



HISTORICAL MILESTONES IN THE EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS COOPERATION

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European defence cooperation is one of the projects with a specific dynamism demonstrated in recent years through concrete initiatives with a certain multidisciplinary character. In this context, how European armaments cooperation supports the political objectives of sustaining an enhanced EU profile in the field of crisis management has been a priority. The practical reflection of this approach is related with a temporal perspective whose initial landmarks are set in the immediate post-Second World War. The development process evolved towards a European model of armaments cooperation based on two typologies. Firstly, they aim at associating armaments cooperation to the institutional framework of international organizations, as is the case with the Western European Union, NATO and the European Union. In addition, there are formulas of cooperation between European states developed outside the EU or NATO framework. Recent achievements indicate the feasibility of this solution, which also reflects the progress made in the overall process of developing the EU's profile and contribution as a relevant actor in the security context.

Keywords: EDC; CSDP; WEU; WEAG; WEAO; EDA; armaments; defence industry; OCCAR; LoI.

Preliminary Remarks

Boosting cooperation in the field of armaments and, subsequently, the defence industry has been one of the lines of action constantly addressed in the context of

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the development of the security and defence dimension in the European context. Basically, one can speak of a generous historical perspective whose initial moments are found in the particular post-Second World War context, in which the Western European states engaged in identifying some cooperation formulas meant to ensure the security and defence of this geographical area.

Clearly, the focus of these concerns was to counter the Soviet threat by creating a system of alliances that would allow the creation of a common defence capability against any form of aggression. Equally, the recent experience of the Second World War has induced a specific dimension of Western European cooperation, particularly in relation to the possibility of German rearmament and, subsequently, how it could have contributed to the development of a new security and defence system in Western Europe.

In doing so, the defence industrial cooperation dimension has been one of the priorities. It can be seen as a precursor to institutional initiatives to coagulate European cooperation, as was the case with the European Coal and Steel Community (1951), the European Economic Community (1957) and the European Union. Obviously, we are talking about a relevant historical dimension of the maturing process of European armaments cooperation. The analysis of security and defence developments recorded in the decades following the end of the Second World War cannot exclude this dimension, given their importance for understanding contemporary realities. Interaction in this area has been an integral part of how European security has been addressed, the basic features of integrated policies at institutional level being defined during this period. Equally, the substance of cooperation has continued to revolve around elements and priorities developed successively in the post-war decades, as the European defence profile matured. There is thus a sustainable continuity between the different initiatives and concrete projects developed in the run-up to the creation of the European Union.

The specific nature of this dimension of cooperation made the developments recorded in the post-war period to be carried out both in connection with institutional developments recorded in the security context of the period and in intergovernmental formulas structured through the participation of Western European states in various configurations. From this perspective, the profile of European industrial cooperation can be regarded as a bivalent approach, including the formal-institutional component associated with the security and defence organizations created in Europe after the Second World War, respectively the cooperation formulas generated in the context of the development of the European Union, but not necessarily associated with this body. These coordinates include the assumption, since 2004, of the central role of the European Defence Agency (EDA) in setting capability priorities at European Union level, resulting in 2008 in the Capability Development Plan (CDP) to which all the Member States' efforts in the context of the Security and Defence Policy



will refer. In connection with this aspect, the role assumed at EDA level to facilitate cooperation between Member States in overcoming capability shortages is also placed. This aspect was addressed particularly in the context of the CSDP initiative launched under the name of the Coordinated Defence Review Process (CARD). Last but not least, the importance of the EDA is also validated from the perspective of functioning as an interface between the capability development process, research and technology, armaments and the defence industry, thus providing additional elements to support European defence cooperation.

In view of the complexity of the subject, the present study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the path of European cooperation over the last half century. In this respect, structuring a historical perspective on how the security and defence objectives of European states have been reflected in the politically assumed priorities, is one of the main approaches. At the same time, the central thesis of the study considers that regardless of the institutional formulas developed between European states during this period, the European cooperation dimension in the field of armaments benefited from continuity, being able to be regarded as a red thread to which the national options were related. Even in the context of sinusoidal developments, the decades of cooperation before the advent of the European Union have provided the foundation that has allowed this area to be approached at a higher level. An important place is taken by the integrated approaches under the institutional auspices offered by the Western European Union (WEU) and, subsequently, the translation of its legacy to the European Union. The sources used mainly in underpinning this approach concern the decisions and procedural framework of WEU and NATO, with the deepening of the institutional approach to armaments cooperation.

Thus, the study provides additional elements of analysis for an issue that is dealt with, almost exclusively, only in the light of developments since the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon. This approach generates a relative discontinuity in the understanding of the rationale behind armaments cooperation and, in particular, of the reasons that motivated the focus at European level. The study also provides the benchmarks in terms of the reasons that generated alternative formulas for cooperation between Member States. Thus, the study can also be regarded as a way of completing the existing bibliographical inventory in the field of European security and defence by offering another perspective on how the security and defence dimension has emerged at the level of the European Union. The thesis of continuity is also addressed from a transatlantic perspective, by looking in more depth at the issues of cooperation between the WEU and NATO, which has been the cornerstone in defining the EU's role in the field of security and defence.

In relation to continuity issues, the thesis on the priority given by Member States to the development of an integrated formula for governing armaments cooperation



is also placed. The constant approach to this subject has been carried out in close connection with the project of creating a Specialised Agency, being one of the first elements associated with an EU role in the field of defence that will be included in the Constitutive Treaty of the European Union. Thus, the study provides additional elements on how to formalize the aspects of cooperation in the field of armaments. In addition to assessing the major trends of evolution in these dimensions, the study also provides detailed elements on the different initiatives developed under the auspices of the WEU and NATO, thus contributing to strengthening the line of argument on continuity with the processes developed at EU level, by seizing the opportunities of the Lisbon Treaty.

1. Institutional Approaches

As is known, the first defence organization to emerge in post-war Europe was structured on the basis of the provisions of the Treaty of Brussels, signed on March 17, 1948, by France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Great Britain. The main rationale for this approach was to initiate a format for cooperation in a wide range of areas between the former allied states in the Second World War, based on the Treaty of Dunkirk, signed by France and Great Britain. (Treaty of Economic, Social and Cultural Collaboration and Collective Self-Defence 1948). Under these auspices, the Western Union was established, with a structure dedicated to the field of defence, known as the Western Union Defence Organization (WUDO). It would operate until 1951 when its functions would be integrated into NATO. In its short existence, the issue of European defence industrial cooperation has not been addressed distinctly and at a higher level of depth, the priority of this organization being the creation of a defence capability against the Soviet threat. Concurrently with the development of the Western Union and the WUDO, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation was created on April 16, 1948, bringing together a much larger number¹ of Western European states. The work of this organization was closely linked to the elaboration of the Plan for the Recovery of Europe (1948-1951), which allowed the use of U.S. support through the Marshall Plan. This approach was firstly reflected in the post-war defence industry context, taken into an economically integrated perspective and with a direct link to the exploitation of natural resources and steel processing.

The issue of armaments and the possibility of developing a European defence, including their production, has been extensively addressed in the framework of the Treaty on the European Defence Community (EDC), signed on May 27,

¹ Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Great Britain and West Germany (at that time represented by the European powers France, Great Britain, together with the USA).



1952, by France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Basically, the implementation of the project for the development of a European army, on the coordinates agreed in the EDC Treaty, placed the European cooperation in the field of defence in connection with the industrial dimension of this profile through the development of the so-called joint endowment programmes. The failure to ratify the Treaty in the French Parliament (recorded after long debates on August 30, 1954) led to a temporary renunciation of this level of ambition. (Treaty Constituting the European defence Community 1952, 167)

In the context thus created, there was an amendment to the existing regulatory framework at the level of European cooperation, more precisely the Treaty of Brussels, which was to come into force in October 1954. As a result of this decision, a new defence organization came into being in Europe, under the name of the Western European Union (WEU), which practically took over the experience and functionalities fulfilled by the Western Union and the WUDO. Armaments was one of the new areas that will be included in the portfolio of this organization. It must be said that its approach was based, at least for the first decade, on controlling the production and types of armaments manufactured in Europe and, in particular, in Germany. It will become, together with Italy, a member of the WEU by amending the Brussels Treaty, assuming a number of obligations regarding the production and marketing of armaments. (Modified Brussels Treaty 1954) Under the auspices of the WEU, the issue of armaments has been addressed from several perspectives. Basically, the dimension of cooperation in the field of armaments was the main direction of action in which the WEU functioned, in the context in which, since 1960, the functions of sale in the economic, social and cultural fields have been taken over by the Council of Europe. Firstly, there was the Armaments Control Agency, created by the amendments to the Brussels Treaty, aimed at monitoring the production of military equipment and technology, as well as the existing stocks at Member State level. This entity will operate until 1985, when the WEU underwent an extensive reform process aimed at adapting to developments in the security environment in Europe and, at the same time, reflecting the state of play of the process of removing the effects of the Second World War.

In addition to the control and verification aspects, the dimension of cooperation between Member States to identify multinational solutions to facilitate national approaches in the field was addressed. This approach has been implemented through the Armaments Steering Committee which would operate until 1985, coordinating operational research activities, the evaluation of military equipment and technological experiments. Alongside this type of institutional approach, the development of European cooperation in the field of armaments recorded the emergence of the intergovernmental typology, with the creation, in 1976, of the Independent European Group (IEPG) with the participation of 13 states. The overall



aim of this approach was to promote a common European approach to armaments by: stimulating international cooperation in procurement; promoting standardization and interoperability; support for an industrial technological base for European and Allied defence; strengthening the European component in relation to the US and Canada.

Acting on the model of a consultation forum, the IEPG met annually at the level of defence ministers, while also including the format of the biannual meetings of national armaments directors. The structure of the IEPG also included a level of work, structured on three components: operational requirements and endowment programs; research and technologies; economic procedures and issues. (European Initiatives 1991, 24) The first ministerial meeting was held in The Hague in November 1984, during which priorities for cooperation between the participating states on armoured vehicles, medium-range surface-to-air missiles, transport aircraft were identified. Subsequently, the areas for cooperation were extended to include the research and technology dimension. At the same time, the work of the IEPG has also focused on the harmonisation of national procurement procedures, i.e. in terms of strengthening coordination between specialized structures in this field. The IEPG should also be seen from the perspective of contributing to the development of the conceptual inventory associated with European defence cooperation. Basically, the debates carried out within the IEPG introduce the concept of a “European armaments market” supported by an Action Plan on a Stepwise Development centered on the need to develop cross-border cooperation and which was to be a constant feature of the European debate from then on. (SIPRI 1992, 223-224) At the same time, the IEPG will also have a component dedicated to the cooperation with the defence industry that will be implemented through the European Defence Industries Group, an advisory structure that will provide expertise to the designated working groups. From the perspective of the contribution of IEPG to the development of concrete initiatives, the decision of the Ministers of Defence in June 1989 to launch a research and development initiative, known as EUCLID (European Cooperation for the Long-Term in Defence) is relevant, with the aim of developing 11 categories of capabilities in the European context (Common European Priorities), for each of which a state has been established as coordinator.

The forum approach to the armaments issue has included, in addition to the approaches mentioned, the emergence of other formats of dialogue and cooperation between Western European states. In parallel with the development of the EDC project, the issue of armaments in the European context has also seen other intergovernmental inspired approaches, as it is the case with the initiative of France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg to create a formula for cooperation applicable to this domain. The approach resulted in the creation, through the Chiefs of Staff of the mentioned states, of FINABEL, an entity that was to identify measures to deepen coordination between European states in the field of land-based armaments.



The results recorded cannot necessarily be considered substantial consisting in the conclusion of agreements on technical specifications and operational concepts, their implementation being voluntary for member states.

In the context of the endeavors regarding the development of the Euro-Atlantic defence system, NATO's ways of strengthening the contribution of the European states generated particular formulas of cooperation. They have engaged a number of NATO European member states (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Great Britain) in the EUROGROUP format, created on November 13, 1968, as a forum for interaction at the level of defence ministers. Under the auspices of this format, a working infrastructure has been developed targeting the areas identified as important for optimizing the European contribution to common defence.² Thus, seven working groups were organized in the fields of: communications in the theatre of operations (EUROCOM); logistics (EUROLOG); long-term planning (EUROLONGTERM); medical services (EUROMED); equipment collaboration (EURONAD); force structure (EUROSTRUCTURE), Joint training (EUROTRAINING). Note, from the perspective of the subject of this article, in particular the activity of EURONAD in which national representation was ensured at the level of the national directors for armaments. The main result of the efforts of this working group was the establishment of principles governing collaboration in the field of armaments, enhance standardization and interoperability. The inventory of principles will be approved at EUROGROUP level in 1972, including: the exchange of essential information between the participating states; assessment of the possibilities for cooperation; expanding cooperation in the procurement process; full standardization; maximum cooperation in logistic support; management and cost efficiency (Eurogroup 1976, 39-40).

2. WEU between Continuity and Failure

Significant changes in the institutional landscape associated with cooperation in the field of armaments have occurred against the background of WEU Member States's decision to develop a more visible profile (reactivation) of this organization. At the same time, the reason for this approach should be seen also from the perspective of strengthening the European contribution in the context of NATO, the Western European Union being perceived in the late 1980s as one of the important vectors in this direction. Thus, the WEU Council declaration of October 27, 1984, expressed

² Signed on April 3, 1948 by U.S. President Harry Truman (Economic Recovery Act). It will be known as the Marshall Plan, after the secretary of state, George Marshall, who was instrumental in its development.

Under the auspices of Eurogroup was adopted (1970) a European Defense Improvement Plan (EDIP) worth \$ 1 billion that will run for a period of 5 years.



the determination of the Member States to develop the profile of that organization, including from the perspective of initiating a process of internal reorganization. The coming years will see major changes in the strategic framework within which the WEU revitalisation process will take place. Firstly, it is about implementing the convergence of views at the level of the Member States of the European Economic Community (EEC), aimed at moving to a higher level of cooperation through the creation of the European Union. Thus, with the entry into force of the Single European Act (1987), new areas of applicability of European cooperation under the aegis of the EEC were introduced, simultaneously with the introduction of European Political Cooperation, an instrument that will significantly contribute to the development of a new political-economic formula at European level. (Single European Act 1986, 7)

The WEU's place in this development would be clarified in the context of the Maastricht Treaty (signed on February 7, 1992, and entered into force on November 1, 1993) by which the European Union was created. From the perspective of the objective advanced by the Treaty in terms of "the implementation of a Common Defence Security Policy that over time can lead to a common defence" (Maastricht Treaty 1993, I,B), the WEU became an integral part of the European construction process, being the enabling structure empowered to implement EU decisions in the field of defence. On this note, the Declaration adopted by the WEU Member States on assuming the role of a component of the European Union in the field of defence as well as developing the cooperative relationship with the EU and NATO will be annexed to the text of the Treaty. Also, one of the points of the Declaration endorsed the development of cooperation in the field of armaments with the aim of creating a European Armaments Agency (Maastricht Treaty 1993, Declaration on Western Union). The achievement of this objective will strengthen the WEU's profile in terms of armaments cooperation, making it one of the main institutional benchmarks associated with this dimension.

Against this background, in December 1992, a decision was adopted to set up a specialized structure at WEU level in armaments issues. It will be named the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), in the following years serving as an integrative platform for the various cooperation formulas developed in the European context in the field of armaments. On these coordinates, in December 1992, the Defence Ministers meeting in Bonn, in the format of the IEPG, decided to transfer the functions of this format to WEU. The main considerations of this decision were to ensure the continuity of the activities carried out under the auspices of the EDPS, as well as to better relate to the developments in the strategic framework for cooperation between the WEU and NATO. Last but not least, the transfer came to meet the political objective assumed by the Maastricht Treaty to develop the EU profile in the field of security and defence, all the more consolidated under the



objective of creating a specific agency for this sector (Duke 1994, 239-240). To an equal extent, the process of taking over three working groups developed under the auspices of EUROGROUP will be carried out, namely those on communications in the operational, logistic and long-term planning environment. At the same time, NATO will integrate the military equipment group into its own working formats with the participation of national armaments directors.

As a result of this process, the WEAG structure and its role in the coordination of armaments at the level of the participating states³ was to be substantially strengthened. Responding to the trend of coagulation of the EU's defence role, WEAG's objectives were to: strengthen the technological and industrial defence base at European level; secure the necessary financial resources through a better harmonisation of operational requirements; improve cooperation in research and development; and open up national defence markets to international competition. In essence, the role of the WEAG was to serve as a platform for cooperation between Member States in order to identify and promote projects in the European context that had potential for industrial exploitation. The central role in coordinating activities within the WEAG was ensured by the defence ministers of the participating states, most often through the national armaments directors. In the institutional economy of the Western European Union, WEAG's role was to provide expertise in the field of armaments for the WEU Ministerial Council. From the perspective of the internal modus operandi, the WEAG structure targeted three components/panels. Panel I was responsible for harmonizing operational requirements and cooperation in the field of military equipment. The working modalities were to organise cooperation formats with the participation of the states concerned in working groups that regularly reported on the progress made. Depending on the complexity of the subject under consideration, there was the possibility of structuring within specialized working formulas (subgroups). The maximum level of cooperation under the aegis of Panel I included six thematic groups dedicated to air transport (strategic and tactical), missile development and portable launch capacity (WEAG: The Course To Be Followed 1995, 29). Panel II was dedicated to coordinating research and development activities in the field of defence (R&D) having as main fields of activity the development of priority areas for R&D at European level (forward-looking in terms of technological progress) and, subsequently, the coordination of research projects at their level.

Project funding was entirely the responsibility of the participating states, which contributed to limited progress in implementing practical solutions beyond the completion of feasibility studies. A distinct area of Panel II activity was the management of the EUCLID Program, inherited by the WEU following the process of taking over the responsibilities of the EIPG, which will be the platform for R&D

³ 13 Member States participated, corresponding to the IEPG format. The only exceptions were Denmark (observer status), Norway and Turkey (associate members).



activities developed at WEAG level throughout its existence. The technological categories on which the program was structured represented the priority directions of action, being transposed into the priority areas. From this perspective, between 1995 and 1996, the work of Panel II was strengthened by the creation of an R&D Cell that will contribute to the implementation of the EUCLIDE program. The Third Panel was responsible for the prospective dimension over the development of strategic level projects aimed at creating a European defence equipment market. The main subjects⁴ covered international competition, transparency of requirements, exchange of information on suppliers, common criteria for awarding contracts, etc. Progress during the existence of the WEAG has been limited due to the extension of the divergent political perspectives between WEU Member States on how to articulate such a project and in terms of its European character.

The implementation of the objective of the Maastricht Treaty to create a European Armaments Agency was also placed on similar lines. Discussions on this topic continued with intensity between 1994 and 1997, but without significant progress. In this context, developments relating to the coagulation of armaments cooperation formulas were further advanced by the decision of the bilateral Summit of France and Germany in Bonn (June 1994) aimed to create a Joint Armaments Agency. The project would evolve in the years to come with the inclusion of Great Britain and Italy in the Joint Armaments Cooperation Structure (JACS) which will come into being in January 1997. In parallel with the dynamism of the intergovernmental cooperation framework, efforts to implement the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty led to the emergence of the Western European Armaments Organisation (WEAO) as a subsidiary body of the WEU.

The main functions of the WEAO were to be agreed upon in terms of its compliance with the parameters set by the Maastricht Treaty. At the time, the option of using WEAO as a European armaments agency seemed to be the way forward. The functions agreed in 1997 by the WEAO Charter offered an extensive range of possibilities including: defence technology and research activities; endowment of defence equipment; development of studies in the field of defence; management of own goods and facilities. At the same time, the WEAO was an organization with legal personality, subsumed under that enjoyed by the WEU through the Paris Accords (European Armaments Cooperation 2003, 13). Along these lines, the WEU encompassed the two dimensions, research (through a Research Cell) and armaments, managed through the National Armaments Directors. The main message conveyed by the WEU Charter was that of an organizational development process in which the

⁴ To a large extent, the benchmarks of the way in which the issue of the European arms market were on the coordinates advanced by the Vredling Report, drawn up in 1987 by a group of experts under the coordination of the former Dutch Minister of Defence Henk Vredeling (1973-1977). Its main theme was to reduce bureaucracy by deepening cooperation between European states and opening up markets.



transition to the next stage represented by the creation of the European Armaments Agency could have been carried out on the basis of a decision at ministerial level within the WEAG. In that case, WEAO would be involved in managing the different levels of the EUCLID program, taking responsibility for the award of contracts. Since 1999, a higher threshold has been established for awarding contracts (10% more) which would have included around 17 EUCLID contracts worth EUR 102 million. USD. (Luxembourg WEU Council 1999, 72)

The adoption of the Franco-British Declaration of St. Malo (December 1998) and, subsequently, the adoption of political decisions to launch the process of creating the EU's own capacity in the field of security and defence placed European cooperation within the WEU on a different course (From St.Malo to Nice 2001, 8-10). Thus, the new approach aimed at identifying those WEU functions that facilitated the implementation of the advanced vision in St.Malo regarding the EU's own capability for action in crisis management. The process of assessing which WEU instruments and facilities could be transferred to the EU was initiated by the decision of the WEU Ministerial Council in Luxembourg. In the context of this meeting, the defence ministers, meeting in the WEAG format, indicated their preference for connecting this format to future European armaments efforts.

The decision to adopt the first Global Defence Goal at EU level (Helsinki Headline Goal) following the European Council in December 1999 gave further impetus to the process of transferring WEU functions to the EU. Thus, the WEU Ministerial Council in Porto (15-16 May 2000) dealt extensively with this issue by adopting the decision to initiate a process of analysis on the long-term prospects of WEAG and WEAO in the light of developments at European level in the field of security and defence (From St.Malo to Nice 2001, 117). The next WEU Council meeting held in Marseilles (13 November 2000) was the end point of the WEU's existence, accepting the transfer⁵ of the Agencies of the Institute for Security Studies and the Satellite Centre to the EU. It also advanced the deadline of July 1st, 2011, for the Western European Union to cease functioning, while maintaining the so-called residual functions⁶ which would continue until the necessary framework for their takeover was created. They also included the issue of armaments, in particular the operation of WEAG and WEAO, whose integration also involved the takeover of ongoing programs.

Against the backdrop of the sharp dynamics of developments in the own security and defence dimension, the Treaty on the Constitution for Europe, adopted following

⁵ They will be transformed into Agencies of the European Union by decision of the Nice European Council (December 2000).

⁶ In addition to the role exercised by WEAG and WEAO, they concerned the WEU Parliamentary Assembly and the provisions of Article V of the Treaty of Brussels amended by the Paris Agreements. The latter concerned the mutual assistance clause between Member States.



the Convention of June-July 2003, strengthened the tendencies to takeover of the two entities. Thus, the objective of creating a European Agency for Military Capabilities, Research and Armaments was agreed. It was to identify the operational requirements and necessary implementing measures. It was also envisaged that the portfolio would also include the development of a defence technological and industrial base. It was also intended that the future agency would participate in the definition of capabilities and a European armaments policy, also play a role in supporting the EU Council in assessing the process of capability improvement (Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe 2003, Art.40). Although failed, the draft Constitution stated the parameters of the future structure, within which it became a formal reality of the option to take over the WEAG, the responsibilities of the projected agency reflecting the profile of the activities carried out by the WEU structure. The implementation of this objective had had a distinct route, in relation to the other components of the draft Constitution in the field of defence.

On February 24, 2003, the Franco-British Summit held in La Toquet marked the convergence of the two Member States towards the creation of a specialised Agency in the field of capability development and procurement. The support provided by France and the United Kingdom will be a strong stimulus for the practical implementation of this line of thinking, also reaffirmed by the first European Security Strategy adopted in December 2003. The continuity of references in the EU Treaties (Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice) also provided the legal basis for the European Council's decision in May 2003 on the establishment, in the course of 2004, of an Intergovernmental Agency in the field of defence capability development, research, acquisition and armaments. Its tasks largely resumed the coordinates generated by the European Convention, while bringing additional elements regarding the coordination with the activities carried out by the European Commission on the security dimension.

The responsibility for implementing this objective and setting the parameters of the future agency has been taken over by the Italian Presidency of the EU Council, under the coordination of which a working group will be set up with the participation of the Member States. On 12 July 2004, the General Affairs and External Relations Council adopted the Joint Action on the establishment of the European Defence Agency (EDA) with the objectives of: the development of defence capabilities in the field of crisis management; promoting and strengthening European armaments cooperation; strengthening the European Technological and Industrial Base; the promotion, in cooperation with the Structures of the European Commission, of research procurement, including with a view to an enhanced role in the field of strategic defence technologies (COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2004/551/CFSP 2004).

From an institutional perspective, the EDA was placed under the subordination of the High Representative and under the political authority of the Council. At the same time, it had legal personality, the financial aspects associated with its activity



being regulated by means of a three-year financial framework. The transfer of WEAG and WEAO to the European Defence Agency was completed between 2005 and 2006. The legacy of the two WEU entities encompassed around 300 projects (125 completed and the rest in various stages of development). The transfer process to EDA also included sizable projects representing, at least for the first years of operation, the essence of the portfolio of the new organization. Subsequently, EDA's role in the armaments dimension has developed significantly both on the conceptual dimension and by integrating this area into the overall context of capability development.

Conclusions

As it is clear from the previous pages, the development of European armaments cooperation and, subsequently, of the defence industry has undergone a sinuous development, marked by the political and military developments of the last half-century. However, it should be noted that this level of cooperation was one of the first areas addressed at the level of European defence cooperation, and it can be considered the forerunner of the political framework developed at European Union level associated with the Common Security and Defence Policy.

In this context, the creation of a specialized agency represented the red thread of the EU Treaties, an expression of the major political interest of the Member States in the development of this segment of cooperation, as well as of the convergence of opinions on the role of this entity in supporting the profile of the European Union in the field of crisis management. The operationalization of the Agency is one of the common points of the four Treaties adopted at EU level, not counting the Constitutional Treaty. It is also in this logic that references to the European Defence Agency in the Treaty of Lisbon are placed, all the more important at a time when this entity was created before the adoption of the last fundamental act for the functioning of the European Union.

On the substance, the different models addressed for establishing the responsibilities of such a structure have generally placed themselves in support of a coordination matrix that generates the framework for guiding European cooperation. The level of ambition associated with the role that such an organizational entity was to play in empowering the available funds was relatively constant throughout this period. The dominant option was to maintain the flexibility of the use of resources committed by the Member States. Thus, the creation of the relevant agency can be seen in the intergovernmental key governing European security and defence cooperation, where the EDA is intended to ensure the reflection of the entire set of options and positions of the Member States. Although not very visible in terms of the level of resources at its disposal, the added value of the European Defence Agency lies in the ability to project common perspectives on the priorities to which European



cooperation must respond and, last but not least, to allow for the identification of common solutions to remedy existing shortcomings and gaps.

Equally, one can also speak of a variable geometry of European armaments cooperation formulas that has incorporated both WEAG, WEAO and, at present, EDA-type formulas, as well as cooperation arrangements between European states. The coexistence of these models is one of the characteristics of armaments cooperation, and all the more important in the context of the defence industry. In this context, it is worth mentioning initiatives such as the Organisation for Joint Cooperation in the field of Armaments (OCCAR) formed in 1996 (Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) or the Framework Agreement, signed in July 2000 (Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) which are elements validating this trend. The existence of these two typologies of approach to the armaments issue, in connection with the industrial dimension, is the basic feature of European cooperation in this area, which will be maintained for the immediate future.

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