

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

EU has enjoyed being perceived as a 'good' civilian power but is also unavoidably seen as an insufficient actor militarily.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัด กับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

Thapanee Wasaratchawet*

บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้เป็นการนำเสนอบทบาทของสหภาพยุโรปบนความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างประเทศโดยมองจากปัจจัยทั้งภายนอกและภายในซึ่งเป็นตัวกำหนดนโยบายต่างประเทศของสหภาพยุโรปอันสะท้อนให้เห็นได้อย่างชัดเจนจากการเมืองโลกที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไปสอดคล้องกับข้อจำกัดของนโยบายต่างประเทศและความมั่นคงร่วมกันของสหภาพยุโรป หลังจากอธิบายปัจจัยภายนอกและภายในที่ส่งผลต่อนโยบายต่างประเทศของสหภาพยุโรปเหล่านี้แล้ว บทความได้บรรลุเป้าหมาย 2 ประการ ประการแรก คือ การสร้างความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับความเป็นไปของนโยบายต่างประเทศและความมั่นคงร่วมกันของสหภาพยุโรปและประการที่สอง คือ การแสดงให้เห็นถึงความแตกต่างระหว่างบทบาททางด้านพลเรือนกับด้านการทหารของสหภาพยุโรปในฐานะตัวแสดงระดับโลกซึ่งบทบาททางพลเรือนนั้นมีความแข็งแกร่งมากกว่าบทบาททางด้านการทหารอย่างเห็นได้ชัด

คำสำคัญ ได้แก่ สหภาพยุโรป, นโยบายต่างประเทศและความมั่นคงร่วมกัน, นโยบายความมั่นคงและการป้องกันแห่งสหภาพยุโรป, ความมั่นคง, การป้องกัน, การทหาร, พลเรือน, ตัวแสดงโลก

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

The European Union: A Dumpy Global Military Power but a Giant International Civilian Authority

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Introduction

The EU has been a key regional organisation in the globalised world. However, her influence, norms, reputation, and policies in terms of politics and economics are rather contradictory; The EU's political and military characteristics are rather subordinate across the world, compared to other nation states and international organisations, e.g. the United States of America (USA), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and the United Nations (UN), whilst her economic and civilian¹ role seems to be gaining a powerful momentum on the international stage. Therefore, it is crucial to examine such contradiction between the 'hard' and 'soft' roles, reflected in the EU's policies in order to understand her.

Throughout world history, many foreign policies have been built around European values and beliefs. However, since the

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¹ According to Hanns W. Maull (1990), as cited in Smith (2000), P. 12; and Manners (2002), P. 240, 'civilian power' is an actor that has international objectives and favours economic, multilateral, diplomatic, non-military means. For more types of power, see Manners (2002), P. 240.

establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1950², the series of the EU's roles has largely affirmed that the EU has been becoming an 'economic giant and political dwarf'. Nevertheless, one of the problems challenging the EU today is that she is gradually on a decline and physically shrinking in various terms – namely, economically, politically, and militarily³. That is to say, the EU is losing its global influence, especially in terms of military and defence, owing to her internal and external factors which those factors are inter-related. The internal factors include the EU's complex and limited institutional reforms and structures of the CSDP, economic woes, and enlargement, whereas the external factors are, for example, the changes in global politics, the global financial crisis, the dramatic transformations of the local environment and other states, etc.

Further afield, since the world is experiencing a number of new international conflicts and crises, the role of the EU in the twenty-first century context is being challenged more than ever, leading many to question her role as an international actor. The main reason why this should worry the EU is because if her power decreases, her ability to act and lead the world in accordance with

² See the Schuman Declaration (9 May 1950), http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration/index_en.htm, accessed 10 February 2015.

³ See the EU's percentage of GDP military expenditure, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS/countries/EU?display=graph>, accessed 31 January 2015.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

European values⁴ will be less plausible. There are further problems to do with preserving human rights, human security, democratic accountability, cyber security, energy security, environmental security, economic justice, health security, climate security, to name but a few, all of these issues confirm that it is inevitable in the present day that the term ‘security’ is not necessarily subject to purely military connotation as in the past. Hence, an important question arises – Do these new forms of security still need armed forces in attaining them? In order to answer such question and understand how the EU operates in her external relations, the following sections illustrate important elements that shape the EU’s CFSP new world context.

Changes in World Politics

During the Cold War era in the 1980s, a well-known scholar, Hedley Bull⁵, criticized the EU, then known as the European Community (EC), suggesting it should be self-efficient in security and defence by becoming a military actor in the Cold War context through the acquirement of a nuclear deterrent, the playing of a stronger role by her key Member States (MS) – West Germany, France, and

⁴ Main European values are peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, and human rights. See Manners (2001), PP. 242-244.

⁵ Hedley Bull was a professor of International Relations. He wrote one of many well-known books, called ‘The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics’ in 1977. The book became a founding script of the English School of International Relations theory, which asserts that the world is anarchic and, thereby, claims for an idea of ‘International Society’. See Bull (1977).

Britain, and a careful policy of co-existence between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the US⁶. This clearly illustrates that the EU, in such war context, needed to project herself as a military power to protect her interests. However, after the nuclear stalemate was over, it seemed like the struggle for power was not entirely dependent on military forces anymore⁷. The power politics in international relations had changed dramatically⁸ in relation to how soft power – achieved through non-military instruments – might even earn more legitimacy and gain greater effectiveness in international relations in comparison to military power, as Manners asserts that the end of the Cold War showcased the apparent power of ideas and norms rather than the power of armed forces⁹. This has served as a favourable political atmosphere supporting the EU's non-military international role.

However, the ongoing 2001 War on Terror, followed by the 2003 war on Iraq, highlighted the EU's inability to develop a cohesive defence stance over Iraq, which led the EU's CFSP to either follow or oppose the US¹⁰. This event dramatically created a crack in the Transatlantic Partnership between the EU and the US, by stating a clear standpoint of the EU's civilian role, led by France and Germany. Later on, the 'Javier Solana¹¹' (the European Strategy

⁶ Bull (1982), as cited in Manners (2002), PP. 236-237.

⁷ Smith (2000), P. 11.

⁸ Nye (1990), as cited in Smith (2000), P. 11.

⁹ Manners (2002), P. 238.

¹⁰ Crowe (2003), P. 535.

¹¹ The Secretary-General of the Council of the EU and the High

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

Report) was adopted and reviewed in 2003 and 2008 accordingly¹², and the world has been consistently shifting ever since. In 2003, the EU faced major conflicts in her multilateral system – largely triggered by the Iraq war. However, having looked at more recent international crises, it is clear that the regional or world problems, written in the 2003 Strategy Report, are somewhat obsolete at present. Some of the issues have been reduced in 2015, some accelerated, and some are entirely new. The key issues at present are as follows: the Iranian nuclear programme; resurgent types of terrorism – namely, Islamist extremists like the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)¹³ and Boko Haram; piracy in Somalia; problems with Russia over Ukraine and the Crimea peninsula; the Ebola outbreak; overwhelming immigration to the EU; and xenophobia in Europe, to name but a few. Hence, the strategy for the EU at present needs to be reconsidered based on these changes as the EU has long to effectively contribute to a multilateral system, aiming for the creation of freer, fairer, safer, and more unified world¹⁴. However, even though

Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy at that time

¹² Since the disparity amongst the EU Member States over the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the EU is split into two sides. See <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/about-csdp/european-security-strategy/>, accessed 25 March 2015.

¹³ Some call it the ISIL, which stands for and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

¹⁴ See the 2003 Report, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>, accessed 19 February 2015; see the 2008 reviewed version, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/reports/104630.pdf, accessed 19 February 2015.

the EU has been projecting herself as a civilian power on the international relations fronts, it is debatable whether it is efficient for the EU to uphold all types of security (military and non-military) roles in the reformed global arena, where the relations between global players are complex and interdependent and the all various kinds of security threat are expanded beyond states' boundaries¹⁵.

Besides the changes in global politics that have occurred in the recent past and caused various shifts of the EU's CFSP, there has been another major factor that precisely shapes or somewhat restrains the military role of the EU – that is, the CSDP. Therefore, it is crucial to scrutinise such measure in order to understand more about the nature of the EU's foreign policy and see how it influences the type of role the EU has as an international security and defence actor.

The EU as a Global Security and Defence Actor through the CSDP

The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is a significant defence alliance collaboration of the EU, especially for the EU to become a security player in the world. As illustrated earlier, the world now consists of high rates of war crimes, new types of terrorism, new forms of security, a spread of regional conflicts, coupled with the US disengagement from Europe¹⁶, an assertive

¹⁵ Complex interdependence is an idea that the world has developed to be more pluralistic in which states are more dependent on each other. See Keohane & Nye (1972, 1977), as cited in Lamy (2011), p. 121.

¹⁶ The United States of America (US) prioritised a new strategic area of engagement (Asian Pivot), which is towards Asia-Pacific arena. See Sutter and et al. (2013), P. 1.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

China, an emerging BRICS, and other new actors and issues in international relations. Above all, with the CSDP's limitations in terms of military forces and internal institutions, the EU has been challenged tremendously by a growing number of global issues and new threats, which have contributed to a reversal of the EU's typical characterisation (as an economic giant and political dwarf). With this mind, the following paragraphs will outline the origin of the CSDP and its fundamental limitations in order to thoroughly understand the EU's global security and defence role.

Firstly, the *European Security and Defence Policy* (ESDP) was initiated fifteen years ago during the Cologne European meeting in 1999¹⁷. In 2009 its name was changed to the *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP) under the Treaty of Lisbon¹⁸. After this Treaty, a new name and new institutional reforms were established, coupled with an appointment of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy (HR)¹⁹; The European External Action Service (EEAS) was also formed under the independently institutional (if not political) supervision of the HR²⁰. More interestingly, the HR

¹⁷ Dyson & Konstadinides (2013), <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/09/26/understanding-the-limitations-of-the-eus-common-security-and-defence-policy-a-legal-perspective/>, accessed 15 March 2015.

¹⁸ See Common Security and Defence Policy (2010), http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/lisbon_treaty/ai0026_en.htm, accessed 26 March 2015.

¹⁹ McCormick (2008), p. 189.

²⁰ http://www.eeas.europa.eu/background/index_en.htm, accessed 26 March 2015.

herself²¹ is also the Vice-President of the European Commission, who is responsible for the CFSP .In this respect, all common EU foreign and defence policies are designed to be implemented cohesively²². Nevertheless, according to the wording, of the Treaty of Lisbon and the unanimity voting system within the Institution, the military competences of the CSDP are, hence, oriented under the voluntariness of the Member States (MS)²³, and the implementation of the defence policy will have unanimous voting system²⁴. In other words, the CSDP will be adopted only when all MS agree. Additionally, ‘Permanent Structured Cooperation’²⁵ has not been adopted by all MS because of their ambivalent supports within the EU²⁶. It seems likely that, when it comes to the military criteria, the MS will prioritise their national sensibilities, which is one of the core blocking the EU from implementing responsive defence policies during global

²¹ Mrs. Federica Mogherini is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy since December 2014, http://eeas.europa.eu/high-representative-about/index_en.htm, accessed 26 March 2015.

²² Ibid.

²³ Dyson & Konstadinides (2013), <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/09/26/understanding-the-limitations-of-the-eus-common-security-and-defence-policy-a-legal-perspective/>, accessed 15 March 2014.

²⁴ Paul (2008), P. 14.

²⁵ It is the idea of encouraging the MS to develop their military capabilities together under the name of the EU. See http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Europa/Aussenpolitik/GSVP/GSVP-Start_node.html, accessed 9 March 2015.

²⁶ For example, the United Kingdom (UK) prefers co-operations under the transatlantic defence partnership to those within the Europe. See Duke (2012), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoAyh86cAjU&feature=youtu.be>, accessed 9 March 2015.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

crises as a responsible, powerful military actor.

It is clear that the CSDP is flawed in terms of institution and cooperation. In order to illustrate the CSDP's inefficiency in dealing with global problems even further, a selection of the CSDP's overseas missions will now be introduced. The first example is the War on Iraq in 2003, which was mentioned earlier in this article. It was evident that during the War on Iraq, the EU split into at least two factions: one was pro-American and the other was its opponents²⁷. Furthermore, it was alleged that the EU as a whole could not send a military force to fight in Iraq because of the following factors – its different views on the crisis, its lack of military-crisis-response tools, e.g. armies, navies, or air forces²⁸, and its CSDP's legislative and operational limitations. The second example is an incident that took place during the course of 2007 and 2008, where upon the EU refused to deploy its Battle Groups²⁹ to Chad and Darfur after claiming a lack of consensus amidst its then twenty-seven MS, and that the affected areas were not officially classified as an 'emergency situation'³⁰. These two examples exposed unfortunate facts about

²⁷ McCormick (2008), P. 197.

²⁸ See No. 55 of the 'Cologne European Council, 3 - 4 June 1999, Conclusion of the Presidency', http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/kol1_en.htm, accessed 9 March 2015.

²⁹ For EU Battle Groups factsheet, see 'EU Battle Groups' (2013) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/esdp/91624.pdf, accessed 10 March 2015.

³⁰ Le Roux (2013), <http://www.france24.com/en/20131220-eu-mali-european-union-france-central-african-republic-francois-hollande/>, accessed 9 March 2015.

the CSDP: firstly its lack of full operating armies; second, the unwillingness of MS to help.

The above shows that the EU could act as a global military security and defence player only if the EU achieved her common defence cooperation and received the military power from all of the EU MS the way in which the ESDP's institutionalisation under the Lisbon Treaty needed to be reviewed and reformed, and the military forces were to be genuinely and supra-nationally shared to the centre. However, the EU has not achieved this goal yet, and its determination to achieve such goal remains questionable.

The EU's Civilian and Military Aspirations: A Limited Militarist but a True Civilian Authority

As outlined in the previous section, the status of the EU as a global security and defence actor is certainly debatable. The changing global political landscape and uncertain situations in the globalised world have forced the EU to act more rapidly and strategically in reconsidering her values and interests in terms of civilian and military power. Even further, her (only) military and defence tool, the CSDP, is institutionally and politically limited. The contradictory characterisation of the EU as militarily small but influential in civilian areas might haunt the EU forever and could restrain the EU from exercising her power to the maximum in dealing with all types of international crises. This has inevitably led to an important question—Can the EU eliminate such an image and strengthen her military capacities through militarisation at the EU level to balance these hard and soft international roles? The answer is no.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

Though militarisation is one of the crucial attributes of a modern state, when it comes to some regionally-integrated countries or a supranational organisation like the EU, the so-called ‘European Army’ or ‘Eurofighter’ seems to have opted out of the integration scope. Since the EU was originally formed after two World Wars to diminish barbarous warfare and massacre, derived from Westphalian nationalisms³¹, it would be contradictory to such original intent of not only making further wars merely unthinkable, but materially impossible if the EU became a military power. In addition, it seems like the idea of mutualising armies amongst EU countries is not commonly shared by the Union’s Members³²; such a sensitive area is legitimately far-reaching as observed in the previous attempts to establish the European Defence Community (EDC)³³ and in the even more politically sensitive case of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution of Europe³⁴. The EDC was off the table in 1954, and the proposed European Constitution in 2005 was rejected by two referendums – the French and the Dutch³⁵. For these reasons, it is clear that the EU’s militarisation is subject to MS intergovernmental negotiation

³¹ Manners (2002), P. 240.

³² As seen from the failure of the European Defence Community in 1954. See <http://www.cvce.eu/en/education/unit-content/-/unit/1c8aa583-8ec5-41c4-9ad8-73674ea7f4a7/bd191c42-0f53-4ec0-a60a-c53c72c747c2>, accessed 10 March 2015.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ http://europa.eu/eu-law/decision-making/treaties/pdf/treaty_establishing_a_constitution_for_europe/treaty_establishing_a_constitution_for_europe_en.pdf, accessed 21 March 2015.

³⁵ See further Hobolt & Brouard (2011), P. 309.

and, as a result, has been rendered rather limited and modest.

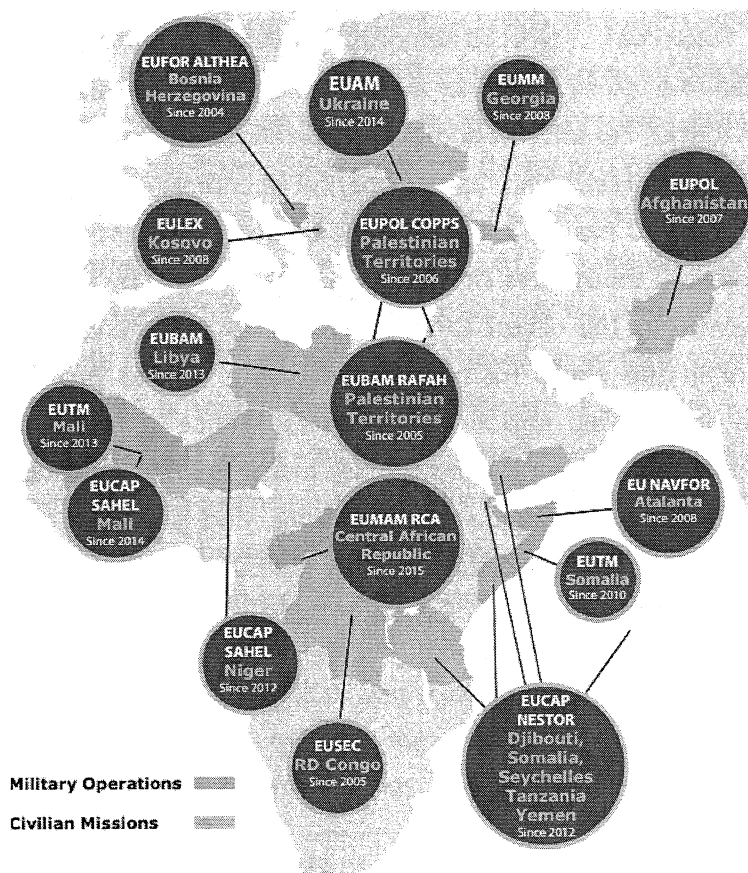
Moreover, in order to demonstrate even further that the EU's civilian role takes precedence over her military and defence ones even further, her soft role and civilian operations will be outlined in this section. First of all, as a successful economic power in the world, the EU has the luxury of an excessive use of chequebook diplomacy', though this strategy has been criticised by some EU observers. As the largest Official Development Assistance (ODA) donor in the world for many years³⁶, the EU has provided development aid and development assistance to numerous developing countries³⁷. Moreover, crisis management, humanitarian operations, election monitoring missions, and police trainings, have been provided and supported by the EU in different parts of the world³⁸. See Figure 1 for the EU's ongoing civilian military missions.

³⁶ More than 50 percent of the total ODA, granted to developing countries, was given by the EU countries. See http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/foraff/142676.pdf, accessed 24 March 2015.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ See the EU's operating missions around the globe, <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/>, accessed 24 March 2015.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง



<http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/>, accessed 24 March 2015.

It is clear that though armed-conflicts in many areas have presented a challenge to the CSDP in terms of military its capabilities, they paved the way for the EU to implement peace-keeping or crisis managements operations, where ‘military’ forces are relatively least involved (e.g. sending observers, police officers, offering border assistance; and post-war management, or conducting military train-

ings in the zones³⁹). The EU's civilian operations and humanitarian⁴⁰ interventions came into play in various areas, e.g. the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine, to name but a few. Civilian and military operations were launched by the CSDP under the auspices of the EU (albeit with military limitations). This is why the EU is prone to be labelled as a 'soft-type power'⁴¹ or a 'good' and 'peaceful' interventionist, which is meticulously in accordance with the EU's values and interests and supported by the EU's economic strengths. Therefore, though the EU is seen as a dumpy military power, as an effective civilian global actor, the EU can seize this opportunity of playing a soft role or a 'force of good'⁴² to offer a new source of international leadership and security. This is because the so-called 'soft' but 'good' mechanism of the EU is able to tackle new types of global problems in today's context⁴³. However, whether or not the role of the EU will cover all types of

³⁹ http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Europa/Aussenpolitik/GSVP/GSVP-Start_node.html, accessed 9 March 2015.

⁴⁰ The EU's international operations or aid are perceived as humanitarian because the operations under the Treaty of Lisbon could be carried out only they are humanitarian, rescue, conflict prevention, peace-keeping, crisis management, joint disarmament, military advice, policing, post-conflict stabilisation, and assistance tasks. See http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/lisbon_treaty/ai0026_en.htm, 26 March 2015.

⁴¹ To understand the idea of soft power, please see Nye (2005), 'Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics'.

⁴² Smith (2013), P. 656.

⁴³ McCormick (2008), P. 210.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

security (both traditional and non-traditional) appropriately is another story.

Analysis and Conclusion

The notion of the EU's CFSP as an economic power through shifting world politics in recent history, including the development and limitations of the CSDP and the distress of militarisation at the EU level, how that the EU has played a good civilian role and moved away from the traditional, hard military power (of course, because of her own internal limitations) in the new global politics. It can be concluded that global politics have been continuously transformed and have reached the point that security cannot solely be achieved through hard military instruments anymore. Thus, since economic power is complimentary to the civilian roles of the EU, the EU, has lived up to her potential and benefited tremendously from projecting herself as a civilian power in such a context; this can be seen as the EU using the right tool at the right time.

However, as the military capabilities of the CSDP ultimately lie under the voluntariness of the MS of the EU, coupled with the murky possibility of European militarisation⁴⁴, the MS are prone to prioritising their national sensibilities and, in consequence, are rarely able to mutually agree – as a whole EU – on military and defence policies towards global problems as an effective, responsible actor. It seems like one of the main obstacles that limits the military

⁴⁴ Dyson & Konstadinides (2013) <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/09/26/understanding-the-limitations-of-the-eus-common-security-and-defence-policy-a-legal-perspective/>, accessed 14 January 2015.

capacities of the CSDP is the political cooperation amongst the EU MS, whereas one of the key restraints of the EU's civilian role is the economic capacity of the EU, which such economic capacity is undoubtedly greater than her political one. That is to say the role of the EU –either military or civilian – depends heavily lies upon the nature of the EU MS. It is clear that when the MS are willing to cooperate economically with each other, the civilian role grows. In contrast, when the MS are not willing to collaborate in terms of politics and defence, the military role is curtailed. With all of the above, for the time being, the EU has enjoyed being perceived as a 'good' civilian power but is also unavoidably seen as an insufficient actor militarily.

สหภาพยุโรป: อำนาจทางทหารที่จำกัดกับบทบาททางพลเรือนที่แข็งแกร่ง

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