

DISCUSSION PAPERS IN DIPLOMACY

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Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'

ISSN 1569-2981

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TOWARDS A EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC SYSTEM?

Brian Hocking and David Spence

As studies of the management of European Union (EU) external policy demonstrate, the processes accompanying the adaptation of Member State foreign ministries to greater levels of integration are coloured by the interaction between an emerging European diplomacy and nationally generated international policy.¹ But the signing of the European Convention in 2004 has posed these complexities in a starker form than hitherto. The purpose of this paper is to a) summarise how a proto-European diplomatic system has developed; b) outline what is being proposed in the new Constitution; and c) consider the implications of these developments both for the conduct of EU international policy as well as Member State diplomatic systems.

The Constitution for Europe is to be put before national publics in referenda before its mooted implementation in 2007. Since one of the major developments in the Constitution involves a European Foreign Minister as Vice-President of the European Commission and a European External Action Service (EEAS), this clearly has considerable significance for the role and development of national foreign ministries. But of equal significance there is the issue of how national administrative arrangements affect those at the European level. Consular affairs are but one of the latest examples of a foreign (and interior) ministry function gradually being 'Europeanised'.² Some national administrations are even reflecting on whether the time is now ripe for national development aid to be channelled through new European arrangements. And they are all pondering the implications of the new constitution's arrangements. Similar discussions are taking place within the Commission. The scope for the new External Action Service to cover CFSP, trade, aid, technical assistance and humanitarian interventions demands new thinking on interaction within the Relex family of DGs. This new thinking is not confined to administrative arrangements. It goes to the heart of how foreign policy is to be defined; whether, for example, humanitarian intervention stands apart from the representation of interests or forms part of a new view of the coherence of EU policies. The High Representative for

1) See, for example, B. Hocking and D. Spence, *Foreign Ministries in the European Union: Integrating Diplomats*, (Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, reprinted edition, forthcoming 2005).

2) For a discussion of this two-way process see P. Mair, 'The Europeanisation Dimension', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2004.

CFSP, Javier Solana, has been clear in his views on the issue of the scope of future institutional arrangements:

The challenge now is to bring together the different instruments and capabilities: European assistance programmes, military and civilian capabilities from Member States and other instruments such as the European Development fund...Our objective should be to create synergy through a more coherent and comprehensive approach. Diplomatic efforts, development, trade and environmental policies should follow the same agenda.³

Likewise, some Commissioners in the Prodi Commission also advocated a similar coherent and comprehensive institutional approach – although former Relex commissioner Chris Patten noticeably refrained from advocating a firm line on potential administrative arrangements.

Solana has already been nominated as the first holder of the post of Foreign Minister for Europe and Commission vice-president. He will chair meetings of foreign ministers of the EU twenty-five and, with the Commission delegations at his disposal – restructured into the EEAS he will lead what might have the makings of a European Foreign Ministry, complete with diplomatic service.⁴ Thus, the Commission's external relations directorates and its delegations outside the EU are set to form the major administrative component of a new European diplomatic system. This heralds a series of reforms to complete an ongoing process by which the Commission's team of international project managers has already become a quasi-diplomatic service. This process is a laboratory for students of modern diplomacy. It is not only the result of the European integration process, the spill-over from administrative, budgetary and project management tasks in the field of aid and technical assistance abroad to 'high politics', but also a telling reflection of major adaptations to the notions of representation and diplomacy in the international relations of the 21st century.

The key issues are the form the EEAS will take and what embellishments to existing structures, rules and procedures for external relations will be developed – not only after the implementation of the Constitution, but – thanks to a declaration on the Constitution – as EU Member States move

3) Javier Solana, EU High Representative for The Common Foreign And Security Policy, 'A Secure Europe In A Better World', speech to the European Council, Thessaloniki, 20 June 2003.

4) S. Duke, A Foreign Minister for the EU: but Where's the Ministry?, *Clingendael Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*, No 89, (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 2003).

towards its ratification.⁵ Several phases of reform over fifty years have prepared the Commission's delegations, through incremental change, for the challenges involved. Will the Commission's existing structures form the core of the new system of European diplomatic representation? Or will the Commission's delegations and external relations Directorates-General be relegated to a purely trade, aid and technical assistance role, while the political running is made by others – staff from the Council Secretariat and Member State foreign ministries? The answer will depend on the roles the EEAS will fulfil and the functions the Commission and the Member State foreign ministries retain.

Developing the Commission's international role

Understanding the future shape of European diplomacy (defined both in its broader and more specific, EU, contexts) requires us to appreciate how it has developed and the roles that the Commission and the Member States have played in fashioning what is a complex, multilayered process. Furthermore, the European arena has to be seen in the light of broader changes which diplomacy is experiencing at the global level. The challenges posed by resource constraints set against the enhanced demands imposed on diplomatic systems in the post-11 September 2001 environment resonate with diplomats and policy makers in many settings. But in a sense, the Commission, in discharging its external policy tasks, is familiar with adaptations to the shifting demands of internally and externally generated change. Indeed, it has come to assume what Bruter claims to be a unique style of public diplomacy characterised by the role assumed by the delegations in many, if not all, arenas.⁶

The Commission's evolution as an external policy actor has matched both the expansion of Community competence and the growing economic and political weight of the EU itself. But the problem has been which European institution could play the role of representative of the EU. Legally, there was no difficulty as the Commission represented the EU if the policy area fell within first pillar competence. Thus, the EU's membership of the G8

5) Declaration 24: 'as soon as the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe is signed, the Secretary-General of the Council, High Representative for the common foreign and security policy, the Commission and the Member States should begin preparatory work on the European External Action Service'. The signing took place on 29th October 2004.

6) M. Bruter, 'Diplomacy without a state: the external delegations of the European Commission', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 2, June 1999, pp. 183–205.

gave the Commission the representative role, since most of the subject matter of G8 meetings fell within Community competence. The Presidency was not represented at G8 officials' meetings, though G8 summits were attended by the prime minister of the state holding the Presidency.⁷ Likewise, for representative functions in Brussels, there was no problem for the Commission in fulfilling its role, since that was where the Commission's headquarters and staff were located. In CFSP representation is the Presidency's preserve. While the smaller Member States can manage presidency roles in Brussels, when it comes to representation abroad, they are frequently faced with a situation where they have no embassies and the presidency role falls to another Member State with a resident ambassador. In legal terms, the presidency is represented, but the fact is that confusion reigns in the minds of foreign interlocutors and there is a clear lack of consistency in EU representation. As for the Commission, abroad its extensive network of delegations allows it to discharge its external relations role in the Community sphere and in CFSP, where it forms a permanent part of troikas, whereas the 'Presidency' has to be represented by another state. This was a problem that the appointment of Solana as High Representative was intended, at least in part, to remedy. But Solana was a virtual one man band. His team of skilled policy advisors, the Policy Unit, were also Brussels-based and there were not enough of them to perform an effective role abroad. Increasingly, there has been resort to special envoys (for regions such as the Great Lakes or the Middle East) and special representatives (for terrorism or WMD, for example). But the Commission remains the only consistent element in the fluctuating institutional representation of 'troikas'.

Thus the importance of the Commission's External Service within the newly emerging diplomatic framework is apparent. But the intention for the Commission to be an international actor dates back to the Monnet era, so it has taken 50 years of slow evolution for the Commission's policy role to become so crucial. In 2004, before enlargement,⁸ there were Commission delegations accredited to 126 countries and 5 international organisations, thus ranking the Commission's diplomatic representations approximately fourth when compared with the size of geographic spread of Member State representation outside the EU (see Appendix 1). But, the Commission's ability to play a more important role has suffered greatly from the unwillingness of EU governments to create a satisfactory EU institutional

7) Significantly, as the agenda of the G8 became more political after 9/11 and the discussions focused increasingly on CFSP competence (weapons of mass destruction, counter-terrorism etc) the Commission's role became gradually anomalous.

8) After enlargement delegations in the ten new member states were transformed into information offices on a par with the 20 existing offices in the member states.

response to the growing demand for more decidedly European and less national policies. As senior officials of the Council have argued, the EU states have been markedly unsuccessful in co-ordinating their foreign policy positions on matters of common interest when the issues have been controversial.⁹ And even the EU's relations with strategic partners such as Russia and the United States have been hampered by a lack of coherence and forcefulness. The Commission is not responsible for this. On the contrary, it is seen by many in the outside world as the natural focus for diplomatic relations with the EU, even where this role falls to what has hitherto been the revolving presidency. The Commission has suffered from the scepticism of governments and publics alike, however, and it carries a large measure of responsibility for its failure to punch according to its weight. In following the maxim that discretion is the better part of valour, it failed signally to engage in advocacy and public diplomacy activities commensurate with its abilities and potential. And there is a generally recognised failure on the part of the Commission to capitalise on the respect afforded it by many in the international arena, notably the approximately 170 states accredited to the EU in the shape of the European Commission president in Brussels. Furthermore, many international non-governmental organisations look to the Commission for inspiration – both in terms of ideas and the considerable financial resources the Commission devotes to them in the exercise of their own activities.

Developing EU foreign policy capabilities

The 1980s saw the growth of the EU as an international actor with a consequent expansion of the foreign policy-making capabilities of the Commission and, of course, an expansion of the external delegation network, notably new delegations in the Mediterranean, Asia and Latin America, reflecting the Iberian enlargement of 1986. In political cooperation (EPC, the fore-runner of CFSP), Member States were beginning to rely on the Delegations' unique expertise in EC policy, its institutional memory and the fact that the Commission was the only stable element in the fluctuating constellation of troikas. In trade relations, Member State officials had an essential support role to the Commission's negotiators, and they looked to the Commission to solve everyday trade disputes. The conception, implementation and monitoring of development cooperation depended

9) B. Crowe, 'A Common European Foreign Policy After Iraq?', in M. Holland, *Common Foreign and Security Policy: The First Ten Years*, (Continuum: 2004, 2nd edition), and R. Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations*, (London: Atlantic: 2003).

critically on Delegation staff. As for public diplomacy, the ‘mission to explain’ begun in Washington in 1954 was now needed everywhere. The status of the delegations varied greatly, from the missions in ACP countries with their mainly contracted staff and modest political profile, to the Washington delegation, now a fully accredited diplomatic mission.

There were two major areas that were problematic for the Commission, however; the staffing issues involved in the expansion of Commission tasks from development to technical assistance in countries in transition and the issue of diplomatic professionalism. From 1986 onwards Heads of Commission Delegations became intimately involved in sensitive and confidential matters with their Member State colleagues on the spot, but a problem was that despite their professional competence, heads of delegation rarely achieved the full confidence of their EU ambassadorial colleagues. This was not merely a question of diplomats in local posts either mistrusting their Commission colleagues or simply not understanding the changing nature of the EU foreign policy game. The Commission’s overall role in international diplomacy itself was frequently contested. In the early days of EPC in Brussels, the then European Correspondent summed up the almost hostile environment surrounding the Commission’s participation in the foreign policy process:

the foreign policy establishments of all member states, confidently reposing on their long-standing traditions of state diplomacy, were at best inclined to treat the Commission with the high courtesy of condescension.¹⁰

In time, this ‘condescension’ gave way, he added, to what might be termed ‘nervous respect’, largely due to the Commission’s ever-present participation in CFSP and in troikas and the fact that the Commission is legally the formal external representative of the European Community. Through its delegations outside the EU, it had become a focus for policy-making towards the EU in capitals worldwide. But there were a number of internal administrative inconsistencies underlined in a 1982 Commission report on the external competence of the Community drawn up by Adrian Fortescue, a former UK Career diplomat and subsequent Director-General for Justice and Home Affairs. This noted that the Commission had an emergent foreign service whose role and needs were comparable to those of Member State embassies.

After 1989 when the fall of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and the prospect of a new wave of accession states led to a diplomatic

10) S. Nuttall, ‘The Commission: the Struggle for Legitimacy’, in C. Hill, *The Actors in Europe’s Foreign Policy*, (London: Routledge 1996).

expansion unprecedented in the history of foreign services, the Western Economic Summit decision, at President Delors' instigation, to entrust the Commission with the coordination of aid to Poland and Hungary engendered a new phase of Commission expansion. This included its overall workload, its role as technical assistant in the management of peaceful change from command to market economies and the new roles of its delegations. This was the start of a conceptual shift from an External Service purely composed of project managers to an emerging diplomatic service. The resulting agenda for the Commission's External Service was complex. New Delegations were opening at an average of five every year in the 1980's, as the former 'Eastern and Central Europe' began to open up. The Commission needed large numbers of personnel to staff them. By 1988, the Commission's 89 missions in six continents meant the External Service had achieved a truly global presence. The number of Brussels based officials serving in Delegations rose from 165 to 440, while local staff numbers reached 1440.

Thus, by 1990, the establishment of a permanent external service staff and the upgrade to diplomatic status of Commission Delegations had created a qualitatively different service. With most delegations considered full diplomatic missions by their host countries and most of the Heads of Delegation accredited at Head of State rather than foreign minister level, their credentials signed by the President of the Commission, the delegations were a firm feature within the international diplomatic community. Heads of Delegation had the rank and courtesy title of Ambassador, though the Commission was at pains to ensure heads of delegation made no formal claim to ambassadorial status for fear of rousing animosity within Member State foreign services.

In 1993 the Maastricht Treaty (the TEU) created a more precisely defined diplomatic framework than that of the Single European Act. New legal provisions gave political support for the change in the nature of foreign policy governance in the EU:

The diplomatic and consular missions of the Member States and the Commission Delegations in third countries and their representations to international organisations, shall cooperate in ensuring that the common positions and common measures adopted by the Council are complied with and implemented. They shall step up cooperation by exchanging information, carrying out joint assessments and contributing to the implementation of the provisions referred to in article 8c of the Treaty Establishing the European Community.¹¹

11) Treaty on European Union; title V J.6.

To mark the change, in 1993, the Delors Commission shifted responsibility for foreign policy from the EPC unit in the Secretariat General to a new Directorate General, 'DGIA'. Under Director-General Günter Burghardt (later Head of the Commission Delegation in Washington), relations with third countries became more effective and coherent. One of the first managerial innovations was the withdrawal of responsibility for Delegation staff from the Commission's general administration and personnel directorate general, DG IX, and the creation of a Directorate within DG1A responsible for management of the Delegations and their staff within the framework of a 'Unified External Service', created in 1994 and so called because hitherto disparate administrative elements were now brought under one management umbrella. The next logical step was the creation of a unified management structure for the External Service, as the Fortescue Report had advocated.

The year 1996 heralded significant change in the status of the External Service. David Williamson, then Secretary-General of the Commission, produced a key document in 1996 on the professionalisation of this 'unified' External Service. The 'Williamson Report' recognised the need for the Commission to develop a homogeneous body of people willing to serve overseas as part of a life-long diplomatic career. Its key recommendations included the obligation of all officials working in the external relations field to serve abroad and a commitment to a specific career development structure involving alternate spells abroad and in head office and professional (including diplomatic) training. Staff had now to recognise that their future advancement depended on their willingness to be mobile. Reflecting this new level of interest in the External Service, the Santer Commission produced new policy documents in the form of 'communications' to the Council and Parliament every year. The communications covered all aspects of External Service management and development, including its role, priorities and resources and substantial modifications to the Delegation network and its operations.

Meanwhile, outside the Commission think tanks and academics were discussing the Commission's potential diplomatic profile. In the discussions in the IGC of 1996 the Belgians actually proposed that the Member States' diplomatic resources should be fully utilised in a joint approach with the Commission acting as a catalyst and coordinator. But their proposal was to no avail. The Treaty of Amsterdam did not amend the Maastricht text. But, it did strengthen CFSP by creating the post of High Representative and creating the ESDP, which put crisis management, conflict prevention and security issues formally on the EU agenda. The Commission had long worked in all the new areas, though responsibilities were scattered not only throughout the Relex family, but also throughout the Commission. A new CFSP directorate was created in DGIA, (now renamed 'DG RELEX'). Commission

Delegations became involved with HR Solana's numerous missions around the world, sending him the political reports hitherto reserved for Commissioners, and playing an important support role for him and the various EU Special Envoys increasingly appointed by the Council.

The European Parliament also passed an important resolution in 2000, proposing the establishment of a common European diplomacy. This included a call for a new College of European diplomacy to train professionals from both the EU institutions and Member States in both Community policies and diplomatic methods, enhanced diplomatic training provision for Commission Delegation staff, turning the Commission's Delegations into Community Delegations accountable to Council and Parliament and turning the External Service into 'a professional, permanent Community Diplomatic Service'.¹²

Post 2000: Nice, the Prodi Commission and Management Reform

When the Prodi Commission took office in 1999 a main priority was overall reform of the Commission's management systems. It had been a bleak time for the Commission and there needed to be clear evidence of commitment to modernisation. The consequent ambitious transformation of management culture across the Commission involved the first real overhaul of resource management the Commission had ever seen. The Commission immediately rationalised the central services with the result that the new Directorates-General RELEX and Trade were housed in one building with their Commissioners and could focus, in principle, on coordinating policy and programming in their respective areas. A new DG, EuropeAid, was created to manage external aid and technical assistance. Before long, some of its key staff moved to the delegations, as the Commission began a radical programme aimed at improving the quality and delivery of aid and technical assistance programmes and embarked on a far-reaching adjustment of responsibilities between headquarters and the delegations known as 'deconcentration'.¹³ Significantly, as Member States everywhere were reducing staff in embassies, the Commission was thus expanding its resources in delegations. Over time there was a major redeployment of staff from headquarters to the 76

12) European Parliament 'Galeote Report', EP Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy 'Report on a Common Community Diplomacy' (2000/2006 [INI], A5-0210/2000).

13) See 'The Development of the 'External Service'' (COM (2001) 381 of 3 July 2001). It is worth noting that deconcentration had already taken place to delegations in countries covered by the PHARE programme in 1998.

Delegations in developing countries, which receive via the EU countries more than half the total aid given by the international community. In addition, new Delegations opened in Malaysia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Cambodia, Laos, Nepal and Paraguay and greater use was made of contracted specialists placed in Delegation offices.

The new policies had a profound effect on staff. Heads of Delegation with little or no resource management experience found themselves charged overnight with the implications of full deconcentration of responsibility for implementation of assistance programmes to the field and at the same time, the delegations were increasingly tasked with foreign policy management in addition to their traditional assistance role. By 2005, work on the coherence and efficiency of external relations management structures and policy-making was well underway and a major effort was made to convert the rudimentary training of external service staff into a comprehensive programme of training for all aspects of external relations and diplomacy.

An EU Minister for Foreign Affairs and EEAS: the impact on the Commission

When Javier Solana becomes EU Minister for foreign affairs and takes over the existing mandate of the Commissioner for external relations (until November 2004 Chris Patten and, since then, Benita Ferro-Waldner) he will represent the Union at the appropriate level, while Heads of EU Delegations will provide the same function in states to which they are accredited. However, the Constitution adds intriguingly that 'the Commission will ensure the Union's external representation with the exception of the CFSP, and other cases provided for in the treaty' (e.g. the Euro). Presumably, therefore, in matters where competence is mixed, representation in the field will be undertaken by the Commission Head of Delegation and the Presidency ambassador – where one exists. Importantly, however, the emphasis is on a coordinated approach.

The new Vice-President will also have a joint service, composed of staff currently working in the Commission, the European Council secretariat and national diplomatic services in the Member States. The Commission's Delegations will therefore add to current tasks a lead role in implementing the CFSP itself and its coordination with all other aspects of EU policy. If the Delegations also replace the rotating EU presidency in the host country and as such become responsible for coordination with Member State embassies, this would involve far-reaching changes in the political role and management culture of the External Service, effectively transforming it into a foreign

service of the EU as a whole and posing fundamental questions for the role of national foreign ministries, embassies and diplomatic staff.

In the light of this, what are the implications of these developments for the management of EU external relations in the Commission? Clearly, there are no foregone conclusions as to how these new arrangements will translate into practice and there are many competing views regarding the nature of the resulting EU competences and how they will be reflected in institutional structures. To take one example, it might be argued that consular affairs could, in time, become a EU responsibility on the grounds that the Schengen arrangements make purely national visa arrangements in the EU meaningless. Consequently, there might well be room for a European consular and visa policy – even an agency – and a system based on integrated national consular administrations, at home and abroad. And as visa matters and legal proposals in the area are increasingly the subject of Commission-led discussions, it would make sense to view the Commission (or a Commission run agency) and the new EU delegations as a suitable focus and locus for the delivery of visa policy and, indeed, visas themselves. There is also logic in the idea of an EU consular service dispensing with national visa delivery services altogether and thus simplifying, even reducing, the staffing needed in consular departments of foreign ministries, interior ministries and embassies abroad. Such a development would concern these ministries at headquarters and in the national embassies, just as they are concerns of the RELEX family of DGs and the Commission delegations.

The potential consequences of the proposed arrangements are numerous but barely understood outside the EU, where confusion as to which institution represents which interest is still frequently underlined. Solana, in his new role, is likely to bring with him his existing key staff from the Council and the creation of an EU Foreign Minister and a common EEAS indicate that the chances are good for making EU foreign policy more professional and consistent, and relations with its partners more stable and predictable. At the same time, there are apprehensions as to the effect that the new Service will have on the current structure and organisation of the RELEX services and on foreign ministries in Member States. Setting these uncertainties aside, not surprisingly, the Commission has welcomed these developments. Yet, many in the Commission fear that the Commission's RELEX family and External Service may be relegated to trade and external aid administration, with Member States and the Council providing the (political) heads of EU Delegations and the Commission retaining Counsellor posts with specific technical (first pillar) competence. Thus, whatever happens to the RELEX Services in Brussels, the Commission's Delegations are concerned. As they cease to exist in their present form, evolving into Union Delegations, their staff provided from the European External Action Service, they could be

divided into a political section headed by an ambassador representing the European Union, with overall responsibility for EU policy and for the coordination of Member State embassies in the host country, reflecting Solana's CFSP role. The political top jobs may not go to Commission staff.

But in 2005 it is early days to predict precisely the future patterns of roles and relationships. Preparatory discussions in COREPER have led to many issues on which Member States need to reflect further, and where divergences of view are already emerging. Until the Convention is ratified, it is likely that a twinned system will reflect the double-hatted duties of the foreign minister. The future pattern is likely to be a co-located joint service based on the existing Commission services and delegations, the Council services and Member State diplomats on secondment. In terms of representation, the model might be similar to the decision-making process for trade issues, where the trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson speaks and negotiates on behalf of the Union under a mandate from the Council. On this model, where the Foreign Affairs Council agrees a common policy, the EU Foreign Minister would be the policy advocate and simultaneously responsible for implementation. Just as Mandelson speaks on trade on a mandate from the Council and Solana represents the Union in the Quartet on the Middle East, so could all future foreign representation be covered. Heads of Commission Delegations (rebaptised EU Delegations) would play a similar role at their level abroad. True, as first pillar purists might fear, this could mean that the Foreign Minister will gain responsibility for at least part of EC/Commission external competences, thus obliging the Commission and the Council to review current first and second pillar external relations instruments and procedures – not only in terms of policy-making staff but also in terms of the practical (and financial) management of policy. The legal niceties involved in the conflicting management arrangements in first and second pillar business actually structure financial and personnel resources.

The EEAS and foreign ministries

What will be the impact on Member State foreign ministries? The picture poses equally challenging questions. Attitudes within foreign ministries undoubtedly differ. Some states will want to keep the new EEAS weak, in order to avoid competition with national foreign ministries. This could be achieved by keeping the existing structures loosely coordinated, with the only change being the appointment of a foreign minister. However, it is interesting to see that Member States have begun to jockey for positions in whatever structures of external representation emerges through the EEAS. In a speech

to French ambassadors gathered in Paris in 2004, Foreign Minister (and former Commissioner) Barnier opined that:

en mutualisant leurs actions et leurs initiatives, et d'abord dans nos réseaux consulaires, tous les pays européens se donnent une capacité d'intervention bien supérieure à leurs contributions nationales isolées....la frontière entre l'interne et l'externe n'a plus guère de sens....la mise en place d'un service diplomatique européen ne rend que plus urgente notre préparation.....et l'exigence, pour vous,.....de renforcer vos relations de travail sur le terrain avec les délégués de la Commission Européenne.¹⁴

But the changing character and organisation of national diplomatic systems turns on developments at two interlinked levels. The first relates to the organisation of the ministry at the centre and its relationships with other parts of the governmental structure. The second level comprises the patterns of diplomatic representation that the ministry maintains in pursuit of its overall objectives. Looking at the first of these, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the development of the EEAS will do anything other than reinforce the emphasis placed on the importance of coordination within Member State international policy processes. This has two key foci: the relationship with other departments which are increasingly involved in managing their own European (and international) diplomacy, and with central coordinating units such as those located in prime ministerial offices. As John Dickie's study of UK foreign policy-making argues, the Foreign Office has to engage in a continual process of selling its value as a key component in the management of European policy to sometimes-sceptical 'domestic' departments.¹⁵

Furthermore, it seems inevitable that the development of the EEAS will serve to enhance the intense introspection that all Member State foreign ministries have engaged in over the last decade or so. Although not an EU Member State, the proposition that the Norwegian foreign ministry might be considerably scaled down and relocated as a 'Bureau of Foreign Affairs' within the prime minister's office, coordinating the external affairs section of each ministry, might well appeal to some Member States in the changing EU diplomatic environment.¹⁶

14) M. Barnier, quoted in *Le Figaro*, 27 August 2004.

15) J. Dickie, *The New Mandarins: How British Foreign Policy Works*, (London: Tauris, 2004), p. 230.

16) J. Moses and T. Knutsen, 'Globalization and the Reorganization of Foreign Affairs' Ministries, *Clingendael Discussion Papers in Diplomacy*, No 80, (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 2002).

It is, of course the case that foreign ministries, as with all bureaucratic entities, are repositories of vested interests and will not necessarily respond positively to changes that might flow logically from this new environment. However, there are real and legitimate human resource implications for diplomatic services implicit in the changes set out in the Constitution, ones on which Member State diplomatic services are currently reflecting. For example, whilst the proposed EEAS offers the prospect of additional postings and career development, how would secondment of a national diplomat to an EU delegation affect career patterns within the home diplomatic service? What kind of training would the new structures demand and who should provide it – the much discussed, but yet to be established, European Diplomatic Academy? Failure to deal with such issues could have a major impact on the success of any arrangements associated with the EEAS.

The second level of concern relates to patterns of representation – another area to which all diplomatic services have devoted much attention in recent years. To a considerable degree, this reflects the impact of resource constraints combined with the opportunities for new modes of representation offered by the communications and information technology revolution. Experiments in various forms of representation are as familiar in Europe as outside it and there has, for example, been much discussion of co-location of missions. The relative lack of success of such experiments combined with some misapprehension as to what is actually involved (sharing premises rather than ‘shared representation’) invites caution. What is not in doubt, however, is the enhanced scope – underwritten by treaty requirements – for enhanced cooperation between Member State missions and the Delegations. There is now a recognisable and distinct European interest, and this needs to be articulated, defended and advocated abroad – a task that Member States and the Commission share. This is underscored by the fact that as competence in many economic, social and political areas has shifted from the national to the EU arena, so external representation of the resulting interests has evolved, enhancing the Commission’s role. Moreover, diplomatic responsibilities increasingly cut across the pillars. CFSP and ESDP often require the addition of first pillar policies and thus a high degree of Commission involvement in a variety of areas such as humanitarian aid, nuclear issues, terrorism and sanctions.

Of course, the Presidency has hitherto been responsible for taking the lead in second pillar matters, but there is a complicating factor here. First, most of the time, and even more so in a Europe of twenty-five or more Member States, the majority of presidencies simply do not have a presence in most capitals around the world, so presidency tasks fall to others. Consider, therefore, the difficulty of EU states not represented in contributing to informed EU policy-making. There is unevenness in the burden of

coordinating work which falls on the larger Member States. In Rangoon, for example, there are four EU Member State missions: France, Germany, the UK and Italy. This places a great strain on them as they are required to undertake an extensive coordination role even when not holding the presidency. Being able to hand over this work to an EU delegation would come as a considerable relief, quite apart from ending the disadvantage of the 'presidency' role in that country hardly ever falling to the 'presidency country'.

What is most likely to develop in this context is a 'variable geometry' of representation as Member States refashion their networks of representation influenced by a combination of international involvement, perceptions of need and the dictates of diminishing resources. Undoubtedly, some may conclude that the cost of 25 separate diplomatic services maintaining posts around the world bears no relation to the added value that they confer as compared to single EU embassies with shared consular facilities and pooled administrative and training facilities. One MEP has even argued that in her country (the Netherlands), a quarter of the 150 embassies and consulates could be dispensed with.¹⁷ These arguments are familiar, not least from the above-mentioned European Parliament resolution of September 2000 advocating improved coordination and sharing of facilities between Commission delegations and Member State missions.¹⁸

Conclusion

Three evolutionary strands characterise the responses of Member State diplomatic systems to the environments in which they operate: that relating to the development of the European project itself; the responses of the state to the pressures associated with globalisation and regionalisation and, thirdly, the adaptive strategies adopted by specific foreign ministries. The Commission's own modes of external relations' management have been determined by pragmatic adaptation in response to internally and externally driven change. The emergence of the EEAS represents a significant step in two interlinked evolutionary processes in foreign policy management: in

17) *Telegraaf* 2004. 'Kwart van Nederlandse ambassades kan weg' 1st Nov. 2004, interview with MEP Lousewies van der Laan.

18) G. Galeote Quecedo and B. Becerril Atienza, 'Towards a common European diplomacy? Analysis of the European Parliament resolution on establishing a common diplomacy', Madrid, Instituto de Estudios Europeas, Universidad San Pablo-CEU, 2001.

Brussels on the one hand and in Member State capitals on the other. Indeed, the two are inextricably entwined.

Inevitably, the shape of things to come is hazy, but it is possible to detect the contours of the immediate to medium term landscape.¹⁹ First, EU Member States will want to maintain some form of international presence and, therefore the machinery to sustain this. Second, they will do so in varying degrees and forms. Variable geometry in terms of representational networks will become more apparent and these will include a continuing redefinition of what needs to be done where and by whom. Thus for some, especially smaller Member States, EU Delegations will offer attractive opportunities to rationalise representation and even for large states with extensive diplomatic presence, the possibility of transferring the task of coordination associated with the presidency to Delegations might be welcomed.

Beyond this, however, there is the real prospect of specific functions being transferred to the European level – such as consular affairs and, conceivably in the future, international aid. The limits to such processes will be found in the extent to which cooperative arrangements are viewed as cutting across the perceived requirements of an unambiguous national presence in specific locations – for purposes of public and commercial diplomacy, for example. A third consequence of the emerging environment will be to alter the career landscape for EU Member State diplomats. The most sought after posts in foreign services remain the important ambassadorial posts, rather than high-level functions in the Ministry. Now that CFSP and ESDP have become core business for foreign ministry staff, whether at home or serving abroad, their permanent partners in policy-making are the diplomats from other Member States and Commission officials. Consequently, the proposed External Action Service is set to offer diplomats additional potential for postings and career development. But as noted earlier, this poses human resource issues in terms of career structures and training needs.

If EU foreign policy-making is at a cross-roads, a key question is whether there exists a zero-sum relationship between Member State foreign ministries and their 35,000 staff on the one hand and the more than five thousand

19) Alternative views are already proliferating. See G. Grevi, D. Manca, and G. Quille, 'The EU Foreign Minister: Beyond Double-Hatting', and A. Maurer, and A. Reichel, 'A Three-Phase Plan for the European External Action Service', *The International Spectator*, Vol. XI, No. 1, Jan-March 2005. Also G. Grevi and F. Cameron, Towards an EU Foreign Service, EPC (Brussels) Issue Paper No. 29, and D. Spence, 'The Commission's External Service', in D. Spence (ed.), *The European Commission*, (Harper, 2005).

Commission staff involved in external relations on the other. How to establish appropriate management structures for the EEAS and the shape of future relations between the EEAS and national diplomatic services are key issues. The sharing of representational roles between Commission Delegations, soon to be called Union Delegations, and Member State embassies, most of which are not present in all the countries in which the Commission has delegations, needs to be defined. Indeed, this issue alone poses many questions about the advantages of sharing embassy facilities or of seconding national diplomats to Union delegations to play both national and European roles. The emergence of an intelligent synthesis between the proprietary attitudes to foreign policy-making of Member State foreign services on the one hand and the supranational leanings of the Commission on the other will be crucial for the future of both national and European diplomatic structures as they redefine their roles and relationships.

APPENDIX 1

‘FOREIGN MINISTRIES AT HOME AND ABROAD’ – EXPLANATORY NOTES

Sources:

The data are from varying years between 2000 and 2005, though figures for Poland are from 1998, and figures for the number of ‘local staff’ for Ireland and Japan are from 1999. Data are derived from several sources including: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) websites and annual reports, Statistical Yearbooks, written and oral replies from MFAs, OECD Sigma reports, European Council document 1731/6/00 (Solana report to the European Council at Evian). Data for US diplomatic staff are from testimonies by senior State Department officials Joseph E. Kelley at the US General Accounting Office on 6 April 1995 and by Grant S. Green Jr. in Congress on 1 May 2002.

Definitions:

The ‘number of embassies’ includes states’ permanent missions, delegations and representations to international organisations, as well as High Commissions (the name for embassies of the United Kingdom in Commonwealth countries).

Roving Ambassadors are ambassadors that perform their duties abroad, but are based in their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Roving ambassadors are classed as Non-resident Ambassadors and are not counted as ‘embassies’, though they are included in overall ‘staff’ figures.

The number of consulates does not include honorary consulates, consular agencies and trade representations (e.g. to Taiwan), though it is possible that some overall figures include such representations.

Consular departments within embassies are considered part of the embassy and not counted separately.

Caveats:

The ‘local staff’ and ‘MFA staff and local staff total’ figures are not precise, because national figures for ‘local staff’ are either missing (denoted with an

asterisk) or unreliable. An approximate figure for total 'local staff' could be 47.766 and an approximate figure for 'MFA and local staff total' could be 103.430, but these figures are guesstimates.

High consular representation of some member states is partly attributable to specific national inward immigration issues.

Efforts were made to verify that MFAs used the above-mentioned definitions when providing their figures, but this was not always possible. Minor fluctuations in data due to different definitions must therefore be taken into account.

Some member states include trade and development functions in their MFA, while others have separate ministries.

Some include culture and trade promotion officers as embassy/consular staff, while others do not.

European Commission representations (information offices) in the EU are not included, since they do not provide the same diplomatic functions as Commission Delegations outside the EU. Comparisons between the number of Commission Delegations 'abroad' (i.e. outside the EU) and Member State embassies must take this into account. For example, whereas Malta has only eighteen bilateral embassies world wide, the UK has twenty-four within the EU alone.

Commission staff figures include staff in DGs RELEX, DEV, TRADE, AIDCO AND ECHO.

FOREIGN MINISTRIES AND COMMISSION DELEGATIONS AT HOME AND ABROAD						
	MFA Staff Total	MFA Staff in Capital	MFA Staff in Embassies	Local Staff	MFA Staff and Local Staff Total	Number of Embassies
						Number of Consulates
Austria	1,314	561	753	620	1,934	86
Belgium	1,800	1,400	400	1,800	3,600	86
Cyprus	250	160	90	290	540	44
Czech Republic	2,200	780	1,420	610	2,810	98
Denmark	1,270	1,000	270	900	2,170	75
Estonia	600	370	230	90	690	36
Finland	2,590	950	1,640	970	3,560	83
France	9,400	4,000	5,400	14,300	23,700	182
Germany	6,700	2,200	4,500	4,800	11,500	157
Greece	2,500	1,000	1,500	320	2,820	87
Hungary	2,000	1,000	1,000	*	*	82
Italy	5,300	2,500	2,800	2,250	7,550	130
Ireland	980	490	490	276	1,256	43
Latvia	640	360	280	80	720	60
Lithuania	620	340	280	250	870	42
Luxembourg	180	90	90	160	340	24
Malta	200	120	80	*	*	18
Netherlands	3,210	1,970	1,240	1,580	4,790	126
Portugal	950	400	550	1,840	2,790	76
Poland	1,800	650	1,150	*	*	106
Slovenia	560	310	250	230	790	67
Slovakia	750	500	250	*	*	72
Spain	2,500	1,500	1,000	3,200	5,700	136
Sweden	1,450	900	550	1,000	2,450	91
United Kingdom	5,900	3,500	2,400	10,000	15,900	163
EU 25	55,664	27,051	28,613	47,766	103,430	2170
Commission	3,250	2,260	990	3,765	7,015	123
Council Secretariat	100	80	20	0	100	2
For comparison:						
US	44,500	25,600	18,900	18,900	63,400	170
Japan	5,290	2,070	3,220	4,894	10,184	139

Note that Commission figures include DGs Relex, Trade, Dev, Aidco and Echo