4

German and Polish Roles and the CSDP

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse German and Polish roles towards CSDP, taking into account each country’s unique strategic culture. First, this chapter seeks to highlight any changes that have occurred in Polish and German policy-makers’ roles in relation to security and defence issues in general and CSDP in particular from 1999 to July 2011. Second, it will analyse the reasons behind these changes as well as distinguishing the reasons for continuity in other areas. Third, it will ascertain if there have been any expectation gaps between the role German and Polish policy-makers want to play and the role they have actually played.

This chapter will be separated into three sections. The first will provide a short overview of the development of the military side of CSDP. This will set the context in which to examine German and Polish reactions and contributions to CSDP in the second section along with an analysis of their roles. In the final section any limiting or enabling factors to the roles that each country wants to play will be highlighted, including military capabilities, status vis-à-vis the EU and international expectations. This chapter will emphasise that these factors have to some extent, hindered Germany’s and Poland’s policy-makers’ ability to fulfil their country’s roles resulting from (a) the military transformation process that both countries are undertaking with limited defence budgets (b) Poland’s candidate status until 2004, which limited its role and (c) Germany’s continuing constraint on the use of force. These hindrances have impacted upon the fulfilment of international expectations as Germany’s and Poland’s policy-makers’ ‘actorness’ has been restricted.
The development of CSDP

The creation of CSDP in 1999 and its subsequent development has been a remarkable achievement in the history of EU integration. Defence was originally one step too far, particularly as it is bound up with national sovereignty. Whilst the re-unification of Germany, an increased EU role in international trade following the completion of the single market and the EU’s collective failure to deal with the break-up of Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1990s underpinned the creation of CFSP under the second pillar of the Maastricht Treaty, defence was still contested. The subsequent Amsterdam Treaty (1997) also failed to deal with defence. Why did a previously contested subject appear on the EU’s agenda at the end of the 1990s and how have the controversies concerning defence among the Member States affected the development of CSDP? While there is no room to embark upon a full, detailed analysis of CSDP, this section will highlight some of the major developments, achievements and problems in the military aspect of CSDP in order to act as a basis for the discussion on Germany’s and Poland’s roles.

Why CSDP?

The rationale for CSDP gathered momentum throughout the 1990s as the EU Member States became aware of their ineptitude to cope with the ongoing crises in the break-up of the former Yugoslavia. Following the end of the Cold War, it also became clear that US security interests were no longer focused on the European continent as the USSR ceased to become the centre of the US’ threat perception. This was highlighted by American calls for the Europeans to take up their share of the burden and reflected a European desire to become responsible for their security in their own back yard. This intermeshed with the EU’s growing importance on the international stage and a desire for the EU to become a global security actor (Howorth 2007: 56–57).

These external and internal impetuses led the leaders of the two major EU military powers, the UK and France, to try to broaden the ‘security’ aspect within CFSP. The beginnings of discussions on European defence took place at the informal EU summit at Pörtschach, Austria (24 and 25 October 1998). Here, Tony Blair underlined that Europe should play a stronger security and defence role, which should be complementary to NATO (see Oakes 2000: 10–13). Pörtschach provided the basis for the 1998 Anglo-Franco summit in St Malo where both countries’ leaders agreed to pursue a European security and defence solution through the EU. This marked a change in both the British position, advocated by