



ANNUAL HIGH-LEVEL EU DIPLOMACY LECTURE

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EU INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
AND DIPLOMACY STUDIES

Summary of the fourth high-level
EU Diplomacy Lecture

EU International Relations and
Diplomacy Studies

College of Europe, Bruges

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The EU's Global Strategy: A New Ambition for the EU's Security and Defence Policy

Pedro SERRANO DE HARO SORIANO, Deputy Secretary-General,
European External Action Service



Professor Sieglinde GSTÖHL, Director of the Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, welcomed the audience and introduced the high-level speaker of the fourth annual "EU Diplomacy Lecture", Pedro SERRANO, Deputy Secretary-General of the European External Action Service.

This year's lecture focused on the importance of the implementation of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, considering the complex security environment that the European Union is currently facing. Mr. Serrano compared the security risks to the Balkan crisis in the 1990s that eventually led to the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy. Similarly, the Global Strategy published in June 2016 is the EU's response to today's security environment. In October 2016, EU Foreign Ministers decided on the most important strategic priorities: security and defence, building resilience and taking an integrated approach to conflicts and crises, addressing the internal/external nexus, updating existing strategies and preparing new ones, and enhancing public diplomacy.



College of Europe
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Natolir

Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies

Dijver 11 BE-8000 Brugge T +32-50-47.72.51 F +32-50-47.72.50

www.coleurope.eu/ird

In his lecture, Mr. Serrano focused on the security and defence component of the implementation of the EU Global Strategy. He pointed out that the current major global security threats are located in closer geographical proximity to the EU borders than ever before and delved into different conflicts that the EU is currently confronting.



One of the major security concerns is the changing relationship with Russia. The annexation of Crimea and the conflict in Ukraine have significantly increased tensions with the EU's biggest neighbour. The 'hybrid' nature of the wars also creates new challenges. By setting up the CSDP operations in Georgia and Ukraine, the EU makes clear that it considers the security situation in these countries as directly affecting the security of the EU itself.

Another key point is the situation in the Middle East. The ongoing war in Syria and the unstable situation in Iraq and Yemen makes it one of the most fragile regions in the world. Due to the involvement of the world's major powers in an already unstable region, the security situation has further deteriorated. Mr. Serrano described irregular migration and terrorism as the biggest threats associated with this unstable environment.



Moreover, the EU's security context is defined by the (extended) Southern neighbourhood, with a 'security belt' running from Mauritania to Somalia. Several North African countries are having difficulties to regain their stability after the so-called 'Arab Spring' and have become operating areas for terrorist groups and people smugglers. Libya in particular has become a cornerstone for such networks, due to the country's internal conflict and its geographical location as part of the Central Mediterranean migratory route. Also the fragility of states in Sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, affects the EU. The core priority for the EU is supporting the Sahel countries in their capacity building, especially in crisis prevention and management.

Additional regions that should be taken into consideration when analysing the global security landscape, are the alarming situation in Iran and an unstable environment in Asia, which is the only continent without a continental security arrangement.



Mr. Serrano highlighted the initiatives that the EU is taking in order to tackle these security threats in the light of the implementation of the Global Strategy: i) developing its defence capabilities, ii) developing its own security structures, iii) cooperating with international partners, iv) CSDP missions, and v) developing the crisis management tools.

The most significant change is the development of EU defence capabilities, which will take place through three main initiatives: i) the creation of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) to establish the

European Defence Fund for research projects, ii) the establishment of the state-driven Permanent Structured Cooperation on defence (PESCO), and iii) the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), a member state-driven mechanism to deepen defence cooperation.

Regarding the development of the EU's security structures, the most notable change is the establishment of the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) responsible for planning and conducting the EU's non-executive military missions. Moreover, the EU is also developing new civilian capabilities.

The EU invests a lot in cooperation with international partners, most importantly with the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). The EU has taken over and complemented operations of these organisations. Moreover, defence capabilities are state-owned and even when they have been developed in the framework of EU defence cooperation, they can be used for NATO commitments. Mr. Serrano stressed the importance of cooperating with third partners in order to create a more stable international security environment. Finally, the EU also has a wide range of non-security foreign policy instruments, such as trade and development cooperation, which can be used to attain security objectives.

The lecture was followed by a stimulating question and answer session with the audience. In her concluding words, Professor Sieglinde Gstöhl thanked the speaker for offering a first-hand practitioner's perspective on the EU's role as a security actor.

Pedro SERRANO DE HARO SORIANO is since November 2015 Deputy Secretary-General for the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) and Crisis Response at the European External Action Service. He was Managing Director a.i. for Crisis Response and Operational Coordination at the EEAS. Previously, he served as Principal Advisor on External Affairs to former President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy, and was the head the EU Delegation to the United Nations in New York. He has been active in the field of CSDP since 2000, by heading, inter alia, the Directorate for Civilian Crisis Management at the General Secretariat of the Council. Prior to joining the EU's diplomatic corps, Pedro Serrano served as a Spanish diplomat.

