

## **Final Report on WMD**

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## EU-GRASP

Changing Multilateralism: the EU as a Global-regional Actor in Security and Peace, or EU-GRASP in short, is an EU funded FP7 Programme. EU-GRASP aims to contribute to the analysis and articulation of the current and future role of the EU as a global actor in multilateral security governance, in a context of challenged multilateralism, where the EU aims at “effective multilateralism”. This project therefore examines the notion and practice of multilateralism in order to provide the required theoretical background for assessing the linkages between the EU’s current security activities with multi-polarism, international law, regional integration processes and the United Nations system.

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# Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction .....	4
2.0 Discourse .....	5
3.0 Security Governance .....	7
4.0 Discourse and Security Governance.....	8
5.0 Impact and Future .....	9
6.0 Conclusions.....	10

# Final Report on WMD

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## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Report is focussed on the findings of the examination of WMD as an issue in security governance through which the European Union acts. It builds upon previous discussion and decisions concerning the role of theoretical considerations, method, case study criteria, and case study selection, that were established through a series of meetings in November 2008, February 2009, and July 2009, through which the Leuven meeting was particularly crucial. This Final Report is also based on the Interim Report delivered at the Gothenburg meeting, and takes comments made there into account.

1.2 There are three research papers that form the analytical basis for this Final Report, as follows:

I. Report on the Iranian nuclear issue, by Ruth Hanau Santini, Research Fellow Forum for the problems of peace and war, Florence

II. EU-India Pakistan WMD. By Dr Oz Hassan, The University of Warwick

III. The EU and North Korean WMD, by Dr. Apostolos Agnantopoulos, Dublin City University and The University of Warwick.

Each author followed a common structure for the research report, which has helped to facilitate the findings of this Report. Each work developed a combination of securitisation and insecurity theory that offered for each a fruitful framework of analysis.

1.3 In the Report of the Gothenburg meeting, it was reported that these Final Reports would be produced according to headings referring to Discourse, Security Governance, the relationship of

discourse to security governance, impact, and future issues, and this is the structure that will be followed in this Report.

## 2.0 Discourse

2.1 In the *Iranian Case*, European discourse has been framed by attributing certain characteristics to the political regime in Tehran, varying from illiberal, irrational, dangerous, unstable, etc. The unpredictability of an actor's erratic behaviour has tended to complement aspects as to what is technically known about the state of advancement of the Iranian nuclear programme. The distinction between intentions and capabilities is central in EU discourses. Both matter when evaluating the degree of threat the Iranian nuclear programme poses to the region and to the international community as a whole. But while a discourse on pure capabilities falls into a non-politicised realm and does not presuppose securitisation, a discourse mixing references to dangerous capabilities and to destabilising intentions manifested by an irresponsible leadership paves the way for a different mode of governance. Much of the debate has been framed more about political assessments over the ultimate goals Iranian nuclear weapons might have, rather than nuclear weapons *per se*. The perception of looming existential security threats takes over and securitisation imposes itself as the main paradigm framing the issue and the response to the crisis.

2.2 With regards to the *North Korean Case*, many similar characteristics were found in the discourse. An analysis of EU official documents and other relevant sources reveals certain common themes about the way North Korea is represented in the EU discourse. Paramount among these is an image of North Korea as an inherently aggressive, irresponsible and duplicitous state which repeatedly fails to follow international norms. These negative representations North Korea were evident in the EU discourse throughout the period studied and where manifested in calls to 'adopt a responsible attitude' (Council 20/11/2000), pursue 'genuine continuation' of Inter-Korean reconciliation (Council 20/11/2000) and become 'a responsible member of the international community'(Council 19/11/2002). But it is particularly after 2006, such references began to that they started to appear more frequently in EU statements. For example, the declaration issued by the Presidency after the July missile launches stated that '[t]he tests run counter to the spirit of the Joint Declaration adopted by the Six-Party Talks ... and call into question the sincerity of the DPRK"s stated commitment to implement this declaration' (EU Presidency 5/7/2006). Similarly, on the day North Korea announced its first nuclear test, the CFSP High Representative Javier Solana issued a declaration which depicted it as 'a totally irresponsible act [and] a further major violation by the

DPRK of its obligations under the NPT’ and expressed regret that ‘once again the DPRK has ignored advice from the international community and broken its word’ (HR/CFSP 9/10/2006). In another speech, delivered to the European Parliament two days later, Solana stressed that the EU condemned the act „in the strongest terms ... because of the degree of irresponsibility which it shows on the North Korean government part“ (High Representative CFSP 11/10/2006). Along similar lines the Commissioner of external relations Ferrero-Waldner argued that ‘as ever, North Korea’s motives are very opaque’ and asserted that ‘someone will have to talk to this regime to bring it out of its paranoiac and aggressive posture’ (Speech to the EP 11/10/2006).

2.3 The third examination, the *South Asian Case*, was altogether different at the level of discourse. With regards to India, both the EU and India have declared a shared interest in working towards accomplishing ‘the goals and objectives of universal disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery’. The declared rationale for this is that both parties regard the ‘proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and its linkages with terrorism poses a threat to international peace and security’. Consequently, both parties have agreed to ‘enhance collective action to fight the proliferation of WMD as well as their means of delivery’. To ensure further dialogue on this issue, the 2005 Joint Action Plan confirmed the establishment of a ‘bilateral India-EU Security Dialogue at Senior Official level which will include regular consultations on global and regional security issues, disarmament and non-proliferation to increase mutual understanding and identify possible areas of cooperation’. Indeed, this was a prominent element of the 2009 EU-India Summit, in which India and the EU ‘reaffirmed their shared interest in working together for disarmament and for countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems’. Consequently, both parties stressed the importance of strengthening national export control laws. India and the EU also supported the adoption of a programme of work for its 2009 session by the Conference on Disarmament including the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. India and the EU share the understanding that the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should take place in conformity with the highest standards of safety, security, and non-proliferation.

With regards to Pakistan, the EU’s position is somewhat more problematic. The ESS identifies terrorism, proliferation of WMD, regional conflicts, state failure and organised crime as its five ‘key threats’. In this regards Pakistan lies at the cross roads of these threats in multiple ways and is perceived by many to be the most likely state to allow for the EU’s ‘frightening scenario ... [where] terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction’. Yet, the possession of WMD is deeply

articulated with Pakistani identity and reflects serious regional concerns Pakistan has with India. Consequently, although the EU is Pakistan's largest investor and trading partner, Brussels continues to maintain a low-profile. The EU and Pakistan nevertheless have declared a shared interest 'in working towards achieving the goals and objectives of universal disarmament and non proliferation of nuclear materials, technology and Wads'. In this regard, the EU has noted the continued work Pakistan has done with the International Atomic Energy Agency on safeguards and physical protection.

### 3.0 Security Governance

3.1 In the Iranian Case, the European Union has expressed its stance in an evolving format, initially comprising only the 'Big Three', i.e. France, Germany and the United Kingdom (E3), who, mainly in a preventive move vis-à-vis an expected US military approach, decided to launch diplomatic negotiations with Iran based on a dual track approach, combining diplomatic offers and the threat of sanctions. The EU 25 format was deemed unfit and in contrast, the idea of establishing a Directoire, while not new to the EU was particularly striking at a time when the catchword for the Union's external actions was multilateralism. In terms of European security governance this self-proclaimed contact group, the E3, had only a partial legitimacy within the EU, since it was considered as not representing smaller parties. The trio had diverging stances on how to deal with the issue, with France and Germany securitising the issue from the beginning and London refraining from doing so until the departure of British Foreign Minister, Jack Straw. The message one could read from the outside was that in order to be effective, Brussels needed to centralise decision-making by counting on a small power centre. At the end of 2003, as a consequence of EU member states' insistence, the format was enlarged to the High Representative Javier Solana, becoming the EU3, gaining intra-EU legitimacy for further initiatives. A stronger internal cohesiveness on this issue however did not conceal the lack of a truly multilateral agreement with the other UNSC members, the United States, Russia and China, able to bring to the table real sticks and carrots. When the group enlarged to them, in 2006, the European stance became aligned with the US vis-à-vis a softer Chinese-Russian approach.

3.2 The *North Korean Case* is about the management of a security issue through multilateral techniques, and this is an EU discourse and policy practice that also reveals much about its own self-image. The EU constructs itself as an entity whose policies are based on peaceful means and persuasion rather than the use of force and coercion, and which pursues moral values rather than

narrow instrumental interests. In the context of EU-North Korean relations the identity as a force for good was manifested in different ways. In the first place the construction of North Korea as unreformed communist regime, which can be transformed through a policy of engagement that combines positive incentives and technical assistance, draws on the perceived success of the EU in promoting post-communist transition in Central and Eastern Europe. A second manifestation of the EU's benign identity was the argument enunciated by some EU officials before the 2002 crisis that the EU could play a distinctive role in the Korean Peninsula because it is 'a distant power with no direct strategic interest and colonial legacy'. A further articulation of the EU's identity constructs it as the embodiment and main advocate of multilateralism. This idea is substantiated in the principle of effective multilateralism, which constitutes a core element of the European Security Strategy (ESS): 'In a world of global threats, global markets and global media, our security and prosperity increasingly depend on an effective multilateral system. The development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order is our objective (European Council 2003: 9).'

3.3 In the *South Asian Case*, it is clear that EU security governance has been marginalised when it comes to India's and Pakistan's WMD programmes. And in response, there has been a good deal of silence on the part of the EU on these issues. Europe, articulate on matters of Iran and of North Korea, has been more silent, and more distant on a discursive level, and also of the practice of security governance. However, the EU has space to act in this area as its policy develops further. Not least because the US and the EU share common objectives on the denuclearisation of the subcontinent, as well as larger objectives of promoting good governance and democracy.

## 4.0 Discourse and Security Governance

4.1 With regard to the *Iranian Case*, from 2003 to 2010 security was understood in negative terms: the absence of a military Iranian nuclear programme would grant security in the region and internationally. Security as the absence of WMD, considered as a powerful element structurally altering the existing status quo, hence the regional balance of power. But security for whom? While Israeli security concerns are known and rightly taken into account by the international community, Iranian security concerns have failed to be discussed and have henceforth remained out of the picture. Security might also be Gulf Arab states' security, with the caveat that this element does not appear publicly, for domestic political reasons (supporting economic sanctions or a Western



military intervention against a nuclear-to be Iran would be read by their public opinion as a betrayal of fellow Muslims).

4.2 In relation to the *North Korean Case*, the discourse employed by the EU is underpinned by certain fundamental internal contradictions. Perhaps the most evident weak point is simultaneous representation of North Korea's nuclear programme as an irresponsible, irrational act and an attempt to deceive the international community. The second construction implies a purposeful rational action which is implicitly negated in the first. Similarly, the image of North Korea as hermitically closed and isolated sits uncomfortably with the assertion that it is involved in a wider international terrorist network. Attempts to stabilise this weak spots in the EU discourse have entailed the following discursive strategies: First the introduction of economic gains as a potential factor that may drive the North Korean leadership to consider a deal. Second an acknowledgment that some ill-judged actions by the west (most notably the US) may have worsened the problem by exacerbating the unjustified fears of the DPRK regime. The articulation of the EU as a normative power and champion of multilateralism is also rendered problematic by the provision for coercive measures in the EU WMD. Even though the Strategy sets out clearly that 'political and diplomatic preventative measures ... form the first line of defence' and therefore coercion is a 'measure of last resort' which should be envisaged only when other measures 'have failed' (Council 2003) it is difficult to see how the identity of normative power can be reconciled with the use of force, especially since the Strategy does not make reference to explicit authorisation by the Security Council.

## 5.0 Impact and Future

5.1 Although there have been clear difficulties in maintaining coherence in the European context, and in maintaining influence with international partners, the Europeans have in regard to the *Iranian Case* developed a mode of security governance that has been framed by sets of discursive moves to shape what is possible and what is acceptable in the question of the Iranian nuclear programme. Many issues remain unresolved; how useful such discursive frames over Iran are to European interests and values; and how appropriate an arrangement it could be for Europe to speak through a framework dominated by a small number of countries. With the Lisbon Treaty, it is clearly possible that a more broadly based European action could develop, in which perhaps more voices will be heard on the framing of the security issue of Iranian nuclear developments. In the case of *North Korea*, a set of security problems that sit more comfortably in their management in

multilateral fora within the Union, there is again challenge to the successful engagement with a very problematic issue at the level of security governance because of discursive choices made and deployed in Europe that limit the scope of possibility. With regards to *South Asia*, the EU must broaden its security agenda in the region and construct an approach that attempts to deal with wider regional problems. That is to say, the EU needs to consider the wider regional security dilemma between India, Pakistan, China and Afghanistan, and attempt to deliver a more holistic regional policy. To this extent it would be useful if the EU de-securitised its discursive articulation of the threat of terrorism and WMD, returning it to the realm of normal politics. This would allow for a refocusing on the possibilities of state to state conflict between India and Pakistan, which poses a serious threat to the region and the international system more broadly. Thus, whilst the EU focuses on the 'root causes of instability' and attempts to redress 'political conflicts, development assistance, reduction in poverty and the promotion of human rights', this approach is too indirect.

## 6.0 Conclusions

6.1 These three cases of EU security governance of issues related to weapons of mass destruction in Iran, North Korea, India and Pakistan through up some interesting issues of commonality, related to questions of identity (and thereby securitisation), internal contradictions, and Europe's problem of speaking.

6.2 First, it is clear that identity constructions are vital in the development of WMD policy. For some states, there is a process whereby EU statements construct linked and differentiated signs that enable the Other to be marked clearly as problematic because it exhibits traits opposite to Europe's own, and thereby the Self is demarcated, justified and legitimated. In relation to Iran – and drawing on a genealogy of European tropes of Iranians/ Persians going back many centuries – the regime is 'illiberal', 'irrational', 'dangerous', and 'unstable.' Of course, as a consequence, the EU space can be seen as marked by liberalism, rationality, safety/ security, and stability. North Korea is marked as 'irrational', 'deviant' and 'duplicitous', again contrasting with the linguistic opposites that mark the nature of Europe. Through these processes, we see a Europe that is a 'force for the good', 'active' and a 'tireless negotiator' for peace, and an 'honest broker'. So Europe's internal character underpins its external policy, and that character is marked and described in contradistinction to Others. Thus, Europe's WMD policy helps us tell ourselves who and what we are. And in so doing, Europe is vulnerable to charges of what Krause called 'strategic orientalism.'

6.3 Second, though, these identity constructions are nevertheless complex. India's proliferation in the nuclear realm has not led to a series of ascriptions to it of irrationality and duplicity; there are no differentiated signs there. Indian democracy, and its opened and booming economy, are more dominant elements of the ascription of values to the country. To paraphrase Wendt (and subsequently, many others), nuclear weapons possession really is what states make of it. Yet, there is a further dimension. The EU has a contested identity itself with regard to WMD; with two of its members being nuclear weapons states, and others profoundly anti nuclear (weapons). Ascribing external values, the EU has argued in its 2003 EU strategy against proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction that 'The more secure countries feel, the more likely they are to abandon programmes: disarmament measures can lead to a virtuous circle just as weapons programmes can lead to an arms race.' Yet it is surely the case that Britain and France sit in a very secure position, and yet do not consider that nuclear weapons offer them nothing further. For both states, nuclear weapons possession acts also as an element of their identity structures; elites in both believe that possession is one of the things that marks the status, and therefore the ability to engage seriously in diplomatic areas, of the state. If this is so for the UK and France, it is surely also the case for India and Iran, both states with major regional roles. And it is perhaps particularly noticeable in Pakistani discourse, with the success of its nuclear developments very much one of the core pillars of contemporary Pakistani-ness. Inability to discuss our own nuclear roles leads to problems in engaging in WMD policy externally. And our efforts to develop coordinative discourse, necessarily often played out in public, is picked up by other actors – whether American, or Russian, or Iranian, or Indian – as representations of Europe's 'weakness', or 'indecisiveness.'

6.4 Third, it is the case that with WMD policy, Europe struggles to find ways of speaking with one voice. President Chirac argued in favour of Europeanising nuclear weapons policy; and sparked a major backlash from Germany and Scandinavian countries, who did not wish to be so involved. Different attitudes on WMD – and on Iraq, in particular – meant that the EU has struggled with ways of developing its 'coordinative discourse' – its ways of speaking with one voice. The European Security Strategy is of course one example of the attempt to develop such coordinative discourse. With regard to Iran, the need for coordinative discourse led to the development of the E3, and then the EU3, rather than acting as a multilateral whole. Much of that specific debate, indeed with all WMD country issues, has been the debate as to whether to politicise or securitise. But on WMD issues, the EU faces a wider problem of coordinative discourse – not only within its members, but also with the United States. And the struggle for the development of coordinative discourses with

the United States has often led to Washington being allowed to set the discursive parameters of debate.

6.5 WMD policy is a particularly difficult area for the EU given the nature of the issue and the nature of the EU. And indeed, on issue specific questions, strategy for engaging with a nuclear power is complex. Should that strategy be one of coercion, of dual track diplomacy, of constructive and engaged dialogue or of critical dialogue? The choices are never simple, but it is clear that whichever security governance frame that the EU chooses and engages with, it brings with it the baggage of its own identity constructions, and its own divisions over WMD practice.

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