecessors, with postings outside Europe in bilateral embassies or at home on country or functional desks. They make national diplomatic careers, sometimes specializing in economic issues, arms issues or security, etc. ‘Europe’, as

<sup>24</sup> Bátorá, ‘Does the EU Transform the Institution of Diplomacy?’.

<sup>25</sup> European Council, 12 December 2008, ‘Presidency Conclusions’.

<sup>26</sup> There is potential confusion here. Of course, an EU member state’s diplomat formally remains a member state’s diplomat, even if he or she is a ‘Euro-diplomat’ for the purposes of this analysis.

such, impinges only marginally on their working life — indeed, almost only when EU coordination occurs abroad, and then often reluctantly. As one national diplomat put it after having read this text: ‘in the ministry the “Euro-group” just doesn’t understand that we are not opposed to Europe; we just think that Europe is necessary as a complement and support to our national position rather than as an objective in itself’. The same idea has been expressed at ministerial level. In a submission to the UK’s House of Commons, Home Office Minister Hazel Blears argued:

[...] we have to be careful to avoid European-wide institutions wanting to create something fresh that comes simply from a European perspective rather than necessarily a bringing together of the information, skills and expertise that Member States have to offer.<sup>27</sup>

National diplomats thus rationalize the importance of EU-induced changes, arguing that the national forum remains the more relevant, and that any success in EU diplomacy is contingent upon a positive constellation of ‘national interests’. The nation state, for them, is where the real focus of authority and power lies — where the ‘buck’ stops. They frequently devalue, indeed deprecate, the implications of change that were described earlier in this article. Simon Nuttall, one of the Commission’s first CFSP officials, already argued early in the 1990s that specific sections of MFAs had become ‘committed’ to CFSP, while others viewed CFSP as ‘Euro crap’.<sup>28</sup> This was the first written indication that Europe’s diplomats now seem to fall into these two main groups, with huge differences in outlook. Euro-diplomats may be officials of an EU member state MFA or of the ‘*famille* RELEX’ in the Commission, in the Commission’s delegations, in High Representative Solana’s policy unit or Directorate-E in the Council Secretariat. ‘Euro-diplomats’ in MFAs follow a specifically European career pattern, with jobs at their national permanent representation in Brussels or at home in EU departments of MFAs or the EU’s institutions. For this group of diplomats, European coordination is a daily necessity, creating its own particular systemic loyalty and an automatic European coordination reflex. In one sense, these Euro-diplomats might even be considered as national diplomats ‘gone native’, their daily frame of reference relying on the imperative of a European reflex, rather than a purely national point of departure.

One watershed issue is the future of the national diplomatic system itself. Euro-diplomats believe that individual, competing foreign policies are inimical to enhanced European policy. As diplomats, they obviously share criteria with

<sup>27</sup> Hazel Blears, British Home Office Minister, House of Lords, ‘EU Counter-Terrorism Activities’, Minutes of Evidence, Select Committee on the EU, Wednesday 8 December 2004, Questions 361-399.

<sup>28</sup> S. Nuttall, *European Political Cooperation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). For a national diplomat’s perspective, see Sir Roger Tomkys, former UK ambassador, who recounts the vagaries of integrating diplomats, integrating the Commission and cross-national networks in ‘European Political Cooperation and the Middle East: A Personal Perspective’, *International Affairs*, vol. 63, no. 3, 1987, p. 434.

national diplomats for weighing and validating knowledge. Both communities may consider a coherent and forceful European foreign policy to be an important objective, with Brussels-based decision-making growingly essential to ensuring policy effectiveness. Yet 'Brussels-based' for national diplomats is a geographical term, whereas 'Brussels' has connotations for Euro-diplomats of a shifted locus of authority and new forms of partnership with other diplomats and the staff of the European Commission and Council Secretariat. Whether there is some form of determinism at work, with national diplomacy ceding place to Euro-diplomacy, is a moot point. Jean Monnet once wrote presciently that: 'People only accept change when they are faced with necessity, and only recognize necessity when a crisis is upon them'. Crises may frequently prompt change, but the path of change is more often a loose constellation of actors' interests, perceptions of problems and growing potential for involvement in policy decisions. A crisis may trigger a political decision, which makes sense of such disparate developments. In the European case, a major diplomatic or strategic crisis — whether of the *tsunami* kind or in terms of relations with a 'rogue' state, thus surpassing the ability of any one European state to resolve it alone — might well tip the balance between national and European action. Thus, while a simplistic history of foreign policy evolution in the European Union is based on a list of constitutional changes, another is based on non-linear development of management structures for external relations, with crisis often the catalyst of constitutional change.

Meanwhile, the continued existence of national MFAs alongside EU diplomatic institutions, each working within different frameworks and logics, remains the fundamental institutional structure of modern Europe's diplomacy. And it is precisely this coexistence of national and post-national elements that forms the European Union's originality. 'Crisis' is not always necessary for diplomats to realize that national foreign policy is frequently 'outsourced' to the European Union.<sup>29</sup> Pending implementation of the Lisbon Treaty's arrangements for a European External Action Service, 'complementarity in parallelism' is a neat summary of what makes the EU's diplomacy original.<sup>30</sup> Everything, however, is in flux. Euro-diplomats, following the precepts of the Lisbon Treaty, are preparing the contours of a new European diplomacy, where the EU's organizational structures, meanwhile, in part work parallel to national diplomacy and in part pick up from where national diplomacy often abdicates, or at best is incapable of rising alone successfully to the international challenges of the twenty-first century.

The two diplomatic epistemic communities in Europe influence policy-makers in various ways. By *policy innovation* they frame issues — that is, decide the nature of an issue, the policy objectives, and the level (and forum — whether national or European) at which issues should be solved. These initial choices also set the stage

<sup>29</sup> I. Stelzer, 'Brown has Outsourced British Foreign Policy', *The Spectator*, 21 November 2007.

<sup>30</sup> I am grateful to several discussions with Jozef Batora in reaching this conclusion.

for defining national interests. Through *policy diffusion* (seminars, think tanks, lectures, newspaper articles and private interaction between diplomats of different backgrounds), both epistemic communities attempted to achieve acceptance of their ideas by others. Both national diplomats and Euro-diplomats saw the logic of a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI). National diplomats largely advocated ESDI in the NATO framework, rather than an EU-based defence identity, which was subsequently baptised the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The debate within MFAs extended to the media and was largely influenced by think tanks with a Euro-diplomatic persuasion. Euro-diplomats seemingly 'won' against the national diplomats and were thus proved the more forceful of the two epistemic communities. It was, after all, the Euro-diplomats' view of European diplomacy that became anchored in the legal texts and treaties after St Malo had heralded ESDP.

To use the vocabulary of epistemic community theory, diplomats share a 'set of normative and principled beliefs, which provide a value-based rationale for the social action of community members'.<sup>31</sup> The national diplomats community believes that foreign policy remains the preserve of the nation-state, even if it simultaneously holds that European coordination of foreign policy is clearly beneficial and necessary. Euro-diplomats go further, arguing that greater coordination, supra-national leadership and even replacement of the intergovernmental principle of unanimity with qualified majority voting serve the real foreign policy interests of Europe's peoples. Again, we should nonetheless be wary of assuming that such identifiable trends form a final assessment of current practice and diplomatic beliefs in Europe. *Complementarity in parallelism* is a more realistic assessment, and it is this very coexistence that arguably makes EU diplomacy original.

Both the parallelism and the nature of potential rivalry between the two epistemic communities are well demonstrated by developments in ESDP since the Franco-British summit in St Malo in 1998, which pushed the EU towards widening the CFSP to include ESDP in parallel to, but leaning heavily on, NATO arrangements. National and Euro-diplomats were involved in this process, both hoping for outcomes that were consistent with their specific national or European preoccupations. They used transnational links with major world actors, both governmental and non-governmental, whether national or international, and they contributed to a variety of studies in-house and by think tanks, within NATO, and in the European Convention and subsequent intergovernmental conferences. By the *policy-selection* stage, the Euro-diplomats had positioned themselves so that decision-makers were ready to use their support to legitimize policy choices. Euro-diplomats were thus recognized as the relevant community of experts. There had been continual advocacy of Euro-diplomatic ideas, beliefs and goals over

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<sup>31</sup> P. Haas, 'Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination', *International Organization*, vol. 46, no. 1, 1992, pp. 1-35.

time (*policy persistence*) and this had raised the Euro-diplomats' credibility and authority. Euro-diplomats had contributed decisively to the process of political persuasion through *policy evolution as learning*, by in-house training, distribution of 'non-papers' and summaries of academic work, etc. — all demonstrating that a now widely shared (Euro-diplomatic) understanding of the policy issue clearly had the potential to determine policy outcomes.

Euro-diplomats have thus become authoritative figures, whose expertise and readiness to take decisions collectively make them more than just any random group of experts. They are authoritative and credible actors, both in relation to each other and in their work with diplomats from outside the EU. And they have participated in the creation of ever-tighter treaty-based obligations to consult and coordinate as part of the *sine qua non* of their own new form of foreign policy. Although both epistemic communities 'share causal beliefs derived from their analysis of practices leading or contributing to a central set of problems in their domain and which then serve as the basis for elucidating the multiple linkages between possible policy actions and desired outcome',<sup>32</sup> the national diplomats, who work exclusively outside the European policy-making framework, still tend to have a 'billiard-ball' view of international relations. Their Euro-diplomat counterparts have engineered ever-tighter obligations to consult and coordinate as part of the *sine qua non* of the new post-Westphalian European setting for foreign policy-making. They are the diplomats who have recommended the expansive treaty changes over the years, producing clear constraints on national diplomatic practice, while nonetheless ensuring (lest they be abandoned by their national diplomat colleagues) through careful 'weasel wording' in formal documents that national autonomy remained for cases of vital national interests. The Euro-diplomats' 'common policy enterprise' was itself manifested in successive treaties that set the roots for expanding European policy-making in legality. Anchoring ESDP from the Treaty of Amsterdam, through various IGCs, the Constitutional Treaty and the Treaty of Lisbon were components of their common policy enterprise.

It might be argued that the *de facto* dominance of two member states — both formal colonial powers with worldwide interests and cultural influence, both nuclear powers, both permanent members of the UN Security Council — is evidence of resilient national power politics and correspondingly resilient national diplomatic structures and premises, inimical therefore to a specific European interest that might otherwise come to inspire national policies. Yet Euro-diplomats created political structures that co-opt the positions of the large member states, constraining those countries through legal texts to report to the others and to coordinate and consult before taking positions in international forums. They may not always do so (for they are often reluctantly complementary and prefer-

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<sup>32</sup> Haas, 'Introduction'.



ably parallel!), but they are in principle constrained by treaties to coordinate and inform each other before taking independent national action.

Finally, and naturally, there remain 'inner contradictions' in the case for recognizing two distinct epistemic communities within the body of European diplomats. If the shift in the locus of decision-making from the national level to Brussels was accepted by all as concomitant with efficient common foreign policy-making, Euro-diplomats did not achieve a formal ceding of power through creation of a supranational mechanism. They hesitated to give responsibility for foreign policy in its traditional sense to the European Commission, opting instead for a hybrid between federalism and intergovernmentalism by appointing a titular head of foreign policy in Brussels, presiding over a Council Secretariat and an intergovernmental (second pillar) decision-making process and first pillar staff in parts of the Commission (the '*famille* RELEX') with legally unchanged mandates, yet politically harnessed to the Euro-diplomatic challenge. The creation of the 'Policy Unit', High Representative Solana's foreign policy team within the Council Secretariat, which was until then characterized by its silence in meetings despite its administrative talent, is a case in point. The High Representative is, after all, according to the Lisbon Treaty the 'assistant of the Presidency' — hence a national authority (that is, the Council of Ministers) — but Solana has consolidated that office with a team of dedicated and clever Euro-diplomats. And there has been a measure of supranational overtone: a shared institutional arrangement with the EC pillar and an operational budget for CFSP 'joint actions' within the EC framework, implying enhanced relations with the Commission and the European Parliament as the budgetary authority — and an annually expanding budget — all features that implementing Lisbon will further enhance.

### **The Professional Contours of the New European Diplomacy**

In sum, therefore, *complementarity in parallelism* sums up well the current dialectic between national and EU diplomacy. But it takes many forms. It has the advantage of not prejudging the outcome of inherent tensions between the two groups of diplomats themselves, whether they are subjectively or objectively competing or complementary. In fact, European diplomats have much to gain career-wise from the evolution of the present system. The proposed EEAS, as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty, is set to offer diplomats additional potential for postings and career development.<sup>33</sup> Inevitably, the shape of things to come remains hazy, but it

<sup>33</sup> For a guide to the most helpful writing on the proposed EEAS, see Brian Crowe, *The European External Action Service: Roadmap for Success*, a Chatham House Report (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2008); Brian Crowe, 'Towards a European Foreign Policy', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2006, pp. 107-114; and Laura Rayner, *The EU Foreign Ministry and Union Embassies* (London: The Foreign Policy Centre, 2005).

is possible to detect the contours of the immediate to medium-term landscape, as Solana and his team sit with Commission officials and the Presidency, representing the EU in negotiations with Russia and Georgia in Geneva or the Quartet in the Middle East or Iran. Solana has argued with regard to the speed at which a European Diplomatic Service needs to be created that: 'We do not have to have a big bang. We must do something that can increase with the needs and with a reasonable speed'.<sup>34</sup> The important question is what these 'needs' will prove to be, although the Middle East or the Georgia–Russia crises do provide interesting perspectives. Meanwhile, as journalists have pointed out, staff in the Commission await an uncertain future,<sup>35</sup> even if a Director of the Commission's External Service could inform the public that the Commission is 'strengthening the capacities of the delegations towards accommodating the future tasks of the "European Union embassies"'.<sup>36</sup>

If an important consequence for diplomats of this emerging new environment will be changes in the career landscape, the most sought after posts in national foreign services are nonetheless traditionally the important ambassadorial posts, rather than high-level management functions at home. This was not always the case for Commission officials for whom a directorship or director-generalship in Brussels represented the height of ambition, with posts of head of delegation viewed as a significant step on the way. Now that the CFSP and ESDP have become core business for MFA staff, whether at home or serving abroad, their permanent partners in policy-making are the diplomats from other EU member states and Commission officials. And for many, a chance to serve in a Commission — soon EU — delegation broadens the potential for a diversified career structure. Moreover, and most significantly in terms of this analysis of complementarity between the parallel paths of national and European diplomacy, there will clearly be increasing exchanges between typically Euro-diplomat jobs and posts in national diplomatic structures: national diplomats will be seconded to postings in the EU service, as the Lisbon Treaty foresees; and Euro-diplomats will likewise have chances of secondment to national diplomatic services for training purposes — a possibility already offered, in fact, in the European Commission's staff training programme.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Javier Solana, in answer to question 620, *House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee Third Report of Session 2007-2008*, 'Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty Evidence'.

<sup>35</sup> E. Steen, 'Commission Delegations Come of Age: Officials Await a Constitution, Allowing Them to be Reborn as a Proper Diplomatic Service', *European Voice*, 15-21 March 2007.

<sup>36</sup> C. Falkowski, Director for the External Service, DG RELEX, in 'Taking Europe to the World — 50 Years of the European Commission's External Service', Information Brochure, p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> See J. Monar, 'The Case for a European Diplomatic Academy', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 5, no. 3, which argues that a 'European Diplomatic Academy could become the centrepiece of an emerging common EU "external service culture"'. Through permanent identification of 'best practices' in training and the use of innovative elements, its work could serve as a triggering factor for the development of common external service practices and a 'common culture' for EU and member state officials in external services. This would facilitate the 'build-up of common diplomatic representations and add to the

In evidence to the UK's House of Lords, Javier Solana explained how he views the benefits of the European External Action Service:

It will not be bigger bureaucratically. It will be less expensive for many countries. For some countries it will be interesting to be able to close their representation and be represented by the European Union. Collectively, we will be more effective. [...] Things will be done more efficiently. There will be presence on the ground, and different countries will deal with matters more efficiently. The United Kingdom will have the possibility of using the European Union when it needs it. You will continue to have your own policy and representation when you need it, too. Within this global world, you have the possibility to use the fact that we have 27 members today and the influence that that will have, as well as to maintain your own representation and specificity.<sup>38</sup>

EU member states will clearly maintain some national presence abroad and, therefore, the machinery to sustain it. Yet they are likely to do this in varying degrees and forms depending on their size, extent of their geographic and functional interests, financial resources and the fluctuating level of their commitment to the Europeanization of foreign policy. In the short- to medium-term, European diplomacy is likely to be characterized by variable geometry in terms of representational networks and ongoing redefinition of what needs to be done where, and by whom. For small member states, EU delegations will offer attractive opportunities to rationalize representation. For large member states with extensive diplomatic presence, the possibility of transferring the task of coordination associated with the Council Presidency to EU delegations might be welcomed, as might overall representation in countries where the distinct national interests of EU countries are not evident. In the conflict-ridden Ivory Coast, for example, the UK sits on the UN-chaired International Working Group, yet the UK provides the committee with a junior official from its High Commission in neighbouring Ghana, having long ago given up resident representation in the Ivory Coast. It relies on the European Commission for the security of its visiting diplomats. Germany, meanwhile, has represented several Presidencies there, since most official Presidency-holders have no embassy structure to rely upon and thus lack the necessary basic logistical framework.

The enormous growth in both the European focus of national foreign policy decision-making and of the European Commission's responsibility poses the issue of whether there may exist a zero-sum-game between European and national priorities and interests. This is not just about the cognitive dissonance that is inherent in the Presidency — simultaneously a neutral chairman and a national player — or the perhaps coming cognitive dissonance between the post-Lisbon role for the High Representative as chair of meetings of foreign ministers and yet

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coherence of the Union's external representation and image'. For a formal view, see 'Staff Training for the External Service', Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, 14 November 2003, C(2003) 4163 Final.

<sup>38)</sup> UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *Third Report of Session 2007-2008*, 'Foreign Policy Aspects of the Lisbon Treaty Evidence', answer to question 629.

defender of the first pillar. Chairpersons of Council Working Groups actually differentiate between what they say as the Presidency and what they say '*purement en national*', so it may be the case that burgeoning European activity does not affect the integrity of traditional diplomacy, but the dichotomy remains.

Presidencies are more often than not run by EU member states with no pertinent policy tradition and no formal representation in most countries of the world, so there are at least increased incentives to recognize synergy and thus willingness to collaborate on practical management issues. At home there is recognition of the long-term effect of joint training for foreign ministry officials, organized by the European Commission and diplomatic academies and based on a shared 'European Diplomatic Programme' and secondments between MFAs, both to capitals and to embassies, and to the Commission's Directorates-General in Brussels and its delegations throughout the world. There is also the issue of shared administration of foreign policy through joint bureaucratic structures. Comparisons and reflections on shared embassy facilities, staff conditions, the changing profile of diplomats, and the use of performance indicators for staff are not merely academic, for such discussions are undertaken in the CFSP Working Group COADMIN, in the tacit assumption that where there is cooperation there is synergy, mutual learning and potential gains in efficiency through the gradual emergence of European diplomatic standards and a European reflex. So while it may be that CFSP still frequently represents 'procedures without policy, activity without output',<sup>39</sup> the fact of daily collaboration on management procedures is doubtless creating a new context for national MFA action and an incentive to seek administrative and policy-making synergies in the name of cost-effectiveness.

Change is not linear and does not necessarily occur because the Council of Ministers proclaims it. New institutions are clearly no surrogate for common strategy and the realization of European interests, yet several constraints and opportunities fashion the need for structures that correspond to changed circumstances. The reticence of several member states to share embassy facilities with their EU partners in the new Nigerian capital of Abuja was significant. Here, national political and financial constraints were clearly considered more important than the mooted economic and financial incentives of togetherness, and this was despite the overall parallel trend to close embassies and consulates elsewhere and to review the constitutional implications of doing so.<sup>40</sup> Co-location with other member states and/or with the European Commission, or even joint missions, have long remained at the level of academic or think tank conjecture. Prac-

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<sup>39</sup> A. Forster and W. Wallace, 'Common Foreign and Security Policy', in H. Wallace and W. Wallace (eds.), *Policy-Making in the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 411-435 at p. 420.

<sup>40</sup> A. Zimmer, 'Gemeinsame Unterbringung von Botschaften und Gesandtschaftsrecht', *Europarecht*, vol. 42, no. 6, 2007, p. 815.

tice, as ever, is in flux however.<sup>41</sup> Seemingly, the good housekeeping notion of sharing facilities (buildings, health services, education, transport and communications), increasing joint reporting and increasing staff interchange have remained embryonic purely for reasons of national prestige — and despite occasional rhetorical commitments. The examples of shared UK/French/German embassies in Almaty and Minsk, or the once proposed Nordic joint embassies in Windhoek, Namibia or Dar-es-Salaam, have been exceptions that confirm the rule.

Politicians frequently demonstrate changing priorities. UK Defence Minister Geoff Hoon told a House of Commons Committee in 2007 that ‘whenever a move of British Mission premises is under consideration, and where appropriate, officials explore the possibilities for co-location with EU partners and others’.<sup>42</sup> Co-location is not synonymous with joint representation, of course, although some implications for future arrangements are discernable. If joint representation through an EU Foreign Service has never been formally articulated as a generic answer to the issue of changing economies of scale for diplomatic services, given the growth in the number of states and financial management rigour, an alternative has been for member states to turn to non-resident representation for the conduct of their relations with other states. States organize representation from their capital or from their embassies in third countries, rather than fusing support structures and providing for public diplomacy through shared arrangements, but a prime challenge for small and large EU states is how to maximize effectiveness without permanent missions — an issue that is frequently discussed in those hard-pressed MFAs with a historic presence throughout the world, as beautiful embassies and residences are sold in Vienna, Monte Carlo or the Côte d’Ivoire and diplomats are obliged to work in less opulent homes and offices than their illustrious predecessors. One national response could be for EU members to reassess their global spread, assess where their prime focus should be and envisage a move to multiple-accredited missions. Recourse to job-sharing — the trend for all staff covering consular, economic, commercial and political affairs — has

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<sup>41</sup> In November 2008, Development Commissioner Louis Michel opened a joint EU embassy in Dili, East Timor. This ‘*maison de l’Europe*’ brings together the Commission delegation and representatives of several EU member states in a renovated colonial building close to government headquarters. As Michel put it at the inauguration ceremony in the presence of East Timor’s President José Ramos-Horta, it is ‘*tout à fait conforme à l’esprit de Robert Schumann*’. In an interview with *Agence France Presse*, Michel argued that the project was a precursor: ‘Putting their services with those of the Commission, states lose none of their sovereignty, but coordination is stronger, and thus more efficient; and this allows significant savings. It ought to be done more frequently’. Most EU member states had originally decided not to open an independent embassy in East Timor when it gained independence from Indonesia in May 2002, three years after a UN-supervised referendum, preferring to manage business from embassies in Jakarta, with counsellors based in a Dili outpost. But the EU is a major supporter of East Timor, with the European Commission providing 65 million euros in humanitarian aid and 168 million euros in development assistance between 2002 and 2007, to which must be added the aid programmes of individual EU member states. The constraints and incentives for merged representation are thus clear.

<sup>42</sup> *Hansard* for the UK Parliament, 16 April 2007, col. 34.

largely remained based in nation-states, despite the exhortations of think tanks. A different approach would be to review the arguments for an EU response, as the European Parliament has long proposed. The European Parliament has argued for a genuine common European diplomacy, transforming the Commission delegations into proper EU diplomatic representations in those countries where the majority of EU member states are not represented.<sup>43</sup> Is there a zero-sum game between national and European representation?

The increase in the number of states in the world does not necessarily imply a corresponding creation of strictly national interests (and need for embassies) on the part of every EU member state. But there is an identifiable European interest, not least because of the many forms of association agreements between the EU and states worldwide or other regional organizations, such as ECOWAS or the African Union. The EU clearly needs Commission delegations where there are important implications in terms of European trade policy, aid or technical assistance, or developments in EU-UN relations. Preparation for EU enlargement certainly requires Commission representation in the would-be member state, so the growth of the Commission's strategic and operational importance for EU foreign policy is a trend that is by no means set to disappear in those countries. Again, the Schengen arrangements are now part of the EU's first pillar and require European responses to such basic issues as visa regimes and immigration. Indeed, the increasing currency of the ideas of a European visa regime and a European consular response to crises offer beguiling prospects for streamlined services currently provided by individual embassies. Avoiding administrative duplication and the consequent waste of resources might even engender European agencies to meet the challenges. The fact remains that currently the EU member states and the European Commission largely duplicate coverage of economic and political issues. And the CFSP provides the logical framework for political and economic reporting, as observers have long pointed out.

National reflexes are difficult to break. In sum, however, the absence of short-term national interests is no guide as to the existence of an interest in the EU as a whole. The question is how national interests can be melded into a definition of European interest and how the melding process should be coordinated and the subsequent policy be represented. Despite the opportunity to remedy the evident contradictions and surprises in the Constitutional Treaty, the drafters of the Treaty of Lisbon still left a degree of puzzling arrangements. The 'new' High Representative is set to run the Commission's external relations and guarantee the coherence for which many have long hankered, but the weasel-worded enjoinder that he should do this to an extent that is consistent with chairmanship of the Council is

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<sup>43</sup> European Parliament, *Opinion of Parliament on the Convening of the IGC*, PE 197.390, 1996. See also Galeote Quecedo and Becerril Atienza, *Towards a Common European Diplomacy? Analysis of the European Parliament Resolution on Establishing a Common Diplomacy* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Europeas, University of San Pablo-CEU, 2001).

worthy of the most difficult Sudoku exercise.<sup>44</sup> Likewise, the creation of a President of the European Council, to be appointed for two-and-a-half years, who 'shall at his or her level and in that capacity ensure the external representation of the Union' on CFSP matters, albeit 'without prejudice to the powers' of the High Representative, was coupled with the commitment for EU external representation outside the field of CFSP to continue to be exercised by the President of the Commission, while the High Representative (a Commission Vice-President) simultaneously remains enjoined to 'ensure the consistency of the Union's external action'. At the very least, Europe's diplomats will struggle with the implications of a *de facto* foreign minister with inherent responsibility to the Council, while obeying the oaths of Commissioners to be independent of extraneous influence and to maintain the principle of *primus inter pares* within the College.<sup>45</sup> They will do this in an increasingly separate EU diplomacy, yet with simultaneous maintenance of national diplomatic systems and structures.

## Conclusion

Long before the idea of an EEAS emerged, British diplomat the late Sir Geoffrey Jackson identified the trend. He wondered 'whether there will even be a diplomacy when diplomats are all on the same side'.<sup>46</sup> His musing was apposite. Bátorá has more recently questioned whether the EU has changed the notion of diplomacy.<sup>47</sup> Certainly, there are significant changes in the MFA's role in the now Europeanized domestic policy agenda and these crucially affect the fate, for example, of bilateral diplomacy within the EU, which is on one reading in structural decline, as the job is either done by others, transformed into a hosting facility for visiting royalty or statesmen, or — to be somewhat iconoclastic — no longer required as the EU deepens and intra-EU foreign policy effectively becomes 'domesticated'. Others, however, have maintained that it is 'incorrect to argue that the demise of the bilateral embassy in Western Europe demonstrates the withering away of bilateral diplomacy' and that we are instead 'witnessing changes in form and function, not disappearance'.<sup>48</sup> How bilateralism is affected by EU developments has not been the subject of this article, yet one interesting question would clearly be whether national diplomats working in bilateral embassies within the EU are

<sup>44</sup> See *inter alia* K. Hughes, *Shaping Europe's Legacy: The EU's Very Discreet Debate on Who will Make Foreign Policy* (Brussels: Friends of Europe, 2008); D. Spence, 'The Commission's External Service', in D. Spence (ed.), *The European Commission* (London: John Harper, 2006); Crowe, *The European External Action Service*; and Crowe, 'Towards a European Foreign Policy'.

<sup>45</sup> Former Senior CFSP official Sir Brian Crowe has analysed the complexity of the issues in Crowe, 'Towards a European Foreign Policy'; Crowe, *The European External Action Service*; and Brian Crowe, *The New European Union Foreign Minister (EUFM)* (London: European Policy Centre, 2006).

<sup>46</sup> Jackson, *Concorde Diplomacy*, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Bátorá, 'Does the EU Transform the Institution of Diplomacy?'

<sup>48</sup> K.-E. Jørgensen, *PoCo: The Diplomatic Republic of Europe* (unpublished and undated manuscript).

more or less influenced in career terms by 'Europeanization', and whether such influences contribute to their career developing in strictly national or strictly Euro-diplomatic directions. It may be that strictly bilateral work confirms the national diplomatic mindset. It may also prove to be the case that dealing with EU work in a strictly bilateral context might open a diplomat's mind to Euro-diplomatic potentials. Whatever the practical outcome, there is obvious relevance for the present article's focus.

The persistence of national diplomacy may come to rely on the fate and fortunes of national export marketing. MFAs now have to justify the existence of embassies increasingly in terms of export promotion rather than in terms of the 'traditional' functions of diplomacy. Underlying the searches for cost-effectiveness in modern diplomacy are two fundamental features. First, there is unpredictability. As former UK Ambassador to Washington DC Sir Christopher Meyer opined:

You can't have the network carved in stone. [...] You need to respond if oil is found somewhere or some new interest arises, and you can't keep people in places in the hope that something will happen there one day. You can't be predictive like that.<sup>49</sup>

At a European level this unpredictability is unlikely to be such an influential structuring feature, since the long road to recognition of 'European' interests involves commitments with regard to governance, technical assistance and, often, pre-accession situations — that is, the 'interests' relate to institutional relationships rather than the fluctuating economic and cultural interests of a nation-state. Second, and more significantly, there is growing recognition everywhere of the need to find alternatives to the simplistic view that representation of interests must be through national embassies. There is a search for synergy on the operational side of foreign policy-making with other member states and the Commission.

The commitment to policy coherence, in particular where EU policies have significant impacts on developments in other countries, is allied to a broad array of instruments that facilitate EU 'actorness'. As an exporter of values, Europe's soft power is crucial. Indeed, if there is an emerging EU diplomacy to match the norms involved, so is there an opportunity in future for Europe's diplomats to play even more important roles. The current stakes for Europe's diplomatic presence are thus high, and it has not escaped commentators that the EU's contribution to good global governance is through enlightened use of the leverage of its *soft* power in persuading the world to accept its norms — in short, its diplomacy. This is a defining feature of EU foreign policy, even if it might not always

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<sup>49</sup> Cited in P. Reynolds, 'A Leaner Diplomatic Service', *BBC News*, 15 December 2004, available online at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/4098109.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4098109.stm).



have been successful at it, as Emerson has claimed.<sup>50</sup> Joseph Nye argues that ‘soft power — getting others to want the outcomes you want — co-opts people rather than coercing them’.<sup>51</sup> Yet in a world rife with conflict, stress and increasing aggression, the EU (like the UN) may, on the other hand, have very restricted margins for life merely as a soft power. States everywhere retain the formal authority and the legitimate monopoly of force at their level. Yet the instruments to tackle global issues, and thus their likely resolution, need to match the scale of the problems. These mostly reside at the regional, if not the global, level. The EU is remarkable in that it is the only transnational forum that offers supranational proposals for solutions to the issues themselves and a model institutional framework for dealing with them — a model for global governance. Whether its emerging security policies and structures will form part of emerging global security governance is an important question, which cannot be answered here, but there are significant rebound effects for diplomats as EU governance alters and as the EU’s diplomatic presence adjusts to these new realities.

Finally, many of this article’s findings are based on observations from practitioners, indeed on the testing of ideas with members of the two epistemic communities hypothesized in the article. Further empirical research will hopefully allow observers to unpack systematically the various hypotheses involved in positing the existence of a division within EU diplomacy between national diplomats and Euro-diplomats. This may help in understanding why both epistemic communities continue in their belief that the other community misperceives the extent and added value of diplomatic adaptation arising from the evolution of the political agenda of the major political and diplomatic players. In turn, this may help us to understand why different reform strategies for the management of EU foreign and security policy are selected at different junctures, why CFSP and ESDP have emerged and developed, and how they increasingly reflect the normative ambitions of the diplomatic players involved.

**David Spence** is First Counsellor for Security and Disarmament at the European Commission Delegation to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland. He is also currently adviser to the Centre International de Formation Européenne (CIFE), and the Institut des Hautes Études Internationales of the University of Nice. Previous responsibilities in the Commission include work on terrorism, enlargement, European Security and Defence Policy and general security issues, and he has also been head of training for the Commission’s External Service.

David Spence has lectured at the Sorbonne, the École Normale Supérieure and the Institut d’Études Politiques in Paris, and is a graduate of Sussex, Oxford and Nice Universities. He has published widely on EU issues, including (co-edited with Brian Hocking) *Integrating Diplomats: EU Foreign Ministry Reform* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005); and (editor of) *The European Commission* (London: Harper, 2006, 3rd edition).

<sup>50</sup> Michael Emerson, ‘What Values for Europe? The Ten Commandments’. *CEPS Policy Brief*, no. 65 (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2005).

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), p. 5.