

Archer, Clive, ed. 2008. *New Security Issues in Northern Europe: The Nordic and Baltic States and the ESDP*. Routledge/UACES Contemporary European Studies Series. New York: Routledge. 256 pages. ISBN: 978-0-415-39340-9.

New Security Issues in Northern Europe, edited by Clive Archer, is a comprehensive analysis of the security issues facing the states of Northern Europe, with particular emphasis on the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) as the institutional framework for addressing national security problems of these states. It is chiefly intended for the advanced student and practitioner of national security policy, though the theoretical aspects, in the form of using the dominant international relations theories as a tool for evaluating the current geopolitical situation, do receive their due.

The book takes the country case study approach to examining each country's set of unique security concerns, and the relevance of both NATO and ESDP in addressing them. In that respect, the country study approach is invaluable in illustrating the difficulty of crafting a security policy for an era where there is not a single looming and unifying national security threat of existential magnitude. Even though the book's focus is on the states of Northern Europe only, the lessons of its participation in ESDP are applicable to the entirety of the continent and are an illustration of problems likely to be faced by states in other parts of the world attempting to establish a regional collective security framework.

For even though this book covers only seven countries of a single region in Europe, the divergence of interests and dissimilarity of security cultures is highly instructive. These seven countries can be broadly grouped into three categories. The first is represented by Sweden and Finland, non-NATO members committed to the principle of armed neutrality during the Cold War era. From their perspective, ESDP represents a departure, however modest, from the long-established norm of neutrality, even as they acknowledge the importance of the new, unconventional security threats. Sweden's Cold War-era strategy of deterrence through denial has been replaced by a focus on security threats further afield, and a determination that its security interests are best served by international crisis management. Even though Sweden is no longer as strongly committed to its neutrality, it nevertheless remains mistrustful of alliance commitments. Similarly, Finland, which shares Sweden's commitment to neutrality, has reoriented its national security policy toward the more unconventional security threats characterizing the post-Cold war environment. The second set of states is represented by NATO members Denmark and Norway

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for whom ESDP represents a not entirely welcome distraction from its NATO commitments. Denmark views ESDP relatively coolly so as not to jeopardize its security ties with the United States via NATO. Norway's commitment to ESDP is similarly being mitigated by the continuing importance of NATO. Finally, the study covers the three newly independent post-Soviet "Baltic States" of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia which, due to the proximity of Russia, tend to regard it as their most immediate security concern and therefore see their commitments to NATO as more relevant to their security needs. To be sure, Estonia represents an exception of sorts, as it has been able to reconcile its commitment to NATO with active ESDP participation. The differences in national security foci and cultures, even among this relatively homogeneous group of Northern European states, are a good illustration of the reasons why the creation of a security identity for the European Union has proven so difficult, especially in view of the looming shadow of NATO.

The discussion of the relative importance of ESDP and NATO, at least in case of states like Norway and the Baltic States that are NATO members is particularly instructive. It would appear that the relative weakness of ESDP is in part due to its focus on non-military threats (i.e., environmental disasters, sudden refugee migrations) and threats emanating from non-state actors (terrorism, organized crime). The difficulty in mustering support for these commitments, and the apparent difficulty in defeating these threats is, paradoxically, due to the very weakness of these threats. Since they do not pose an existential threat to any of the states of Northern Europe, the allocation of resources to combat them is consequently lower than to NATO. Moreover, NATO today still benefits from its Cold War-era combination of sense of urgency and unity of purpose in its focus on the Soviet threat; the national case studies reveal that ESDP is not able to tap into a similar sense of urgency or unity of purpose, as the security preoccupations of the various member states vary considerably, with ESDP's concerns ranging from counter-terrorism to the problems of population migrations and environmental disasters.

As noted earlier, the authors and the editor of the book should be lauded for having attempted to apply international relations theory to the discussion of security policy, an attempt that is rarer than it should be, for the academic communities that devote themselves to security policy theory on the one hand and international relations theory on the other do not cross-pollinate often enough. However, the theoretical discussion raises the intriguing question as to the relevance of ESDP in situations involving threats other than non-state actors. While, at least for the moment, the importance of NATO has somewhat receded due to the near-zero likelihood of armed interstate conflict in this part of Europe, should the evolution of Russian internal politics take it in the direction of renewed hostility toward the West it might be instructive to speculate what role ESDP

might play in the security policies of the countries that are the subject of the study. The authors, in their discussion of the relatively low commitment of resources to ESDP (low by comparison to the resource commitment to NATO), indirectly point in that direction, since even given the relatively benign security situation in Europe, none of the countries in question is willing to fully embrace ESDP or (where applicable) jettison its commitments to NATO.

The flaws of the book are minor. It would have benefited, for example, from an expanded treatment of the global context of ESDP policies, and the trends in the areas of most likely security concerns. While the Cold War is well over, the looming shadow of Russia's own economic and national security issues is of crucial importance to both the development of the ESDP and the contributions of the Nordic and Baltic states. The recent "planting" of a Russian flag on the bottom of the Arctic Ocean, evidently intended to signify Russia's intent to contest the control of the Arctic's natural resources (specifically, oil), may be a portent of renewed major power competition in which Northern Europe will once again find itself the battleground. Similarly, while the security concerns of Poland and the Czech Republic are necessarily outside the purview of this book, the Russian placement of ballistic missiles in the Kaliningrad oblast, ostensibly in response to the US ABM system deployment in Central Europe, will inevitably affect the security of Northern Europe. To be sure, the developments in the Russian Federation are briefly addressed in the overview chapter on the security of Northern Europe in the post-Cold War era and in individual chapters. However, here the country-based approach of the book becomes something of a weakness. Given that, fortunately, Northern Europe is not an exporter of security problems to the rest of the world, the sources of its security problems lie on its regional and global periphery and therefore the security policy will naturally be reactive in character, with Russia being both the most proximate and likely source of security concerns for the states of Northern Europe. In that respect, a separate chapter on Russia would have been a welcome inclusion. Similarly, to the extent that European states' commitment to NATO is in large part conditional on the assumption that the United States will not only continue to play a vital and leading role in that alliance but also that it will resume the tradition of respecting the interests of its NATO allies (a tradition suspended, if not broken, by the Bush Administration following its snub of NATO's offer of assistance in response to terror attacks of 9/11 and subsequent rhetorical division of Europe into "old" and "new"), an expanded treatment of the role of the United States would likewise be beneficial to improving the understanding of the future of ESDP. Therefore the answer to the question of the proper scope and even the appropriateness of ESDP as a vehicle for Northern European collective security will depend largely

on events outside Northern Europe, a reflection of the continued growth of complex global linkages.

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