

## Securing Europe and its Neighbours

By John Edwin Mroz



Europe's policy makers currently face two key challenges: finding new methods for governments to work better together, and

identifying new ways for businesses and civil society to protect the continent's citizens, infrastructure and economies from the threat of terrorism. The terrorist attacks in Madrid on 11 March 2004 and London on 7 July 2005 were vivid reminders that not enough has been done.

In many ways, the European Union's response to these terrorist attacks has been markedly multifarious in approach, reflecting the current structure of the Union and the limitations of policy integration when it comes to the more sensitive issues of defence and security. The looming question is one of how European integration can proceed while ensuring that a more effective European security policy is developed.

I was in London immediately before and after the July underground and bus bombings. A visit to Brussels several days after the London attacks was particularly revealing. There was an extraordinary meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council of the European Union on 13 July to discuss the post-London strategy. The EU Interior Ministers also held talks with high-level US Homeland Security officials. Participants of both meetings told me that amidst an unusually heavy atmosphere, agreement was reached to significantly accelerate the implementation of new policies to better protect citizens and infrastructure – many of which had been under discussion since 9/11 or Madrid but had yet to be adopted and moved forward. The new British Presidency of the EU Council has made

it clear that a lot will be happening before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January.

After years of indecision on the matter, the need for a concerted European security approach has finally been brought to the fore. The European Union is and should be the natural 'bearer' of policies to support such a harmonised collaborative approach. The question remains, however, as to whether the Member States are unified enough in their approach for a common policy to emerge and whether there are the prerequisites for sufficient trust for cooperation to take place at all levels, including intelligence-sharing. There is also the question of what instruments the EU has at its disposal to deal with such problems and whether these can be effective.

As the EU becomes both a regional and global actor, it will have to deal more effectively with international problems such as cross-border terrorism. The distinction between internal security and external security is dissipating. One consequence is the need to tackle the problem of international terrorism by better protecting Europe's borders, especially if the Union wishes to maintain and promote freedom of movement *within* its borders. Unfortunately, this implies harsher border regimes with the EU's neighbours, just at a time when the EU is seeking to reach out to these very neighbours in support of an integrative approach to stabilisation and development in a region too often described as a potentially threatening arc of political and security uncertainty. Harsher border regimes would hardly be a carrot to these countries for closer cooperation, a cooperation that is paradoxically vitally necessary if these same external EU borders are to be secured. Borders, it has been shown, cannot be properly managed by one side alone.

In addition, measures that might further widen the socio-economic gap for the EU's outer frontiers can only contradict the EU's security interests. True partnerships are therefore required, not only between Member States, but also between the EU and its direct neighbours. An integrated approach to border management, which incorporates principles of trade facilitation (movement of goods as well as people), alongside border control, and which also supports socio-economic convergence through border region cooperation is the key.

The EU has developed fledgling policies and mechanisms in this vein for Southeast Europe's borders, which might, if optimally developed, serve as a template not only for EU's outer borders but also for the management of borders throughout the 'EU neighbourhood'. Finally, bringing in the business community can help provide the newest technologies to assist in better security and can also lead to a public-private cost-share in terms of the financial burden of securing Europe's borders. The EastWest Institute's Centre for Border Cooperation and the EWI Consortium on Security and Technology, both based in Brussels, are examples of tools that can advance both of these goals.

### **The European Security Strategy and its regional dimension**

The European Union has had a distinct approach to security since cooperation between the Member States was strengthened in the 1970s in the face of the threat of terrorism by such groups as the Red Brigades in Italy or the Bader-Meinhof Group in Germany. Exchange of information and the working out of complementary strategies between Member States were set early on as the main objectives.

The rapid, albeit at times painful, development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and cooperation in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) in the 1990s, taken together with the European Union's ongoing process of integration and enlargement, has given the EU the capabilities of a global actor.

The European Security Strategy constitutes the first clear articulation of the EU's security interests. It defines the key threats facing the EU, and outlines the EU's policy objectives in countering these threats. The European Security Strategy was written partly in response to the tragic events of September 11, 2001 in the United States, and it therefore reflects recent security thinking.

In the strategy, traditional post-Cold War threats such as regional instability are complemented by a focus on how to counter the threat of terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organised crime. Furthermore, the strategy emphasises the need to "promote a ring of well-governed countries" around the European Union in order to increase security, bringing external policy together with security policy.

This promotion of a ring of well-governed countries around the EU is carried out through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The ENP is an important new policy, sharing the benefits of European integration with the neighbours of the enlarged European Union, through increased cooperation and active engagement. The ENP constitutes the regional dimension of the EU's security strategy, in that a stable and well-governed neighbouring region adds to the security of Europe as a whole.

The EastWest Institute's *European Neighbourhood Initiative* (ENI), which has a special focus on the Eastern Dimension, draws on a range of EWI's programmatic competences and experiences to bridge the new dividing lines that EU enlargement threatens to create in Europe and to maximise the opportunities offered by EU integration processes. Such work focuses on helping the countries of the European Union's new Eastern neighbourhood to take advantage of their EU proximity and to work towards creating a Pan-European Space of Security and Prosperity that will include the European Union and the Russian Federation.

Firstly, we are dealing with the very real danger of a new dividing line between the European Union's "ins" and "outs", in particular the widening socio-economic gap and challenges to free movement of people and goods on the European Union's outer borders. Secondly, we are working to create a new quality of co-operation and partnership between the countries in the Eastern neighbourhood, the European Union and the Russian Federation, leading towards the creation of that "Pan-European Space of Security and Prosperity". Finally, we are utilising opportunities provided by the EU's ENP for accelerating domestic reforms in the countries of the Eastern neighbourhood, as well as for their strengthened sub-regional co-operation.

The EU has drawn up a 10-point plan for relations with Ukraine that now accompanies the Action Plan, a policy move that shows the tailor-made approach of the ENP vis-à-vis each country involved. A tailor-made approach does offer the possibility of combining several policies if they meet the EU's interests. This can be seen in the relationship with Ukraine's neighbour Moldova. The EU has requested Ukraine to play a facilitating role in a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Transdnestrian region.

The new Ukrainian administration under President Yushchenko, in its bid to speed up the integration process for EU membership, has delivered in this regard by increasing its cooperation with the Moldovan government, coordinating a plan for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. This has so far resulted in a common approach by the two Presidents, expressed in a letter that was delivered to Mr Solana by the Moldovan President Voronin during his visit to Brussels on 7 June 2005.

In this letter, the two Presidents ask for EU assistance in establishing international customs controls on the Transdnestrian segment of the Ukrainian-Moldovan state border, as well as for the creation of an effective international monitoring mechanism for this area. Russia's participation is absolutely crucial to any efforts to resolve the Transdnestrian conflict. Romania

too has recently become more vocal about its need to be included. The EU, Russia, Ukraine and actively involved parties in Moldova and Transnistria have an unusual opportunity to work together on creating workable border arrangements and an eventual solution to the conflict.

### **Strengthening the new borders of the European Union**

Free movement is one of the fundamental principles of the EU. Within the EU, borders are withering away and controls at the external borders are being strengthened. With the enlargement of the European Union, its external frontiers moved eastward. The EU shares borders with Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Romania, and Serbia. The new European border has 6.000 km of land borders and 85.000 km of coastline.

During recent years, with the increase in major acts of international terrorism, and with the increase of cross-border flows of illegal goods, of illegal trafficking of people and substances, the question of border management and border regimes has finally come to centre stage. We are faced with a key strategic challenge, which is the question of how to balance the new requisites of security with requisites of facilitation of trade and the transit of people – basically, the requisites of freedom. We are also faced with a challenge of trying to develop a common vision on how to balance these requisites. We should also not forget that trade and people-to-people contacts are a basis for socio-economic convergence, and socio-economic development itself will underpin European security.

The recent enlargement of the European Union has placed a focus on securing the new external borders of the Union. The EU has sought a balance in preserving the integrity of the common, free travel area provided by Schengen cooperation, and the need to tackle the threats of terrorism and illegal migration into the EU. In preparation for this enlargement, the EU invested in equipment and training for border guards from the 10 new Member States, and in

the coordination of joint operations aimed at guaranteeing an equal level of border control. After enlargement, some of these countries are now responsible for the protection of EU's external borders. The financial burden that this implies needs to be better shared within the EU. A welcome step was taken in November 2003 when the Council decided to create an external borders agency.

In April 2005, Warsaw was chosen to be the headquarters of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States, or FRONTEX. This agency is meant to coordinate and assist the activities of national border guard services of those Member States that represent the external borders of the EU in implementing the Schengen acquis on control of persons at the external borders. Unfortunately, very little has been done to date. Moreover, there is an important problem with how FRONTEX has been shaped by policy-makers and politicians.

While this will go some way to harmonize and hopefully increase the efficiency of the management of these external borders, the fact that customs authorities have not been engaged in the development of FRONTEX, and will not play any direct role in FRONTEX at least for an initial period, raises concerns about the the agency's ability to support an 'integrated' approach to border management. Customs and border policing cooperation is at the heart of a properly integrated border management strategy and customs authorities bring an important alternative perspective to border management, in large part focused on the facilitation of trade. It will be vital for the EU to pursue such integrated approaches to border management if broader European integration is to be achieved whilst still ensuring a high level of security.

### **Partnering with neighbours**

"Because terrorism is a global phenomenon, we need a global response" said Javier Solana at the Second Annual Worldwide Security Conference,

organised by the EastWest Institute and the World Customs Organisation in February 2005. He was explaining the need for partnerships with key actors and organisations, as well as the development of a comprehensive strategy to tackle terrorism. For Europe, a strong partnership with its neighbours, in particular Russia, is crucial in tackling international terrorism. Nowadays, it is increasingly difficult to make a distinction between internal security and external security.

The EU's common strategies towards Russia include a Justice and Home Affairs dimension. For instance, at the EU-Russia Summit in Moscow on 10 May 2005, a single package of road maps for the creation of four Common Spaces was adopted. The road map for a Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice includes cooperation on border issues. If managed properly, operational cooperation between the EU and Russia in the framework of FRONTEX could enhance good relations.

Russia's relations with Europe have always been complicated to manage and this will not change following major elections on the continent this autumn. Critical issues at the heart of the security relationship between Russia and Europe are energy security, the fight against terrorism, and relations with Russia's neighbours from the former Soviet Union.

President Putin has helped the West in the fight against terrorism and is committed to tackling the fundamentals that will assure social stability and economic viability, as the state comes to grips with issues of ownership and resources, equitable taxation and the need to maintain some distance between big business and politicians. Russia is taking the lead in crafting a new public-private partnership in fighting terrorism as part of its upcoming G8 Presidency - an important initiative that was acknowledged in the Glen Eagles Summit papers.

Issues of counter-terrorism and energy security are those areas where the Russian Federation has much to offer in terms of its resources,

experience and new ideas. The EastWest Institute is working with both the EU and Russia to improve cooperation between the two actors in these fields. At our Third Worldwide Security Conference in February 2006, one day of the conference will be devoted to Russia's role in the world as a security actor and will be chaired by Russian officials.

More attention needs to be given to the common neighbourhood of Russia and the EU. The Ukrainian elections did cause tensions between Russia and Ukraine as well as difficulties in EU-Russian relations over the electoral process that led to the coming to power of Viktor Yushchenko. EWI and others have been stressing the need to promote greater confidence and stability through an intensified schedule of higher level and expert meetings to break down stereotypes and biases, build confidence and move the agenda forward in a practical way. The issues we are focusing on include border cooperation as well as "frozen conflicts".

### **Bringing in the private sector**

Terrorism is an asymmetric threat. It requires an asymmetric response. Governments alone cannot do the job. Business and civil society must be included. The European Commission is developing a long overdue European Security Research Programme (ESRP) to do just that. It is now in the second-year of its preparatory phase (Preparatory Action for Security Research – PASR), funding selected projects that have to define both the required technological solutions and the supporting operational concepts. Particular attention is given to security of the EU's borders.

One of the main conclusions that emerged from our Second Annual Worldwide Security Conference in Brussels was the existence of an enormously wide gap between private and public sectors. While high-level EU decision-makers called for stronger efforts to be made by the private sector, business representatives

clearly stated their difficulties in communicating with European government officials and EU regulators due to slow procedures in policy development. Implementation of regulations can take several years, while new technologies continue to progress, and furthermore, monitoring of the implementation of security policy is lacking. Hence, there is a strong need for better cooperation and coordination between public and private sectors.

Jonathan Faull, Director General for Justice, Freedom and Security in the European Commission, has a very important impact on the way we move forward. We are committed to strengthening and making more effective the fledgling partnerships that already exist between governments and EU institutions on the one hand, and large and small-scale leading technology companies on the other. I fully agree with Mr Faull when he says that the struggle against terror in the European Union will succeed only if the private sector and governmental bodies work closely together, and that this can only be done effectively if private and public actors come together to set the right legislative and regulatory framework and then ensure that this framework is kept up to date and that rules are properly enforced.

Representatives from both sectors challenged the conference organisers last February to find more effective ways to forge better public-private partnerships in the area of security, justice & home affairs. One of our major responses has been the creation of a *Consortium on Security and Technology*.

The Consortium provides a forum through which public-private partnerships in the field of civil protection can be built, thereby developing a more consolidated European technology market. It includes both European as well as US companies. Its members' businesses are global, Europe-wide as well as nationally-based companies from France and Germany to Romania and Russia.

The Consortium focuses on various issues of civil protection, among them the supply chain and border security. This work is meant to bring together the public and the private sectors around the issue of enhancing citizens' security, actively including different processes such as the actors involved in the EU's development towards an ESRP, but also bringing in expertise from the Member States, Eastern European countries, NATO, WCO, and many others. In so doing, we are working to resolve some key challenges: how can the private sector, with more than 80% of the world's critical infrastructure in its hands, become a more effective partner with governments? How can IT-infrastructures linking many critical infrastructures together improve coordination between sectors in the protection of this infrastructure?

## Conclusion

European institutions, both public and private, are doing a great deal to meet the major security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But they are working largely independently of one another. We will experience graver acts of terrorism than the ones we have been seen in London, Madrid, New York or Moscow. Our ability to limit their scope and provide maximum security for our citizens requires a Kierkegaardian leap of faith by governments, the private sector and citizens alike to cross old boundaries and cooperate in new ways with new partners.

We can and will do a better job of protecting Europe's citizens, infrastructure and economy. Until now, security against terrorism has been looked at in a compartmentalised way, rather than as a whole. From borders to partnerships, Europe needs to think more boldly about how security can better be provided through new ways of cooperation. Thinking out of the box is always useful, but today it is more than that: it is essential. Many of the necessary tools are already in place; they only need to be connected and expanded.

Action begins with understanding. The best hope we have for being better able to provide security for Europe's citizens is to take that leap of faith: build new links between issues, develop unthinkable partnerships and build new approaches based on what we now have in place.

*John Edwin Mroz is President and CEO of the EastWest Institute.*