

THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC:  
CURRENT REPRESENTATIONS AND THE  
POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE EEAS

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by

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## ABSTRACT

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The European Union (EU) has been called an experiment in a world system traditionally dominated by nation states and the use of military coercion. Because of its uniqueness, academics have sought new theories in order to understand it. This thesis draws on two of these theories in order to gain an understanding about the driving force behind the proposed European External Action Service (EEAS); the so-called ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ and Normative Power Europe (NPE). The former is agency-centred and draws on understandings about the capability of the EU as an international actor and the impact of both internal and external expectations placed on it, that it does not necessarily have the means to live up to. The latter theory –NPE- is identity centred, and concerns how the EU is understood with a focus on norms and values which it wishes to export to the rest of the world. One of the connecting themes of the two theories is a stress on the need to have effective communication.

Using both a qualitative and quantitative methodology, this thesis aims to understand how the EU is currently represented in the Asia-Pacific and the potential of the EEAS to improve this representation. Ultimately, there are three findings for this thesis. Firstly, how the EU sees itself and its role in the world does not necessarily correlate with outsiders’ perceptions of it. Secondly, part of the confusion and ineffectiveness of the EU to be recognised could be directly related to its confusing multi-representation in third countries. Finally, the EEAS has the ability to greatly improve the way the EU operates and communicates, thus potentially narrowing the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ as well as improving the capability of the EU to be a normative power. However, the vagueness of the EEAS proposals means that steps must be taken to ensure that the EEAS is supported by the other EU actors who will be affected by the new system, as well as ensuring that the proposals are effective in carrying out the goals that it has set out to achieve. This is important if the EU aims to be taken more seriously as an international actor and is to be a force for good in the world. However, caution must be taken against building up the expectations placed on the EEAS too much – history demonstrates that it would be foolish to market the EEAS as a panacea for all of the EU’s problems.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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ACP	African Caribbean and Pacific countries
ASEAN	Association for South East Asia
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CATI	computer-assisted telephone interviewing technique
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
DG	Directorate General
DG E	Directorate General of External and Political Military Affairs
DG JLS	Directorate General for Justice, Freedom, Security
DG RELEX	Directorate General for External Relations
EAC	European Agency for Cooperation
EC	European Community
EC	European Commission
ECB	European Central Bank
ECD	European Commission Delegation
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian aid Office
DG ECFIN	Directorate General Economic and Financial Affairs
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEC	European Economic Community
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
EULEX	EU Rule of Law Mission
EUSR	EU Special Representative
GAERC	General Affairs and External Relations Council
HR	High Representative
HR-FASP	High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy

IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MEP	Minister of the European Parliament
MFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCRE	National Centre for Research on Europe
NPE	Normative Power Europe
PSC	Political and Security Committee
QMV	Qualified Majority Voting
RRF	Rapid Reaction Force
SAP	Stabilization and Association Process
SEA	Single European Act
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UES	Unified External Service
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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## CHAPTER ONE:

### INTRODUCTION

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On 7<sup>th</sup> August 2008 Russia invaded Georgia, leading to a month long war over the South Ossetia region. The response from the neighbouring European Union (EU), an economic and political union which aims to promote stability in the region, was incoherent and lacked a strong, single voice or force for dealing with the crisis, bringing into question the effectiveness of its neighbourhood policy: a policy that aims to promote peaceful integration through democratic and economic reforms. Indeed, there was a clear division between EU Member States about just how best to act in the situation, particularly from Eastern European members who condemned Russia's presence in the region, while countries with close ties with Moscow, such as France and Germany, were reluctant to do so (Benhold, 2008). Indeed, the incident has been claimed to have the equivalent significance for the EU as the events of 11 September 2001 had in America because in its wake the "EU's illusions of emancipation have been rudely shattered and the bloc's capabilities found desperately wanting" (Lobjakas, 2008).

Would having a single head of European Union foreign policy (in essence, an EU foreign minister and an EU foreign ministry with its own embassies) have enabled the EU to speak more coherently in such a crisis, thus giving the EU credibility as an international actor? Nicolas Sarkozy, the French president, and head of the EU's rotating Presidency at the time, believed that it would have. According to Sarkozy, having "a High Representative endowed with a real European diplomatic service" would have helped the EU to deal more efficiently and effectively with Russia's invasion (as cited in Mahony, 2008, n.p.). It is the EU's capability and effectiveness to transpose its stability around the world which is of interest to this thesis.

In economic, trade and monetary terms, the EU today is a major world power. For instance, in 2006, the European Union and its member countries were responsible for

dispensing 57 percent of the world's aid (EU Business, 2.04.2007).<sup>1</sup> It has considerable influence within international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the specialist branches of the United Nations (UN) and at world summits on the environment and development. Its currency, the euro also is now one of the world's dominant currencies. Indeed, because of these capabilities, some commentators have labelled the EU as being a “significant actor” (Reis 2008, p. 164).

Yet, in spite of this, the EU's political weight has until now been largely ignored, leading to the oft-cited description that it is an ‘economic giant but a political dwarf’. Its insignificance was highlighted in the United States National Intelligence Council report, ‘Trends 2025: A World Transformed’, which noted that the EU's strength and role would be even more reduced by the year 2025 (2008, p. 52). This same report labelled the EU a “hobbled giant” (*ibid*). There have been a myriad of reasons postulated as to what sort of political actor the EU is (or what it is not), and why it has been overlooked. Drawing on such discussions, this thesis provides a unique perspective on how the EU is currently represented and perceived in the Asia-Pacific and how this may be improved with the introduction of the Lisbon Treaty, which includes provisions for establishing a European External Action Service (EEAS) and aims to streamline EU decision-making processes as well as make the EU more coherent.

Currently, the EU is represented in its external relations by a number of figures and institutions - the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the rotating Presidency, European Union Special Representatives, the Commission (through a number of its Directorate Generals), the External Relations Commissioner, the European Council of Ministers and Council Secretariat, not to mention its 27 Member States. Indeed, this plethora of external actors has been at the centre of criticisms of EU foreign policy.

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<sup>1</sup> This is outstanding when compared to other countries.

## 1.1 THE STUDY IN CONTEXT

Drawing upon two theoretical understandings of the EU as an international actor – the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ and the EU as a normative power (NPE) - this thesis is divided into two sections, and draws on two case studies - Singapore and New Zealand. The first section (Chapters Six to Eight) is concerned with: ‘What are the current perceptions and representations of the EU in the Asia-Pacific region’? The second section (Chapters Nine and Ten) asks: ‘How will the proposals to introduce the EEAS potentially change the way the EU is represented and perceived in these two countries’?

The agency centred ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ (Hill, 1993) deals with the resources and capabilities of the EU, and was a conception that came about in response to the about to be launched Maastricht Treaty which included a pillared system of the EU, and the separate division of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). A number of concepts and terms are important when understanding the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’. One of the problems of the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ argument lies in the fact that there is an expectation that actors should have state-like qualities (Rosamond, 2005, p. 466) and it is because of this misconception and falsehood that Manners and Whitman (2003, 395) believe that the EU’s actor capability has been unfairly criticised.

The challenge then, is how to conceptualise the EU’s actions in the world arena. Although the EU is not a state, at the same time its impact in world politics is discernible (Hill, 1993). Consequently, two terms are useful for understanding how the EU is viewed as an international actor, as well as its capability to live up to expectations - ‘actorness’ and ‘presence’. Because the EU has influenced world events in some way, Hill argued that it is almost indisputable that it has some kind of presence (Hill, 1993, pp. 310 – 311). The EU’s presence is closely related to how it is perceived (*ibid*, p. 309), as it must be accepted by third entities (Allen, and Smith, 1991, pp. 97-98).

Much of the blame for the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ has been laid at the foot of Treaty of Maastricht, which constructed the complicated pillared structure and the

CFSP. According to Rummel and Wiedermann (1998, p. 55), it is the pillared structure of the EU which inhibits its capability to act internationally. Because all of the EU's actors have the ability to interact in third countries in some capacity, there can be confusion about the role each plays when communicating with the host country, especially in areas where there is mixed competence (Cameron, 2002, pp. 14-15). This current system means that the EU is as confusing to outsiders as it is internally (Rosamond, 2005, p. 465).

The challenging institutional set-up of the EU means that the many actors involved in its foreign policy conspire to make the EU's global role lack coherence (Hocking and Spence, 2005, p. 5) and cohesion (Herrberg, 1997, pp. 45 – 46). In addition, a lack of sufficient autonomy for the EU to act is also related to the expectations deficit (van Schaik, 2009, p. 199). Although Member States have acknowledged the need to become more united in their foreign policy tasks (Nuttall, 2001), they themselves are also one of the major problems contributing to the deficit due to: their desire to retain control over foreign policy (Bale, 2004, p. 54; Hoffmann, 2000), a lack of consensus about how to address pressing issues (Toje, 2008b, p. 124) and an inadequate allocation of resources (Krotz, 2009, p. 564).

A number of capabilities have been added to the EU's foreign policy competence since Maastricht. From one perspective, it has been assumed that the 'gap' was associated with a "lack of a powerful instrument, a 'military arm' of the EU" to give the EU real international credibility (Rummel and Wiedermann, 1998, p. 57). Subsequently, some military capacity has been added to the EU's mandate, leading Ginsberg (1999, p. 430) to comment that the so-called expectations-capabilities gap had begun "to narrow". Tsuruoka (2004) has even observed a 'reverse expectations-capabilities gap', meaning that if the EU is perceived as unable to act coherently and meaningfully, then it will not be taken seriously (Tsuruoka, 2004).

The second thread of this thesis is identity centred, as NPE concerns how the EU is understood with a focus on its norms and values. It has been postulated that these norms characterise the EU's role(s) in the world and NPE is based on the idea that shared values and identity, rather than personal interests, drive the EU. Manners

(2002; 2006; 2008), is the seminal authority in the conceptualisation of the EU as a normative power.

NPE assumes a number of important facts about how the EU operates. Firstly, it is based on the understanding that the EU is *sui generis*, and it is this condition of being unique which strengthens the concept of NPE, as being a normative power “predisposes it [the EU] to act in a normative way” (Manners, 2002, p. 242). Secondly, the EU prefers to operate multilaterally and is therefore a strong supporter of the United Nations and other international fora, which in turn leads to an increased legitimacy of EU action. Thirdly, and related to the promotion of multilateralism, is the endorsement of a “rule-based international order” (Fukuyama, 2002), because operating as a normative power means to operate within the law (Sjursen, 2006, p. 245). It is for this reason that much emphasis is placed by the EU on its many treaties and declarations. Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly, the normative identity of the EU lies in its projection of soft power. Although in recent years the EU has increasingly gained (albeit a limited) military capability (which may be in reaction to the criticisms of its ‘expectations-capabilities gap’), nevertheless, the EU’s reliance on, and ability to create peace and stability without the use of overt force, remain important for EU identity (Sjursen, 2006; Smith, K, 2000, 2004).<sup>2</sup>

In addition to these conditions, according to Manners (2008), there are nine normative principles that the EU wishes to promote in other regions and nations globally. These include (but are not limited to) - peace, freedom, democracy, human rights, rule of law, equality, social solidarity, sustainable development and good governance. The promotion of environmental issues and the peaceful resolution of conflicts have also been linked. These values have been cited as being important in creating a united identity for Europeans and the EU. Indeed, many are key points included in the *aquis communautaire* for prospective member countries to accept.

Although the conditions and values which NPE highlights have been grounded in academic debates, these have almost always come from an internal perspective (Beetham, and Lord, 1998; Egeberg, 1999; Bruter, 2004). That is that EU officials and

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<sup>2</sup> This ability has been questioned in the Georgian crisis, but has been deemed successful in other parts of the globe.

even the EU public believe that the concepts and terms described above are highly valuable and should be emulated in third countries in order to promote peace and stability. However, the strength of NPE lies in convincing others to follow its lead and at present there is a dearth in academic literature about how effective the EU has been in promoting NPE beyond its borders. Moreover, although Hill's 'expectations-capabilities gap' was undertaken using both an internal and external perspective, as the EU's resources and capabilities are constantly evolving, the so-called gap has not yet been bridged - meaning that current understandings of this concept are imperative. Using a comprehensive methodology and data set, this thesis will bridge these gaps by exploring how the EU is currently represented and viewed in the Asia-Pacific region as well as how the proposals in the Lisbon Treaty may improve these representations.

Thus, while the two frameworks utilised in this thesis are distinct in focus, they are also complementary. One of their biggest commonalities is the emphasis on how the EU communicates, because expectations are ultimately built up and perceived to be met through effective and adequate communication. Furthermore, the ramifications of ineffective communication are important given that external perceptions can help to shape the way the EU is perceived both internally and externally and a lack of efficient external communication on behalf of the EU could be argued as yet another factor which may contribute to the deficiencies in expectations placed on the EU. This means that external perceptions and how the EU is represented abroad may have a number of ramifications. For instance, Hill and Wallace (1996, p. 8) have pointed out that "a European foreign policy cannot exist if a European identity does not exist" and Holland (2002, pp. 322 – 323) has noted the importance of the EU's external activities in helping to foster public support at home. Elgström has also emphasised the importance of external perceptions, as he contends that they may provide feedback of the EU's foreign policy through "insights into how the EU is actually judged as an international actor" (Elgström, 2006, p. 11). The perceptions of EU outsiders are thus pertinent to the EU's legitimacy and are a crucial element of this dissertation.

In addition to the two theoretical frameworks presented and analysed in the context of this study, a number of other concepts and theories are introduced in order to thoroughly understand the issues the thesis is concerned with. These include: legitimacy, the so-called democratic deficit, the practice of diplomacy (both generally

and specifically relating to the EU), and the increasing emphasis placed on public diplomacy for self-promotion.

Legitimacy is important since it has been argued that the EU suffers from a lack of legitimacy, which has the ability to impact on both the ability of the EU to be a strong international actor and it also impinges on a core aspect of NPE. This thesis aims to establish whether these conceptions about a lack of legitimacy of the EU are valid from a unique, external perspective. Moreover, it asks whether the EEAS proposals have the potential to improve the situation in any way.

Central to this thesis is the practise of diplomacy. Therefore, concepts and practises of diplomacy both in general, and how they relate to the EU specifically, are also introduced. This extends to public diplomacy which also emphasises the importance of communication.

## **1.2 THE SELECTED CASE STUDIES AND THE EEAS PROPOSALS**

The proposals for introducing the EEAS are entrenched in the treaty processes of the Union, and are therefore linked with EU legality. As such, until now, the future of the EEAS has been tied to the Constitutional Treaty and the subsequent Lisbon Treaty. Although the proposals have thus far survived a number of set-backs, its subsequent resurrections, most recently with the approval of the Irish public in their second referendum on the matter, leave the impression that it is perceived to be vitally important for the actors involved in European foreign policy and representation.

The year 2000 heralded a purposeful step for the European Union in its development towards becoming a truly international actor. In particular, two important political developments occurred that proved that the EU recognised that change was needed. The first of these, the 'European Governance' White Paper, noted that the Union required a more consistent attitude and policy when dealing with the wider world and noted that only when the EU speaks with one voice can it aspire to be an actor with world-wide influence (European Communities, 2001, p. 27). Additionally, the Nice Intergovernmental Conference in 2000 formally launched the 'Debate on the future of the European Union'.

Exactly one year on from Nice, its issues and goals were raised again at the Laeken Summit, which called for an explicit definition of the EU's role as a global actor. Judging by the documents emerging from Laeken, the wish for the EU to become a credible actor in the international arena (including improving its capabilities) was a driving force behind the proposals to introduce the EEAS, coupled with the historical responsibility and desire to become a leading normative actor. Mirroring Laeken's proposals, the subsequent 'Convention on the Future of Europe' indicated the need for the Union to shift away from intergovernmental dominance and change the 'centre of gravity' in how it conducted its external relations. Subsequently, the Constitutional Treaty was approved by all of the governments of the EU and was sent to each Member State for ratification.

The Constitutional Treaty was monumental for a number of reasons. Not only would it give the European Union a single legal personality under both domestic and international law (thus giving more support to NPE from a coherence, effectiveness and efficiency perspective), it would have replaced all the existing Treaties (with the exception of the Euratom Treaty), abolished the complicated three-pillar structure implemented at Maastricht and streamlined the Council's Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) system (retaining unanimity in a number of areas of key foreign, security and defence policies). In an effort to increase the transparency of the EU, previously secretive Council proceedings would become open to the public. This step had the potential to improve the legitimacy of the Council and subsequently the EU as a whole. Furthermore, the Treaty would guarantee the better protection of fundamental rights, an important normative principle. In achieving all of this, the Constitutional Treaty would thus improve not only how the EU operates internally, but would also address some of the issues first noted by Hill in 1993.

However, the ambitious plans for creating a more efficient, effective, coherent and democratic Europe were halted by the unexpected rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by the citizens of both France and the Netherlands on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May and June 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 respectively. In their defence, the foreign policy initiatives of the Treaty, including the EEAS, have seldom been referred to as a reason for its rejection.

In spite of the rejection, the idea was clearly compelling enough to be kept alive regardless of the referenda outcomes. After the 'period of reflection', during her time as head of the rotating EU Presidency, German Chancellor Angela Merkel decided that the treaty should be revised so as to make the document more digestible and the process less controversial. The result was presented on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2007, in the form of the Reform Treaty, latterly known as the Lisbon Treaty.

However, the Irish public also rejected the Lisbon Treaty, thus once more halting any future progress. Nevertheless, mirroring the developments that occurred for the Nice Treaty, it was decided that Ireland would once again go to the polls in 2009, and this time the Treaty received an overwhelming approval of 67 percent. Some attributed the change of heart in Ireland to the 2008 world economic crisis, which has greatly affected the Irish economy. With the Polish President, Lech Kaczynski subsequently signing the treat, the ratification from the Czech Republic remains the sole obstacle. At the time of writing it seems that the EEAS will finally be implemented sometime in the near future.

Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty would seemingly mean a shift away from multi-representation of the EU, leading to a more coherent approach in Union foreign policy. The Treaty states that the EEAS would be headed by the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (HR-FASP). As he or she would be both the Council's representative for the CFSP and one of the Commission's Vice-Presidents, they would be mandated to be what is essentially viewed as an EU foreign minister, authorised to speak on behalf of the entire EU.

In order to support the HR-FASP, it was decided that the new minister required additional support in the form of a foreign ministry, named the EEAS. It is the potential of the development of the EEAS which this thesis is primarily concerned with. What is interesting to note is that the following is the sole mention of the EEAS in either treaty, and the inclusion remained unchanged with Lisbon. This singular reference to the EEAS in both Treaties was rather brief considering the major changes that it could potentially represent:

In fulfilling his mandate, the [HR-FASP] shall be assisted by a European External Action Service. This service shall work in cooperation with the

diplomatic services of the Member States (Lisbon Treaty Article 27 [13a] 3 and Constitutional Treaty Article 111-296 3).

It has been assumed that the EEAS would be the new foreign minister's ministry and would be comprised of staff from the Council, the Commission, and seconded from Member State foreign services, thus ending the divisive pillared division of EU foreign policy. Because of the single, vague mention, there have been many irresolute questions about the exact shape the EEAS will take on. Therefore, the discussions on the EEAS included in this thesis should prove useful for future developments and discussions about how it will be implemented. It also includes important considerations which will need to be reflected upon prior to its launch.

What is clear is that the EEAS has the potential to change the way the EU is represented abroad and will thus impact on the roles of the Member State embassies and European Commission Delegations (ECDs) based in third countries. From an ambassadorial perspective, it has been widely assumed that the ECDs would be renamed "Union Delegations" and be given the mandate to represent the entire EU, something which has hitherto been lacking. Indeed, it makes sense for the Commission Delegations to provide a base for the Union Delegations; they are currently based in 136 countries and organisations worldwide (source: European Commission), have immense experience in operating abroad and have significant resources.

Of particular interest to the study is what sort of actor the EU is perceived to be, and how this is communicated around the world. In other words, is the EU viewed as a normative 'good-guy' and is it seen as an influential power in international relations? The methodology undertaken asks: 'How is the EU perceived by the public and elites in Singapore and New Zealand and what is the EEAS's potential to improve the way the EU is represented and perceived'? Regarding the first, there has traditionally been a deficit in external perceptions of the EU, something which has been addressed by a number of scholars, including Martin Holland and Natalia Chaban at the National Centre for Research on Europe, University of Canterbury. In order to understand how the EU is understood, conveyed and portrayed in these distinct countries, they have undertaken a number of studies in the Asia-Pacific region. This study draws on data

collected for this study from Singapore and New Zealand public and elite opinions and the print media. The NCRE media projects have been informed by a 1979 UNESCO study, and undertook a two-fold methodology; by collating relevant newspaper items and analysing their content and interviewing public and elites in third countries. One of their conclusions is that third publics no longer have any expectations or understandings of the EU whatsoever (National Centre for Research on Europe, retrieved 11.11.2008 ).

In order to evaluate the internal European vision (how it views itself), and the potential implications of the EEAS proposals, interviews were also conducted with ambassadors and diplomats, representing their respective countries and the Commission, in New Zealand and Singapore. Furthermore, as the opinions of first hand practitioners abroad do not tell the whole story, interviews were also conducted in Brussels, in order to gain vital information about not only who, and what institutions, are driving the creation of the policy, but to obtain a more thorough understanding of EU foreign policy as it is understood from its core. These were undertaken with both present and former officials from the Council Secretariat,<sup>3</sup> the Commission, and the European Parliament.

Although literature surrounding both the HR-FASP and EEAS is broad-ranging, this thesis provides a unique perspective both theoretically and practically. The focus in the literature thus far seems to be primarily on an internal perception of how it should look, with external conceptions being vague and mostly concerned with the transatlantic relationship. For instance, Crowe (2005) identified a number of issues that need to be addressed before the role of HR-FASP can be successfully undertaken, including the difficulty of juggling the position of being part of both the Council and the Commission (*ibid*, p. 2). Other studies have looked at the possible lessons the new minister may glean from the EU Special Representatives (Adebahr and Giovanni 2007; Missiroli, 2007).

Pertaining to the EEAS in particular, much emphasis has been placed on which EU institution, the Council or the Commission, should gain the most power in the new

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<sup>3</sup> The secretariat which prepares EU Member States' regular meetings.

structure (Duke, 2004; Rayner, 2005; Hocking and Spence, 2005; Rijiks and Whitman 2007). Indeed, this clash between the Council and the Commission, both of whom will form integral parts of the EEAS, is addressed in this thesis, but from a unique perspective – from the practitioners of EU foreign policy – in the form of interviews conducted with Member State diplomats stationed abroad as well as officials within the institutions themselves. Likewise, other issues which have been highlighted in the literature are also addressed using this unique perspective, for example, the potential impact on Member State embassies and ECDs (Hocking and Spence, 2005; Korski, 2008; Rayner, 2005; Rijiks and Whitman 2007; Edwards and Rijiks, 2008). The interviews undertaken with the practitioners of EU foreign policy mean that previously unaddressed concerns and issues relating to the EEAS have been given time and consideration.

### ***1.2.1 European Union Relations with New Zealand and Singapore***

**Figure 1.1: Map Showing Singapore and New Zealand in the Asia Pacific Region**



The EU is a significant trading partner to the countries in the area, it being among the top three trading partners for the entire Asia-Pacific. The EU has also been of increasing political importance, not least through its promotion of peace and security, as demonstrated through the deployment of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) mission in the Indonesian province of Aceh, and its administration of development aid to the Pacific region. Furthermore, it is often referred to as a point of reference for increasing cooperation for ASEAN.

The increase of EU interaction in the region has been matched through a rise in its diplomatic representation. For instance, since the 1970's, the Commission has opened a number of delegations in the area. The largest of these is in China, which employs 91 people (including local staff), the oldest is in Japan which opened in 1974 and the smallest and the newest is in New Zealand (opened in 2004 with only five staff members). With the proposals in Lisbon, the future of these delegations is up for discussion.

While it is acknowledged that the Asia-Pacific regions are larger than just Singapore and New Zealand, for comparability purposes these two cases have been chosen for a number of reasons. The study of their relationships with the EU provides a distinctive perspective, given that EU involvement in the area is usually focused on the bigger countries such as Japan or China in Asia, and Australia in the Pacific (see Figure 1.1). This traditional focus on the EU in the literature means that these 'third tier' states have been perhaps unfairly overlooked in the past.

Although the countries are geo-politically distinct, they have a number of commonalities, enabling comparisons to be made and which affect their relationships with the European Union. Both locations have a similar population size – the New Zealand population is officially 4,281,580 (Statistics New Zealand, retrieved 14.10.2008), while the Singaporean population is only slightly higher at 4,553,009 (CIA, retrieved 14.10.2008). This means that the two Asia-Pacific locations are larger than eight of the current EU Member States including Ireland and Lithuania.

In addition, both are stable, largely democratic, traditional allies of the EU (but not the major players), English-speaking, former British colonies and maritime states.

They also have relatively small diplomatic communities, meaning that individual EU Member States tend to be underrepresented. In addition, both countries have a relatively low military profile and rely heavily on international trade for their livelihoods, which makes having a prosperous, stable relationship with the EU crucial. Indeed, each is individually considering signing free trade agreements with the EU in the distant future.

The two locations also share a similarly cooperative relationship with the European Union. Whereas in many parts of the world, the EU, and the ECDs in particular, place a strong emphasis on developmental assistance and support, the relatively affluent economies of Singapore and New Zealand mean that the relationships have instead focused on collaboration, particularly in areas such as the arts and culture, research and development, education, and health.

Despite this positive focus, stability is also a key part of the relationships. Their geopolitical locations mean that the EU respects and cooperates with New Zealand and Singapore for their highly developed strategies of dealing with their neighbouring, developing countries. For New Zealand, it is the country's proximity and paternal interest in the politically turbulent Pacific region (part of the EU's African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) partnership agreement) which solidifies the EU relationship. By contrast, Singapore is a stable democracy situated in the middle of a somewhat volatile Asian region, where the EU is engaged in several regional forums aimed at promoting development and stability in the region (such as cooperation with ASEAN and in the ASEM process).

### ***1.2.1.1 New Zealand***

The diplomatic relationship between New Zealand and the EU is a hitherto widely under-researched field of academic study. In the past, the New Zealand-EU relationship has tended to focus on economic or political factors (See for example, Gibbons and Holland, 2007). The strong history and links between New Zealand and Britain have meant that New Zealand's political ties with the EU have been dominated by this older relationship. Indeed, according to Lodge (1982, p. 1), since Britain first

began accession talks to the European Community (EC), it was decided that “New Zealand should engage in ‘quiet’ but persuasive diplomacy” and

[W]ork in the closest co-operation [sic] possible with the British Government given the latter’s responsibility for negotiating a special arrangement for New Zealand with the EC.

Since its initial colonisation by Great Britain, migration to New Zealand from other European countries has created strong bilateral contacts with some of the other EU Member States. These links are still important today, but comparatively, the EU interest in New Zealand is relatively minor. For instance, the ECD in Wellington currently consists of only six local and seconded full time employees, including the Chargé d' Affaires or ‘Head of Mission’ and New Zealand ranks as only the 50<sup>th</sup> most important trading partner for the EU (European Commission, 2006d). In contrast, New Zealand's neighbour, Australia, has 19 staff at the Commission Delegation and ranks as the 20<sup>th</sup> most important trading partner for the Union (European Commission, retrieved 1.08.2007).

Since 1975, regular ministerial meetings between the EU and New Zealand have taken place during each EU Presidency, and these are normally attended by the New Zealand Foreign Minister, the European Commissioner responsible for External Relations, and the country responsible for the Presidency at the time (The European Commission's Delegation to New Zealand, retrieved 8.5.2007.). These meetings allow the political leaders to discuss the state of the relationship and share information on international developments of mutual interest. In 1984, the European Commission's Delegation in Canberra, Australia, was accredited to New Zealand, subsequently, the New Zealand *Chargé d' Affaires* opened in May 2004. In addition, New Zealand has an embassy based in Brussels that deals with the various EU institutions when required. New Zealand opened official contact with the then European Community in 1961 when the first New Zealand Ambassador was accredited to Brussels.

The European Union is an important ally for New Zealand, both economically and politically. It is New Zealand’s second largest market and is currently responsible for 16 percent of its total exports (The European Commission's Delegation to New Zealand, retrieved 16.10.2009). The EU and New Zealand also share common views on many issues including on how to promote stability and security, especially in the

Pacific, with the aim of promoting peace, stability and prosperity in that part of the world. Likewise, the EU and New Zealand are both supporters of regional integration in South East Asia and are actively participating in the ASEAN Regional Forum. New Zealand, along with Norway is the only non-EU member country that participates in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which was established in response to the war in Afghanistan. This cooperation has led to the debate about the borders of Europe, with New Zealand often used as an example of a country which could potentially be part of the EU if membership was based on shared values (see for example, Avery, 2007b, p. 103). According to one Member State Ambassador; “It’s really very important for the European Union that New Zealand is close and the relations are very good”. However, in spite of the great economic, strategic and historical importance of the EU to New Zealand, among the general public in New Zealand “[t]here’s not a great deal of understanding by the public of what the EU is” (Chaban, *et al*, 2006 p. 197).

The EU has an extensive diplomatic network in New Zealand. This is comprised of eight Member State embassies (one of whom represents the Council in the form of the rotating presidency), and the ECD (see Table 1.1). All are based in Wellington. Fourteen of the other EU Member States with accreditation to New Zealand have their Embassies located Canberra. Estonia’s Ambassador is resident in Tokyo and Latvia’s in London. Interestingly, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Luxembourg are not accredited to New Zealand at this stage. There has been a paradoxical trend by EU Member States to both extend diplomatic links and yet simultaneously to contract them. For example, the Polish and Spanish embassies both opened in New Zealand in the last five years, while the Belgian Embassy closed in January 2002, and the Swedish one in 1995.<sup>4</sup> In New Zealand, monthly meetings are held between the various EU representatives, with these meetings increasing in frequency if there is a pressing issue to be discussed.

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<sup>4</sup> From 2002, the Belgium embassy in Singapore covered New Zealand.

**Table 1.1: EU Member State Diplomatic Representation in NZ**

France
Germany
Greece
Italy
Netherlands
Poland
Spain
United Kingdom

Source: Gateway to the European Union in New Zealand.

The New Zealand Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade places a strong emphasis on the relationship with the traditional ‘big three’ countries of the European Union – Britain, Germany and France (New Zealand Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade, retrieved 08.05.2007). The ‘parent-child’ link between the United Kingdom and New Zealand remains strong even today, with the presence of the British High Commission in Wellington cementing this tie. For many New Zealanders, the image of the EU remains negatively coloured by the perception that when Britain joined the European Economic Community in 1973, New Zealand’s agricultural exports were forced to find new export markets (Gibbons, 2008, p. 8), this being in spite of Lodge’s (1982, p. 35) assertion that New Zealand’s relationship with Britain helped to safeguard its important agricultural exports. The relationship has now been redefined with the UK remaining New Zealand’s fourth largest trading market (The Link, 1999). Although most of New Zealand's cultural and economic ties with Europe were originally directed towards the United Kingdom, other Member States have become increasingly important.

Apart from the traditional New Zealand relationship with Britain, Germany has also become of increasing importance to the country in recent years, due to its post-reunification size and tourism prospects. Official New Zealand–German diplomatic relations have continued unabated for over 50 years. The first German embassy in New Zealand opened in 1953. Although Germany was at the time partitioned, the Federal Republic of Germany elected to represent all Germans abroad, regardless of

whether they lived in the Eastern or the Western part of the country. Relations between Germany and New Zealand have developed steadily and positively in all fields. Increasingly, New Zealand and Germany find that they share similar views, with the war in Iraq being a relatively recent example. The German Ambassador once noted that “[a]lthough the German Foreign Service has no representation worldwide farther away from Berlin than Wellington, it is remarkable how close our positions are on many important political issues” (*as cited in* Goff, retrieved 9.8.2007). New Zealand’s former foreign minister has also noted that in Germany New Zealand has a partner in Europe “which, alongside the United Kingdom and other member states of the EU, enables us to retain our strategic, economic and political interests in Europe” (Goff, retrieved 9.8.2007 [sic]).

Bilateral relations between France and New Zealand were established in 1945, with a French embassy opening soon after. In 1950, New Zealand opened only its sixth office abroad - in Paris. In the eyes of the New Zealand public, diplomatic relations between the two countries were somewhat tainted through the nuclear testing controversy in the Pacific in the 1970s through to late 1990s, and the bombing of the Rainbow Warrior in 1985. Despite this sometimes tense past, France is also a significant Member State of the EU for New Zealand, in particular due to its active role in the Pacific, and Polynesia in particular (New Zealand Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade). Hoadley has commented that

While each [New Zealand] government has distinct views on many issues, and unique styles of dealing with them, and while public perceptions of France remain ambivalent, a broad consensus over goals and means now prevails (2005, p. 145).

### ***1.2.1.2 Singapore***

Singapore is a significant trading partner and interlocutor between the whole of Asia and Europe. Because of the EU’s nature as an experiment in regional integration, it also prefers to relate to third parties as regions (Lamy, 2002). This preference extends to Asia and enables it to be more effective and efficient. In turn, Singapore actively promotes regional integration and economic competitiveness through arrangements such as ASEAN and a series of bilateral and regional Free Trade Agreements. In this way, the European Union is seen by many in Singapore as a positive reference point

of regional integration. Singapore also plays host to organisations such as the Asia-Europe Foundation, Asia- Europe Meeting's (ASEM) only permanent institution.

However, according to Mahncke (1992), the EU's political influence in Asia is limited. EU involvement with ASEM was only established in 1996, much later than the establishment of official ties with the ACP states (Holland, 2002, p. 59). According to Holland (*ibid*, p. 67), the official EU involvement in Asia was begun with a strategic *economic* goal in mind: "ASEM was originally conceived as a comprehensive platform for dialogue and cooperation reflecting the emergent role of Asian economic 'Tigers' and Europe's somewhat marginal involvement in the region". However, the first meeting between the two sides highlighted a marked difference in their approaches: "Human rights were a European concern whereas the Asian participants preferred an exclusive focus on trade" (*ibid*, p. 68).

Many of the EU Member State connections with Singapore stem from colonial origins. For example, the Dutch interests in Singapore date back to the opening of a consulate in 1856. Following Singaporean independence from Malaysia in 1965, many of the current EU Member States recognised the new state, and embassies or consulates were quick to open.

Bilateral relations are still important for EU countries in Singapore. The main focus of those with an embassy is on commerce and trade promotion, and a secondary emphasis on political reporting and consulate work. For example, the Dutch Ambassador in Singapore has noted that their focus was "of course in trade promotion, promotion of economic ties... and where Dutch companies need us they can turn to us". Likewise one of his counterparts also highlighted the importance of trade: "Singapore is a trade hub, so obviously that has an impact on the way we work" (ECD to Singapore).

**Table 1.2: EU Member State Diplomatic Representation to Singapore**

Belgium
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Netherlands
Poland
Spain
Sweden
United Kingdom

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore, retrieved 03.04.2009.

The modern history of Singapore began in 1819 when the Englishman Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles established a British port on the island. Because of its strategic importance, during World War Two Singapore was conquered and ruled by Japan, with Britain resuming control soon after the end of the war until Singapore's merger with the Federation of Malaya to form Malaysia in 1963. Since then, strong relations have been maintained with Britain through a variety of mechanisms including remaining a member of the Commonwealth, and as part of the Five Power Defence Arrangements.<sup>5</sup>

Singapore is France's third-highest trading partner in Asia and the first in Southeast Asia. The positive state of bilateral relations is illustrated by the 'Joint Declaration for a Strengthened Partnership' signed during then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong's visit to France on March 1999 (The French Embassy to Singapore, retrieved 4.3.2009). As an example of the close relationship between Germany and Singapore, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, the Monetary Authority of Singapore signed a financial supervision

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<sup>5</sup> Along with Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand.

agreement with Germany's prudential regulator of financial institutions BaFin (Thai Press Reports, 13.02.2009).

The Embassy of the Czech Republic in Singapore was closed from 30 June 2008. Since then, diplomatic coverage of Singapore has been from Jakarta. Spain opened a Singaporean embassy in 2004. The opening of new embassies is a recent trend for Spain. A Spanish diplomat pointed out that “this is a trend which Spain is upholding... In the last legislative, we opened twelve embassies; we even have plans to open in Cambodia and Sri Lanka”. Hungary has also relatively recently opened its first embassy in Singapore – in June 2001.

### **1.3 CHAPTER SYNOPSIS**

Through introducing and establishing the theoretical framework from which the rest of the dissertation is based upon and understood, Chapter Two provides the structure of the study. In particular, two complementary theories for understanding the international actor capability of the EU are outlined and analysed: the so-called ‘expectations-capabilities gap’, first introduced by Christopher Hill in 1993, and a more recent understanding of the EU – as a benign, normative power, intent on exporting its key values to the wider world, a concept which has most famously been addressed by Ian Manners (2002; 2006; 2008). In order to understand how the proposals to bring in joint European embassies may affect both how the EU conducts its external relations, how effective it is, as well how this will impact third countries, it includes key terms and understandings about how the EU is currently perceived and operates, many of which are outlined above.

Chapter Three further expands on key concepts surrounding the EU’s conduct of foreign policy and reviews the further relevant literature. In particular, it outlines the importance of legitimacy to the EU. From an external perspective, Hurd has noted that legitimacy is dependent on the perceptions of others’ (1999, p. 381). According to Kratochvíl *et al* (2008, p. 1), legitimacy is one of the important aspects that defines an actor. Likewise, Allen and Smith (1991a, pp. 97-98) have noted that in order for the EU to have an international ‘presence’ it requires legitimacy. The association between external recognition and legitimacy is also closely related to the ‘expectations-

capabilities gap' as, "[p]aying attention to how the EU is viewed abroad helps us to evaluate whether gaps between expectations and realities have affected the 'reach' of EU influence" (Rhodes, 1999, p. 6). Not only is legitimacy – and being perceived as a legitimate actor and entity – important for the EU's identity and coherence, but it is also connected to its normative capabilities, which in turn enhance EU conceptions of EU identity (Lucarelli, 2008, pp. 24- 25).

Related to questions about the legitimacy of the EU is its democratic deficit. Not only is this internally problematic, but it is also important for foreign policy. Hill, for example, has noted that the deficit must be acknowledged and indeed improved on as "[a] European foreign policy worthy of the name...will need to enjoy democratic legitimacy and also have a sophisticated bureaucracy at their disposal" (Hill, 1993, p. 316). This is perceived as one of the major weaknesses of the EU today, and contributes to the Union's 'identity problem' (Peterson, and Sjørnsen, 1998, p. 180).

Chapter Three also outlines key understandings of EU diplomacy. Indeed, although Europe has been credited with creating the institution of diplomacy, their unique institutional arrangements mean that they now pose a challenge the Westphalian system of states (Fossum, 2002, p. 9). Public diplomacy may be linked to enhancing external legitimacy. Unlike traditional diplomacy which deals with governments, public diplomacy aims to promote entities among foreign publics. Finally, the chapter highlights important literature surrounding the proposals to introduce the HR-FASP and the EEAS. This includes theoretical implications and understandings as well as practical questions which still need to be solved.

Chapter Four details the methodology employed for conducting this research. A core element of this thesis is to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of EU foreign policy and the European External Action Service (EEAS). In order to reach this understanding, a robust and comparative methodology and research design has been developed. This chapter outlines the methodological approach, detailing its strengths and delimitations. It outlines the validity of the project as well as the various approaches employed in the study. Owing to the challenge of analysing the different theoretical approaches discussed in the previous chapter, as well as the range of concepts, attitudes, and actors that need to be

considered when critically evaluating current EU foreign policy and the potential of the Lisbon proposals, it was necessary to employ multiple methodologies in the collection of data for this thesis. As well as conducting archival research, the research is seminal as it draws on a number of primary sources of data.

These include in-depth, semi-structured interviews, with practitioners of EU external policy and included questions pertaining to the EEAS proposals as well as the EU generally. The chosen format of the interviews was semi-structured because it offered both a comparable data set and “valuable flexibility” (Berry, 2003, p. 679). Public opinion surveys and a systematic content analysis of EU newspaper articles in the print media in Singapore and New Zealand was also undertaken in order to understand how the EU is currently represented and understood in the two countries. Yeric and Todd have defined public opinion as “the shared opinions of a collection of individuals on a common concern” (1983, p. 4). Although public opinion is important from within democracies, the opinions or perceptions of ‘outsiders’ also have the ability to sway outcomes since arguably the public in a given country have the potential to influence key decision-makers – the ‘elites’ who craft their country’s foreign policy agenda. Although the methodology is not without its limitations, it has proven a valuable tool for systematically analysing perceptions of the EU both internally and externally.

Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to attempt to understand and evaluate the various sociological or historical factors which may inform how the public and elites of the respective countries view the EU, one tool which may influence ‘outsiders’ perceptions of the EU can be found in how an entity is presented in that country’s news media. The final aspect of this methodology thus draws on the systematic collection and analysis of newspaper articles mentioning the EU in Singapore and New Zealand, collected as part of the Asia-Pacific perceptions projects. Whilst some commentators have claimed that the media plays a role in ‘manufacturing consent’ for the interests of political elites (Bennett, 1990), it has been widely acknowledged that the media’s strength lies in its power to shape ‘outsider’ perceptions and influence policy choices (Gilboa, 2005, p. 27). Likewise, the visibility of an actor in the media, be it a politician, an institution or an international entity like the European Union, will influence how it is perceived by that media’s audience.

Indeed, “[a]ccounting for the EU’s external perceptions is argued to be instrumental in understanding images which potentially impact the Union’s external actions and capabilities, and thus affect its internal rhetoric and self-visions of foreign policy” (Chaban, Kelly and Bain 2009, p. 279). This thesis is interested in understanding *who* is portrayed as representing the EU in Singapore and New Zealand news media, in order to identify whether there is confusion for third countries as noted by the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’.

Using the Chapter Two as its guide, Chapter Five charts the evolution of the EU as an international actor and in doing so it sets the context for the rest of the thesis. Missiroli (2007, p. 9) has highlighted “an intrinsic dualism” existing within the European Union between its Community and intergovernmental related tasks. Similarly, there has consistently been a division between both theorists and practitioners of EU integration involving those who envisaged the EU as a federal entity (supranational), and those whose goal it was/is to see the supremacy of nation state remain for important decision-making (intergovernmental). Therefore, Chapter Five is divided into two distinct, but parallel aspects of EU foreign policy: the development of Member State, or intergovernmental, cooperation and the role of the Commission in implementing community policy. The former is based on both official Treaties which were traditionally focused on internal economic integration, but have gradually been expanded to include the CFSP as well as some military and policing functions under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) framework. The latter has been traditionally granted competences in dealing with pan-EU trade and aid functions, but its division with intergovernmental competences has been increasingly blurred (Nuttall, 1996, p. 144).

While both the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC) were based primarily on an internal motivation to create economic stability for their members who were recovering from the devastating effects of World War Two, it also had external ramifications, mainly in the foreign economic sphere (Bebr, 1953, p. 24). The 1970s saw the introduction of a key development in EU external policy, in the form of European Political Cooperation (EPC). Although EPC was in many ways positive for the EC at the time as it signified a desire from Europe’s leaders to work together, overall it proved to be largely

ineffective since it was based on only a loose set of rules and informal agreements. Since its inception, many new developments have taken place, in the form of common declarations as well as key treaties such as the Single European Act, and those signed in Maastricht, Nice, and Amsterdam. At the same time, the ECDs have increased both their scope and numbers.

Chapter Six is the first of five chapters which introduces primary data crucial for understanding both EU foreign policy and the proposals for the EEAS. As it is from the perspective of EU foreign policy implementers, the chapter addresses the validity of the theoretical framework from an internal viewpoint, using interviews with the implementers of EU foreign policy – Member State diplomats and ECD officials in third countries, as well as officials from the Council, the Commission in Brussels, and Ministers of the European Parliament (MEPs). In other words, it provides a more detailed examination of whether the ‘expectations – capability gap’ currently exists, whether the EU is a normative actor, and if these issues could possibly be a motivating factor for implementation of the European External Action Service. The combination of 35 interviews demonstrated here is significant because “[s]tate identity is expressed through key decision-makers” (Jackson, and Sørensen, 2007, p. 172), and allows a number of conclusions to be drawn. Namely, that there is an overwhelming belief that the EU is a normative actor and its foreign policy initiatives need to be better coordinated.

Since the perceptions of the EU from the outside is just as important as an internal perspective, Chapter Seven draws on elite interviews conducted with key stakeholders in Singapore and New Zealand, as well as public opinion surveys and newspaper articles about the European Union. External perceptions are important for both the legitimacy of an entity as not only is recognition and acceptance required internally, but it must also be conferred externally – in the form of acceptance of its international role by its partners and beneficiaries around the world. An entity only becomes legitimate when it is approved of (Koppell, 2008, p. 181) and having legitimacy is also the basis of claims by governments that they should be listened to (Donnelly, 2005, p. 46). Therefore, this chapter now turns to perceptions of the Union from the point of view of two case studies of ‘non-Europe’ – Singapore and New Zealand.

Although there is no definitive way to analyse how the European Union is perceived on a global scale (Fiske de Gouveia, 2005, p. 3), this chapter provides a detailed picture by using three methods – telephone public opinion surveys, open-ended interviews, and the content analysis of daily newspaper coverage. The result is a clearer understanding of how the EU is perceived and represented in Singapore and New Zealand. Drawing on the theoretical framework, the chapter seeks to provide an insight into how effective the EU is in communicating what it is and what it stands for to the rest of the world.

Chapter Eight expands on the issue of EU representation in Singapore and New Zealand, by analysing the effectiveness of the ECDs in the two countries. At the heart of this thesis is a focus on the EU's diplomatic structure. Because of their sheer number and presence world wide, arguably the EU's most important external representative is to be found in the Commission, specifically, the ECDs. However, they have not been exempt from criticism (Bruter, 1999; Chaban and Holland, 2008; Duke, 2002). Indeed, a recent study by Chaban, Kelly and Bain (2009, p. 288) noted that the ECDs are not as effective as they could be. The study concluded that “that for the EU's public diplomacy to truly launch itself, the Union should pay attention not only to what it says but also to how it says it, and how loud, clear and engaged it sounds”.

The ECDs are often the only permanent part of the troika in third countries. Although it is clear that the ECDs are by no means the only operators of EU foreign policy, they are given special attention in this dissertation largely because their personnel, resources and experience mean that they are likely to be the starting point of the EEAS. Therefore, their successes and failures in promoting EU policy could prove to be valuable for the future of the EEAS. The analysis presented in this chapter has been drawn from elite interviews with local representatives in those countries. The issues raised in this chapter are particularly pertinent as so little has been previously published about the role and actions of the European Commission. Moreover, the chapter is significant as it outlines how the EEAS may learn from the experiences of the ECDs in Singapore and New Zealand.

Chapter Nine directly introduces key developments and discussions surrounding the

failed Constitutional and subsequent Lisbon Treaties. Not only does the chapter draw on archival methods to provide analysis, but it also draws on the expertise and opinions of the implementers of EU foreign policy both in Brussels and abroad. The proposals for the introduction of the EEAS are entrenched in the treaty processes of the Union. The chapter uses discourse analysis in order to examine the possible motivations behind the proposals and to see whether these motivations are driven by the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter Two. The inclusion of normative principles in the texts demonstrates a clear desire by EU officials to firmly ground these values. Moreover, the proposals and language used in the treaties indicate continued internal observation that the EU has a coherence problem when it is performing on the international stage. In addition, discussions are raised about the importance of appointing a well-respected leader as the new HR-FASP (Van Gerven, 2004, p. 473).

The chapter also addresses the on-going debates concerning which Brussels-based institution is best situated to undertake the leading role in the new structure. The discussion is all the more pertinent given Heuser's (2005, p. 1) comment that "[t]he EEAS has become the scene of a new struggle for power and influence between member states and EU institutions". Finally, the likelihood of the proposals going ahead at all is outlined.

Chapter Ten addresses key questions about how the EEAS will potentially impact EU representation in Singapore and New Zealand. Of particular interest in this section are the *pragmatic* issues surrounding the construction of the EEAS and how it may change EU representation in third countries. Because of the complex and vague nature of the proposals, a variety of viewpoints have been taken into consideration. While this chapter focuses primarily on the practical realities of EU diplomacy, it does so through the lens of theory.

From an EU perspective, as 2009 draws to a close, the events leading to the Lisbon Treaty demonstrate a real and persistent desire by European leaders to improve the international capability of the Union, which has been sometimes linked to a desire to be a stronger normative force in the world. How will having a European External Action Service on the ground impact on Member State embassies? Will the new

Union representatives be able to compliment Member States' work, or even take over the function of the traditional embassy? Given the obscurity of the current proposals, the results of interviews about these issues are enlightening, and some conclusions about how the EEAS may function can be drawn from them. Again, the vague nature of the actual proposals must be noted, as well as the differing year in which the comments were made. When the proposal of bringing in joint European Union embassies is first mentioned, the first question that tends to spring to mind is - will it replace the role of traditional embassies? With this in mind, the respondents were asked the question; "What does your embassy do, that the EEAS *could not* do"? In addition to the emphasis on bilateral relations and communication, three other aspects were highlighted and discussed: consular responsibility, trade and culture promotion. The emphasis on these relations means that the EEAS would potentially take over political competences and need to ensure that it has strong communication skills as well as be willing to facilitate information sharing between all of the parties involved.

Chapter Ten also addresses key issues such as staffing considerations, whether certain Member States will potentially benefit more than others, and how potential obstacles may be overcome. Finally, the chapter introduces the potential impact on third countries such as Singapore and New Zealand when the EEAS is launched. Phil Goff (2005), the then New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade believed the move towards an External Action Service to be extremely positive, as it would give New Zealand a single point of political access to the EU as opposed to the current confused situation. An interesting finding to emerge from the interview responses was that both the Singapore and New Zealand-based EU Member State diplomats held similar views regarding the practical aspects of setting up the EEAS, thus demonstrating that it will be possible to arrive at an 'EU view' of the proposals. Finally, the chapter looks at how the proposals may directly change relations with third countries.

To conclude this introduction, the findings presented here are significant as they set the scene to not only better analyse the future prospects of the EEAS in New Zealand and Singapore, but additionally they provide an internal and external perspective of EU foreign policy abroad. The thesis contributes three specific views on the development of the EEAS. Firstly, that the EEAS has the potential to extend the

visibility, coherence and effectiveness of the EU. Secondly, that the impact of the EEAS depends on the varying levels of cohesion with third countries which is very much dependent on social and cultural contexts. Finally, that the future prospects of the EEAS are considered with recommendations and insights hypothesised.

At the time of writing, research in this area is both topical and valid especially given the positive result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2009 Irish referendum. Although any changes to how the EU operates its foreign policy have not yet been finalised, and a number of EU Member States have not supported the ratification of the EU Constitution and Lisbon Treaties, based on interviews conducted with 35 European diplomats on this very topic, the opinion is that the proposals will indeed go ahead in the future, although the predicted timeline does vary, and at present it very much tied up with what will happen with the pending Lisbon Treaty. Ultimately, the study presented here offers an empirical assessment of the EEAS proposals, a relatively recent development which has been largely under-researched, as can be seen from the relative lack of studies of the EEAS compared to the vast array of literature available pertaining to the CFSP in general. Moreover, even where there have been empirical and conceptual evaluations of the EEAS proposals, the Asia-Pacific region has been entirely ignored. This thesis thus provides an innovative contribution towards filling this void in the literature.

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## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

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#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The theoretical debates introduced in this chapter relate to the EU's competences in the international community and are fundamental to the development of the central argument. Because of the nature of theory as a phenomenon in methodology, and EU foreign policy specifically, no single theory is enough to explain and understand EU foreign policy generally and the European External Action Service (EEAS) in particular. Writing in 1991, Holland noted that when it came to theorising the European Union's foreign policy "no single EPC [European Political Cooperation] theory has been promulgated – indeed it would be inappropriate and foolhardy to do so" (1991b, p. 5). Because of this, two theories are presented here to help conceptualise the EEAS proposals. Firstly, the capabilities and expectations of the EU as an international actor, and secondly, an analysis of the EU acting in a normative manner.

Although broader international relations theories such as constructivism, realism, functionalism or liberalism may be useful in understanding the role of the EU globally, it is postulated that the intricate and unique nature of the EU means that it requires a tailor-made understanding. For example, realism argues about the centrality of the nation-state (Morgenthau, 1967). Whereas this centrality remains in some areas of EU foreign policy, it is no longer adequate in understanding the EU in its entirety.

Furthermore, whilst there have been various conceptualisations of the EU as an external actor, the two theories presented in this thesis have been selected because they encompass both an agency centred understanding of the EU that deals with its resources and capabilities of the EU, and the identity centred NPE which deals with the understandings and norms that characterise the EU's role(s) in the world and is based on the idea that shared values and identity, rather than personal interests, drive

the EU. Other theories which have been considered but ultimately refused for this thesis includes the assumption that some Member States are either primarily concerned with their Atlantic relationship, rather than strengthening EU integration, or otherwise see little cost-benefit in increasing their foreign policy status (Hoffmann, 2000, pp. 191-192; Peterson, 1998, p. 11). This understanding has been considered and ultimately rejected for the purposes of this study for two primary reasons. Firstly, the proposals put forward in both the Constitutional and Lisbon treaties suggest a move away from these concepts towards an acceptance by Member States that further political integration will be ultimately beneficial. Secondly, the focus of the thesis – the EU as an actor in the Asia-Pacific region and Member States’ – means a need to move beyond such understandings.

Other EU specific theories concentrate on internal decision-making processes, for example, on the institutions of the EU, and the allocation of power and decision-making (such as intergovernmentalism (Moravscik, 1991) and supranationalism (Sandholtz and Zysman (1989)). For example, Forster and Wallace (1996) argue that one of the impediments of EU foreign policy lies in its weak supranational decision-making processes. Whilst such understandings may be useful to an extent, it is postulated, and will become clearer as the thesis progresses, that the expectations-capabilities gap, combined with NPE, covers such considerations, but provides a more comprehensive platform for understanding the EU’s role in the world.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline a coherent theoretical framework through which the phenomenon behind the proposal introducing the EEAS can be understood. In addressing this issue, some key questions become apparent: How does the EU currently conduct its foreign policy and what flaws are present in it that requires the establishment of the EEAS? Is there a genuine desire for the EU to be a real global influence, and if so, how does it plan to exercise this through the establishment of a common diplomatic service?

The proposals to introduce the EEAS have been active since the Laeken Intergovernmental Conference in 2001. Thus far, the proposals have survived rejection a number of times, (in 2004 and 2008 by public referenda in France, Netherlands and Ireland respectively) but were resurrected ultimately. This seems to

indicate that there is a real need and/or desire to see these proposals actualised. This begs the question; why has the EEAS, in the form of the two Treaties, been consistently resurrected? What is missing in the EU's current structure?

## **2.2 CONCEPTUALISING THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE EXPECTATIONS – CAPABILITIES GAP**

In 1993 Hill first introduced the idea that a gap existed between what was expected of the EU's (then imminent) foreign policy in the form of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and what it was capable of. Although Hill did not advocate that it be used as a theory *per se*, his 1993 article has come to stand out as a unique and valuable way of analysing and measuring the effectiveness of EU foreign policy. The creation of the CFSP was hailed as a great step towards increasing the EU's international presence, with the words 'foreign' and 'security' seemingly promising that the newly named European Union would emerge as a strong and united actor in the context of the post Cold-War world order. However, while the CFSP signalled a commitment from EU actors to operate at a more effective global level, the reality has proved to be less impressive. The result of slow reactions to conflict close to home in the Balkans as well as in the first Iraq War (Hill, 1993, p. 306), led Hill to comment on the increasingly apparent gap between what was expected of the Union in difficult circumstances, and what it was actually capable of. Hill was critical of the EU's newly formed foreign policy, because he thought that it would lead to expectations being placed on it commensurate with a traditional nation-statist foreign policy, but without the Union necessarily having the appropriate tools to implement a 'real' foreign policy. This would, according to Hill, consequently result in disappointment from third parties when the EU failed to deliver. Although commonplace now, at the time Hill's contribution was considered innovative and contributed to a growing body of literature on the emerging 'actorness' of the Union which is primarily concerned with the capability of the EU to be recognised as an international actor world wide.

Hill focused his attention primarily on the need for institutional change in order to improve the capability of the EU. It appears that an ethos of what the institutions of

the EU stand for both individually and as a collective whole has been evolving since the 1970s, and this has been instrumental in helping establish the EU's 'actorness' on the world stage. This evolution has seen the EU move from being seen as a solely economic actor to encompassing a wide number of common values which it wishes to export; a notion which will be discussed in further detail in the next section.

International relations theories such as realism have traditionally viewed the primary international actors as being nation states. Such an understanding prompted Hedley Bull's famously derogatory critique of Europe that stated: "Europe is not an actor in international affairs, and does not seem likely to become one" (Bull, 1982 p. 151). Subsequently, others have been more open-minded about analysing the EU on the narrow nation state perspective. The debate is outlined below.

Although Richardson (1996, p. 3) has argued that the EU has state like qualities, it has been consistently acknowledged that the unique constitutional arrangement of the EU means that unique ways of understanding its international role are required. White (2004, p. 45) has noted that the EU has a "distinctive non-state" presence, and according to Ginsberg (2001);

The EU is not a state...the EU is a partially constructed international political actor, neither a state nor a political union of states...[and] [c]omparing and assessing EFP [European Foreign Policy] as if the EU were a state...is a slippery slope" (pp. 9 &12).

The problem also lies in the fact that there is an expectation that actors should have state-like qualities (Rosamond, 2005, p. 466). It is because of this misconception and falsehood that Manners and Whitman (2003, 395) believe that the EU's actor capability has been unfairly criticised.

The conundrum then, is how to conceptualise the EU's actions in the world arena. Although the EU is not a state, at the same time its impact in world politics is discernible (Hill, 1993). Consequently two terms are useful for understanding how the EU is viewed as an international actor, as well as its capability to live up to expectations. These are the EU's 'actorness' and presence. The two concepts are intricately linked (Betherton and Volger, 1999, p. 255) and are connected to external feedback on EU foreign policy (Ginsberg, 1999, p. 447). Manners and Whitman

(2003) have gone some way to thinking about the ways in which the discussion of the external representation of the EU might be tied to the earlier, long-standing debates about ‘actorness’ and ‘presence’. According to Manners and Whitman it is important to understanding “how the EU is constituted, constructed and represented internationally” (2003, p. 383). Indeed, one of the longest standing problems in the study of EU external relations concerns the conceptualisation of the EU as an actor.

Hill noted that conceptualising the EU’s actor capability is not a black and white phenomenon, and “[t]he community is a genuine international actor in some respects but not all” (Hill, 1993, p. 309). The idea that the actor capability of the EU has had varying degrees of success has been consistently supported since Hill first made this conclusion and the challenges it faces in this area been attributed to its institutional set-up (Vanhoonaeker 2005; Chaban *et al.*, 2006).

Clarification about the EU’s international actorness may be drawn from Sjoestedt, (1977, p. 309), who deemed that an entity requires a number of attributes which enable it to be considered an international actor, including that it be “autonomous” and in possession of “structural prerequisites”. In other words, an actor needs to be sovereign and have institutions in place which allow it to conduct its own affairs. Included in the latter is ‘a set of diplomatic agents’. Indeed, Hill (1993) argued that the EU would only become a credible international actor when it was in possession on these traits. The latter aspect is crucial to the understanding of this thesis, as the EEAS has the potential to change the institutional arrangement of the EU, and will introduce a radical new way of organising its diplomatic agents. Smith has described the EU’s international actorness as “the EU’s ability to function actively and deliberately in relation to other actors in the international system” (Smith, K, 2003, p. 24). In other words, it is the condition of the EU in which it interacts with other entities on the world stage that gives it its actor status.<sup>6</sup>

One of the first requirements of being an actor is having a ‘presence’. Because the EU has influenced world events in some way, Hill argued that it is almost indisputable that it has some kind of a presence (Hill, 1993, pp. 310 – 311). The EU’s presence is

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<sup>6</sup> See below.

closely related to both how it is perceived (*ibid*, p. 309), as well as the expectations placed on it internally and externally. Presence “is defined by a combination of factors: credentials and legitimacy, the capacity to act and mobilise resources, [and] the place it occupies in the perceptions and expectations of policy makers” (Allen, and Smith, 1991, pp. 97-98). In other words, the EU’s presence is linked to it being accepted, and thus relies on the opinions of ‘others’.

However, just having its presence acknowledged does not automatically mean that the EU is recognised as an ‘actor’.<sup>7</sup> Manners and Whitman (1998b, p. 237) argued that there are a number of factors which define the EU’s presence, and that the EU’s “...absence [on the world stage] may be at least as important as ‘presence’ in giving a full account of the international role of the EU” (*ibid*, p. 234). The acknowledgement therefore, that the EU did have a ‘presence’ meant a move, in academic circles, away from the debate surrounding whether the EU had an international presence towards “testing the *effectiveness* (of the EU) as an important international actor” (Ginsberg, 1999, p. 430, (emphasis added)).

### **2.2.1 What is inhibiting the EU as an International Actor?**

The reasons why the EU is often ignored on the world stage are multi-faceted. Its capacity as an international actor is closely related to its foreign policy mechanisms, with the CFSP being the most obvious: “[t]he CFSP is seen as a ‘motor’ of actorness in the global arena and as the emerging prototype of something that might lead in time to ‘real’ foreign policy” (Smith, 1998, p. 77). Hill’s primary focus was on the creation of the EU’s newly created CFSP. Unsurprisingly then, much of the analysis of the EU’s international actor capability has focused on this area of policy, as it partly was the imperfect structure surrounding the CFSP that has led to much of the criticism focused on the EU.

The introduction of the CFSP was viewed as a signal that the EU had acknowledged that in order to influence world events, in particular to promote peaceful relations, it needed to involve itself with third parties not only economically, but also politically

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<sup>7</sup> The EU’s ‘actorness’ is often connected to the ‘International Identity of the European Union’, see below for more detail.

(Hill, 1997, p. 87). Formally, the division of who is responsible for any given EU foreign policy action is dictated largely by the pillar structure,<sup>8</sup> (see Figure 2.1) which was implemented by the Treaty on European Union (TEU), otherwise known as the Maastricht Treaty. The structure institutionalised at Maastricht means that Member States, the Commission, the Council of the European Union, the Council Secretariat and European Parliament (EP) all have differing (and sometimes overlapping) roles to play in the creation and implementation of EU foreign policy. The Commission is in charge of the Community pillar, which means if something is a community competence, then depending on the issue, one of the various Commissioners or DGs may be called upon. Member States, or the Council, are in charge of the ‘Common Foreign and Security Policies’ pillar. If the action is purely part of the mandate of the CFSP, then either the country holding the rotating Presidency or the HR may be called to speak for Europe. The external relations policies of the CFSP and European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) require involvement by both the Council and the Commission.

According to Rummel and Wiedermann (1998, p. 55), it is the pillared structure of the EU which inhibits its capability to act internationally. This structure has led to a number of criticisms which impact on the ability of the EU to conduct its foreign policy. This includes the internal and external confusion about who has the capability to act and deficits in EU cohesiveness and autonomy. Such criticisms have led commentators to note that institutional change is required if the gap identified by Hill is to be bridged.

The constantly evolving institutions and policies of the EU (and the European Community before it), has meant that its external action has been called “inconsistent” (Bretherton, and Vogler, 1999, p. 3). Because all of the EU’s actors have the ability to interact in third countries in some capacity, there can be confusion about the role each plays when communicating with the host country, especially in areas where there is mixed competence (Cameron, 2002, pp. 14 -15). This current system means that the EU is as confusing to outsiders as it is internally (Rosamond,

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<sup>8</sup> The ‘Three Pillars’ are: the European Communities pillar, the Common Foreign and Security Policy or CFSP pillar, and the Justice and Home Affairs pillar.

2005, p. 465). Fraser Cameron has addressed the confusing nature of who speaks for Europe:

If it was an individual, the CFSP would have long been locked up in a psychiatric ward with doctors assessing how it could have survived so long with such a deep split personality. Its schizophrenia was programmed at birth and was further complicated by the addition of the High Representative (Cameron, 2002, p. 3).

The challenging institutional set-up of the EU means that the many actors involved in its foreign policy conspire to make the EU's global role lack coherence (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 5). This is something which is vitally important in the promotion of EU's actor capability. In addition, according to Herrberg (1997, pp. 45 – 46), “[t]he more cohesive, i.e. the tighter the system is the more effectively it can react to the international system”. Here Herrberg is pointing out the importance of the EU to act collectively and unitarily at the international level in order to make it more successful.

A lack of sufficient autonomy for the EU to act is also related to the expectations deficit. This means that the EU lacks an autonomy which makes it distinctive and independent from other actors. Although Community institutions exercise considerable autonomy, this is often in internal matters such as judicial and penal law, and in foreign policy matters the Commission and other Community institutions still require Member State acceptance and cooperation to implement them (Kirchner, 2009, pp. 16 & 21). Even in trade matters, the Commission's “autonomy is curtailed somewhat by a negotiating mandate decided upon by the Council” (van Schaik, 2009, p. 199).

The EU's insufficient autonomy is not only inhibited by the myriad of factors mentioned above, but also in its (in)ability to act independently of America, especially in security and defence matters (Howorth and Menon, 2009, p. 736). It therefore becomes clear that the EU also requires sufficient authority in order to be a credible international actor. Consequently, it has been noted that the EU needs institutional change in order to improve its current confusing, incoherent structure.

For Smith, CFSP was only a stepping stone for the EU to creating a more substantial foreign policy (Smith, 1998, p. 77). The policy was also crucial to Hill's analysis, as it was its imperfections that led to the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ argument.

Therefore, Smith's opinion would explain why the EU's capability as an international actor was not as strong as it could have been.<sup>9</sup> Positively for the EU, the actors working in the various EU institutions have acknowledged the need to become more united in their foreign policy tasks (Nuttall, 2001). This has been most recently highlighted in the consistent support for the Lisbon Treaty. The mention of the EEAS in Lisbon is part of proposals which have the ability to radically change the CFSP and its tasks through streamlining the decision-making process and providing necessary structural changes and strengthening the EU's capability to act internationally. Through combining the resources of the different institutions, the EEAS has the potential to gain real legitimacy and support, which is crucial if the EU wants to be taken seriously on the international stage. Arguably the EU's pillared structure makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness and capability of the EU, and as a consequence, a variety of methodologies have been developed in this thesis to do so.<sup>10</sup>

Not only would the Lisbon proposals give the European Union a single legal personality under both domestic and international law (thus giving more support to NPE from a coherence, effectiveness and efficiency perspective), it proposes to abolish the complicated three-pillar structure implemented at Maastricht and streamline the Council's Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) system (retaining unanimity in a number of areas of key foreign, security and defence policies).

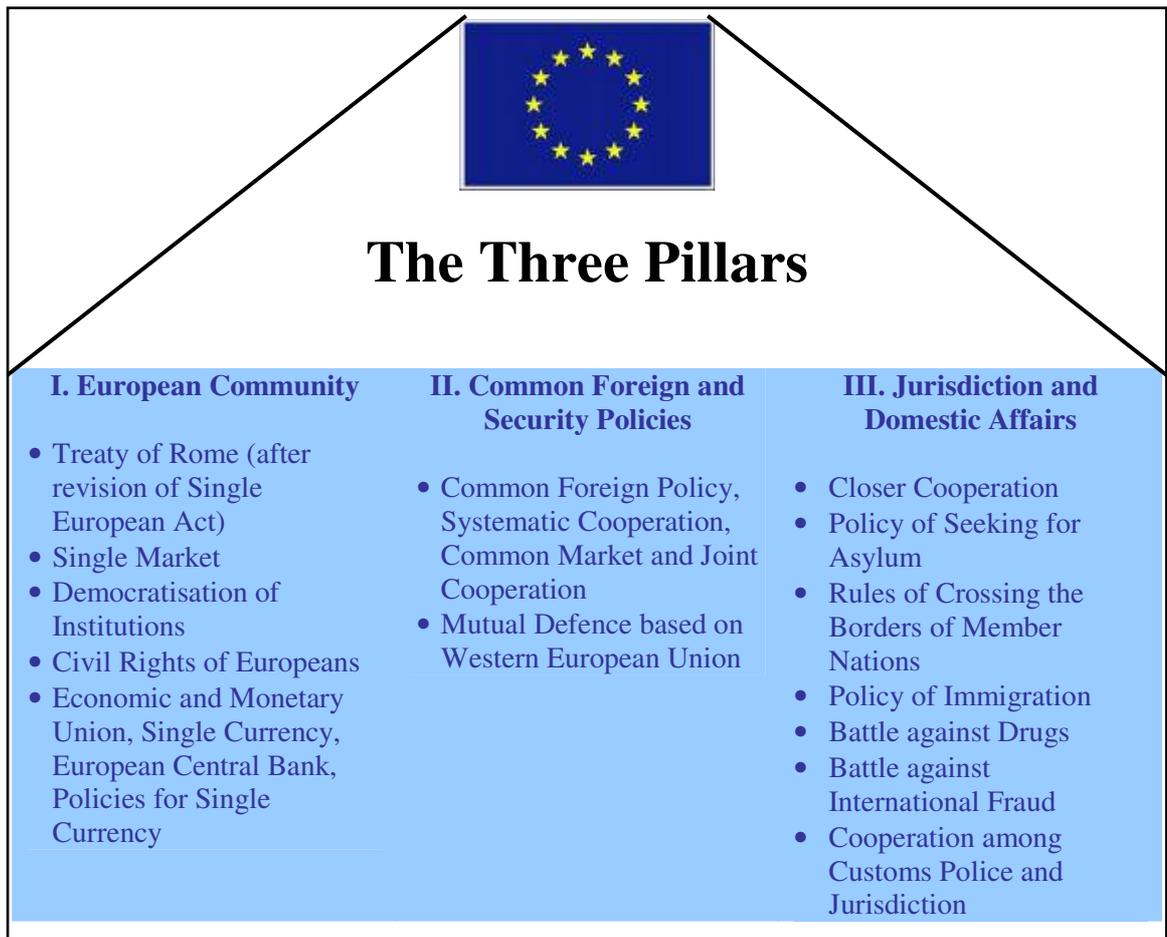
One part of this change could mean a transference of competences towards community competences. This is meaningful as the EU's actor capability has been closely connected to the level of supranational control associated with the policy in question (Groenleer, and van Schaik, 2007, p. 970). In other words, when supranational rather than intergovernmental decision-making dominates, the EU is seen as a more effective international actor. Such a finding is also significant for the thesis at hand given that there has been much discussion about which EU institution should hold primary control over the EEAS.

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<sup>9</sup> Many of these ideas were written over ten years ago. Therefore, they do not take into account recent changes in how the EU's foreign policy is conducted. Nonetheless, as we shall see, many are still relevant.

<sup>10</sup> See below.

**Figure 2.1: The Division of Competences under the Maastricht Treaty**



Source: Diagram drawn from <http://www.wtuc.edu.tw/eu/images/engthree.gif>, retrieved 01.08.2006.

In spite of the consistent support for a stronger EU foreign policy by EU Member States, they themselves have been linked to contributing to the EU's inability to act on the world stage. In fact, one of the major problems contributing to the deficit has been related to Member States jealously guarding foreign policy in what Bale considers the "last bastion of nationhood" (2004, p. 54). Ginsberg (1999, pp. 438 – 439) has noted that national interests may also drive EU foreign policy. Indeed, it has been noted that transatlantic relationships take precedence in some Member States' foreign policy decisions than EU-centric ones (Mahncke, 2009).

The interests of the so-called 'big three' countries are instrumental in understanding EU foreign policy generally (Moravcsik, 1991). David Allen (1998, p. 42) has noted that national foreign policy is at odds with European foreign policy. One reason for

the remaining ‘expectations-capabilities’ gap has been the (often absent) need to have the determination from Member States, in particular, the ‘big three’,<sup>11</sup> to help the CFSP to succeed (Hoffmann, 2000).<sup>12</sup> In addition, there is an argument that only when most of the Member States agree on something, is something likely to be successful. This situation is otherwise known as the ‘lowest common denominator’ bargaining (Hill and Smith 2000, p. 151),<sup>13</sup> and means that policies and actions are increasingly watered down until they become acceptable to all Member States and institutions and outcomes are suboptimal. Because the EU is increasingly gaining capabilities, Toje believes that the remaining ‘gap’ is related more to a lack of consensus about how to address pressing issues (2008b, p. 124). These assertions are particularly supported by the Union’s response to America’s decision to invade Iraq, as Britain decided to focus on its traditional transatlantic relationship, rather than support a united pan-EU response.<sup>14</sup>

Hill and Smith (2000, p. 153) have pointed out that one of the downfalls of the Maastricht Treaty was that it only represented a change at the procedural level, and did not in itself change the willingness of states to work in unison and to commit the necessary resources for the EU to become a stronger actor on the world stage. For example, although Member States wished to retain control over the CFSP, they proved unwilling to provide the necessary funding. The inadequate allocation of resources towards EU foreign policy has been a consistent source of criticism for the EU (Krotz, 2009, p. 564). Moreover, Krotz does not believe that a significant increase in Member State spending in this regard is likely in the future:

[C]hanging Europe into a real security and defence actor in world politics would require very significant defence budget increases. Such European spending upsurges of the scale required are not likely in the two or three decades ahead (*ibid*).

Positively for the EU, Ginsberg noted that the “politics of scale”, or the efficiency of doing more things together, could work towards attaining a stronger foreign policy from the point of view of Member States (1999 p. 438).

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<sup>11</sup> Britain, France and Germany.

<sup>12</sup> As the only EU permanent members of the Security Council, France and the UK have the strongest military capability.

<sup>13</sup> Indeed, it is perhaps for this reason that NPE is successful (see below).

<sup>14</sup> The EU response to Iraq and the implications that it had on the ‘expectations-capabilities’ gap is explored in further detail below.

It is not only Member State preferences which have inhibited further EU cohesion and cooperation, however. The success of the EU in attracting more members has also made decision making more problematic, as enlargement makes the task of agreeing to a common stance even more difficult, especially because of the unanimity requirement in matters deemed to be of prime national importance (Hoffmann, 2000, p. 196). Krotz supports the view that this has further inhibited the capability of the EU to act internationally (2009, pp. 564 – 565). Similarly, Haltzel (2009, n.p.) has concluded that, such has been the extent of enlargement and the challenges it has created, that there is currently ‘enlargement fatigue’ sentiment in the EU, meaning that future membership by countries such as Kosovo is unlikely.

Furthermore, Krotz supports the view that from an internal perspective, the tendency of Member State governments to use the EU as a scapegoat on unfavourable policies, and thus promoting anti-Brussels sentiment among EU citizens further inhibits the EU actor capability (2009, pp. 564 – 565). However, the strength of this view is questionable given evidence from Eurobarometer polls which consistently demonstrates that EU citizens wish to have more EU participation in foreign affairs (Eurobarometer 61, 2004, p. 62).

Having more Member State support of a strong EU foreign policy cannot be ruled out in the future. Indeed, the changes recommended in the Lisbon Treaty have been consistently supported by the governments in question. Furthermore, it seems that an evolution of foreign policy alignment has been happening since the implementation of the European Political Cooperation (EPC).<sup>15</sup> Ginsberg has noted that the effect of EPC was to successfully influence Member States through the ‘Europeanisation’ of diplomats:

As EPC habits and procedures of political cooperation became institutionalized into a corporate body of European values and norms, they eventually caused Member States to change their attitudes and preferences despite the absence of enforcement mechanisms (Ginsberg, 1999, p.444 [*sic*]).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter Five.

<sup>16</sup> Chapter Three provides a more thorough look at this phenomenon.

The phenomenon of 'Europeanisation' is likely to only increase its scope with the advent of the EEAS. Chapter Ten provides an analysis of the potential of this trend in relation to the EEAS.

According to Hill, if there is a desire for the European Union to be an international actor, then change was required (Hill, 1993, p. 316). Bretherton and Volger (1999, p. 168) supported this requirement:

If the Union is fully to realise the potential of its significant presence, it is vital that the economic power of the EC is articulated to a stronger sense of collective political purpose. A well co-ordinated and fully functioning common foreign policy would have this effect.

A number of capabilities have been added to the EU's foreign policy competence since Maastricht. This has led to Ginsberg (1999, p. 430) commenting that the so-called 'expectations-capabilities gap' had begun "to narrow". From one perspective, it has been assumed that the 'gap' was associated with a "lack of a powerful instrument, a 'military arm' of the EU" to give the EU real international credibility (Rummel and Wiedermann, 1998, p. 57). Consequently, many reassessments of the 'expectations-capabilities gap' have focused on improving the EU's military capabilities.

According to Hill and Smith (2000, p. 169) the '1996 Reflection Group' signified an acknowledgment by EU officials that the 'expectations gap' did in fact exist and steps were taken to reduce it. This meant that the debate had moved beyond the purely academic realm and was becoming a real political issue. The ultimate result was the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) which made a number of steps beyond what people had envisioned the Union was capable of, including the establishment of the High Representative (*ibid*).<sup>17</sup>

More institutional reforms aimed at giving the EU military capability were undertaken at the 1999 Helsinki European Council. The development of the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) gave the EU the capacity to coordinate and deploy a force of 60,000 troops, at 60 days notice. While this establishment was aimed at improving the EU's capability, there has been a cautious response about the extent of its success as:

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<sup>17</sup> See Chapter Five.

The acquisition of a military capability with the size of a full corps with 15 brigades could prove to be futile if the European Union does not acquire the institutional ability to take appropriate decisions at the right time (Van Staden *et al* 2000, p. 9).

In other words, it is one thing to have a military capacity, but the EU needs to ensure that it is effectively and efficiently despatched. Subsequently, the European Security Strategy (ESS) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) were introduced, and these have been described as further ways for the EU to gain credibility in world crises (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 171).<sup>18</sup> According to Deighton (2002, p. 720): “ESDP has grown out of a long-term process in which the Union has sought to project power beyond its borders”. However, in spite of a step towards granting the EU greater power in the field of security and defence policy:

Lack of political will to pay for greater capabilities for the ESDP has put a brake on developments: while European deficiencies have been publicly rehearsed since the Kosovo air-strikes, effecting change has been tortured, and many capability gaps remain (*ibid*, p. 729)

The ESDP has been hailed as a monumental step towards developing the EU’s capability (Howorth, 2007). However, because of this lack of political will it still arguably lacks coherence especially when one considers that it is not an EU army as such, and that the various defence groups are often divided about who they work with. For example, the Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support (NORCAPS) is aimed at only improving military cooperation of Nordic countries (Herolf, 2000, p. 127). More recently, the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX), the EU’s police and justice mission to Kosovo, was dispatched to solve the problem of fighting over Kosovo’s independence (2008). Furthermore, it is arguable whether or not the EU even requires a military capability in order to be an effective international actor, as it has a number of other capabilities in this respect, many of which are outlined in NPE.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> For example, in Aceh.

<sup>19</sup> See section 2.3.

### 2.2.2 *Outside Influences and Non-Europe*

Although the EU has been the focus of much of the criticism surrounding the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’, some of the blame which has been placed on the EU is beyond its control. In particular, it has been noted that the CFSP was “baptised by fire” (Ginsberg, 2001). This meant that the CFSP was barely established when it was called on to act in an international crisis (the Balkans war). This idea has been supported by Hill and Smith (2000, p. 153) who have pointed out that the EU needs to educate the public about its capabilities and to inform them that change will not happen over night. Without this education, it was inevitable that the CFSP would be harshly judged. In addition, Hill’s 1993 article noted that the European Union needed to be careful about its ‘capability-expectations gap’, and that it needed to reduce and downplay the expectations which third parties placed on it. However, such communication could be difficult to enact.<sup>20</sup>

Judgement is not only internally driven, but EU external action is also subject to external influences, whether they are welcomed by the EU or not (Ginsberg, 1999, p. 435). Ginsberg noted the importance of ‘externalisation’ in EU foreign policy (*ibid* p. 437). For example, there was external pressure on the EU in the lead up to the Iraq war. This is also related to expectations, as it is on the expectation of others that the EU will act in a given situation. Therefore, it is clear that the EU is not entirely responsible for how it is perceived - it is also at mercy of outside influences.

This goes one step further than just pressure. In Hill’s oft-cited distinction, ‘actorness’ is only achieved when an entity is distinguished from and recognised by other entities in the international system (Hill, 1993). Likewise, for Stråth (2002), the ‘actorness’ of the EU is based on it being both different and acknowledged by non-European countries. Outsider perceptions of Europe are important because “no matter how hard the EU struggles to establish itself as an international actor, the result inevitably depends on whether third countries regard the EU as such” (Tsuruoka, 2008, p. 8). Allen and Smith (1990) have recognised that this has much to do with the fact that the presence of the EU needs to be regarded as legitimate and perceived to be important

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<sup>20</sup> Chapters Three and Eight introduces concepts surrounding the possibilities for improving the EU’s communication strategies.

by other actors in the system.<sup>21</sup> Unlike nation-states, the EU is not necessarily acknowledged by others:

[T]he European Union does not benefit from the norm of automatic recognition. Recognition of the EU by third parties is discretionary, and they have traditionally been reluctant to grant it in full (Caporaso and Jupille, 1998, p. 215).

These perceptions also add to the EU's 'expectations-capabilities gap. For those living outside the Union's borders, understanding the "political mixity"<sup>22</sup> of the EU can lead to a confusion about who third countries should communicate and interact with when dealing with the Union, and is linked to the highly complex nature of the EU as well as its constantly changing foreign policy mechanisms (Fiske de Gouvía, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 21). This is sometimes known as the EU's "structural complexity" (Krotz, 2009, p. 563). It is the outsiders' conception of the EU that this thesis considers in Chapters Seven and Eight.<sup>23</sup>

A lack of EU coordination between its different factions has the potential to have repercussions world wide. For example, it has been noted by Puetter and Wiener (2007, p. 1066) that the EU's "inability to co-ordinate political positions internationally can potentially translate into outright paralysis of international and regional organizations" [*sic*].

Although it is difficult to measure the EU's presence, and indeed its success, in being recognised by 'non-Europe', this thesis does so from two different perspectives. Firstly, it has been noted that one way to measure presence is through an entity's presence in the media since the visibility of an actor in the media, be they a politician, an institution or an international entity like the European Union, will influence how it is perceived by that media's audience as:

Accounting for the EU's external perceptions is argued to be instrumental in understanding images which potentially impact the Union's external actions and capabilities, and thus affect its internal rhetoric and self-visions of foreign policy (Chaban, Kelly and Bain, 2009, p. 279).

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<sup>21</sup> See Chapter Three for an in-depth look at important concepts of the legitimacy of the EU.

<sup>22</sup> This was first introduced by Groux and Manin 1985, pp. 58 -769, and means the multitude of external actors.

<sup>23</sup> Also see below for more information on the importance of outsiders' perceptions of the EU.

Therefore, the EU's presence as an international actor in the Singaporean and New Zealand news media is introduced. Secondly, elite and public opinion interviews and surveys are introduced in order to understand if the EU is considered in Singapore and New Zealand to be a significant actor and if so, in what fields.

### ***2.2.3 Case Studies on the Expectations-Capabilities Gap***

In spite of the limitations of EU foreign policy, “the EU undoubtedly creates ‘footprints’ in world politics” (Rosamond, 2005, p. 465). But because of the EU's multi-dimensional personalities, coupled with the fact that “[w]hat the EU is and what kind of model it might be is far from static” (*ibid* p. 475), it is difficult to assess its international actor capability. Moreover, the problem when assessing the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ is not ascertaining that the EU does influence, but rather the extent and significance of this influence (Reis, 2008, p. 163).

The EU's foreign policy lies in not only the CFSP and the ESDP but it also conducts bilateral relationships in addition to its traditional economic relations (Rosamond, 2005, p. 465). Helen Smith (1998) has noted that EU foreign policy may be understood by *one* of its three conditions - Member State foreign policy, EU foreign policy and community-led foreign policy. Unsurprisingly, this means that many of the analysis's of the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ have tended to concentrate on specific areas of EU competence. In contrast, White has asserted that EU foreign policy can only be understood through a combination of all of its foreign policy components (White, 1998, p. 44).

It is undeniable that the EU is a strong international presence. However, as described above, its political competences have led to considerable criticism. For this reason, the EU has often been called an ‘economic giant but political dwarf’. The EU is currently unable to act formally in international relations, except in explicit areas, such as trade and customs – areas which have been conferred through the EU's treaties. Indeed, it is in these areas that the EU has been acknowledged as an international actor (Krotz, 2009, p. 557). According to McNamara and Muenier (2002, p. 849), “[t]he EU is already one of the two most powerful actors in the world

in the realm of trade, and it [also] wields considerable influence in international trade negotiations”. Hill and Smith (2005b, p. 12) have noted that the EU might be understood as a ‘trading state’. An area in which the actorness of the EU has been consistently criticised has been in the realm of crisis management. The introduction of the CFSP highlighted the EU’s (in)ability to act in a crisis (Krotz, 2009, pp. 564 – 565).<sup>24</sup> Indeed, although some capabilities have been added to the EU’s crisis management ability, much criticism remains.

Whereas it is acknowledged that the EU is an international actor in some respects, “[t]he fate of its actorhood in the domains of foreign policy, security and defence is important” (*ibid*, p. 558). For example, events in the Middle East, and the Balkans showed that “the Community is not an effective international actor, in terms both of its capacity to produce collective decisions and its impact on events” (Hill, 1993, p. 306). The result of this criticism was the establishment of a number of military and political competences to its ever-growing competence arsenal.

According to Hill, a ‘real crisis’ was needed to spur the required change from within in order to address the Union’s deficiencies (Hill, 1993, pp. 322, 326). It is difficult to analyse whether the number of crisis’s which the EU has faced since 1993 have resulted in a deepening of foreign policy cooperation among EU Member States or not. However, given that prior to the writing of the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties, the EU faced a number of challenges and criticisms — for example, the events of September 11,<sup>25</sup> and the embarrassment of being unable to reach an internal agreement in the lead-up to the 2003 Iraq war and the Georgian crisis, these events could have resulted in a determination by EU officials to persist with the embattled Treaties. The EU’s capabilities have indeed improved since these events and its influence and resources are now expected and needed in world affairs (Hill, 2004, p. 148).

Hill’s prognosis of the effect of September 11 2001 was that “[at] the practical level the EU has acted with an unforeseeable speed, range and flexibility since 11

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<sup>24</sup> For example, in the war in Iraq and Georgian crisis.

<sup>25</sup> Manners (2006) believed that the move towards militarisation since September 11 has been a step towards creating a European ‘super state’.

September, seemingly unhindered by the infamous three-pillar system” (Hill, 2004, p. 150). However, on the war in Iraq, the EU remained noticeably silent (*ibid*, p. 152). This has resulted in the remark that within the EU, both ‘coexistence’ and ‘cooperation’ are now the order of the day: “Most states may have no intention of relinquishing their own diplomacy, but equally it would not occur to them to opt out of the CFSP” (*ibid*, p. 160). Therefore, although the EU has improved in the way it communicates and implements its foreign policy, it is by no means perfect. In fact, the EU was glaringly absent in the international arena in the Iraq war.

The EU’s reaction to the Georgian crisis was likewise disjointed. The division was particularly evident between Central and Eastern European Member States who condemned Russia’s presence in the region, while countries with close ties with Moscow, such as France and Germany, were reluctant to do so (Benhold, 2008). Indeed, the incident has been claimed to have the equivalent significance for the EU as the events of 11 September 2001 had in America because in its wake the “EU’s illusions of emancipation have been rudely shattered and the bloc’s capabilities found desperately wanting” (Lobjakas, 2008).

It was perceived that the Kosovo crisis could have forced the EU to take on more responsibility in international security. However, although the EU has been active in promoting peace in Kosovo, it has failed to unanimously recognise Kosovo as an independent state. According to Harsch (2008), the EU’s involvement in Kosovo exposes its disunity and structural weakness. Much of this disunity is focused around Member States, such as Slovakia, Spain, Romania, Cyprus and Greece, who fear that recognition of Kosovo could encourage separatist movements in their own countries. Harsch has noted that:

When most EU countries backed Pristina's declaration of independence this February, it was supposed to demonstrate European leadership on Kosovo. Instead it has become another demonstration of Europe's difficulty to speak with a single voice on crucial foreign policy issues (*ibid*, n.p.).

In addition, EU representation in Kosovo is disunited because of its multiple representations: the head of the European Commission's Liaison Office, the chief of the EULEX and the EU Special Representative. In order to improve EU capability in

regards to Kosovo's independence, Harsch has recommended overhauling the unanimity clause within the Council (*ibid*).

Similarly, Toje (2008b) has also presented an analysis of the 'expectations-capabilities gap', but in doing so has moved beyond the traditionally perceived failures of EU foreign policy and instead has looked at the EU as an actor in the Sudanese province of Darfur between 2003 and 2008. In analysing the EU's capacity to act in this respect, Toje commented that it is the lack of a streamlined decision-making process, linked to the fact that most foreign policy decisions between the various actors are inhibited by the unanimity clause which led to the gap in this instance (*ibid*, p. 130).

Duke (2002/3) has noted that since the advent of EU crisis management, a 'rhetoric-resources gap' exists. By this he means that although the EU is openly promoting itself as a new security actor, its aspirations in this field are met by inadequate resources and funding. Moreover, although the consequences of this deficit have not yet been catastrophic, there could be real problems in the future.

But EU foreign policy cannot be understood from a purely economic perspective, nor are the capability and limitations of the CFSP sufficient. Rather, the EU as an international actor must be understood from the point of view of the actions and capabilities of all of the practitioners of EU foreign policy (Holland, 1995, p. 556). The concept of NPE (outlined in detail below) assumes that the EU wishes to influence the world in a unique way – primarily through the exportation of its core values. Likewise, a number of studies have looked at the capability of the EU in these facets and are useful for further understandings of the EU as an international actor.

Although Rosamond (2005, p. 465) has noticed the absence of clearly discernible EU 'interests', and the influence of these on the 'expectations-capabilities gap' (Rosamond, 2005, p. 465) and Toje (2008b, p. 126) has noted problem that the EU has no agreed definition of itself, EU capability may be influenced by the values which it wishes to export (Ginsberg, 1999, p. 439). Following from Hill, Holland (1995) applied the theory behind the 'expectations-capabilities gap' to a case study –

the operation of the CFSP in South Africa. Holland raised the point that the emphasis in the EU's relationship with South Africa was based on "support for democracy, the rule of law, social justice and the promotion of human rights", with the result — South Africa's return to democracy — hailed as a success story for EU foreign relations and its capability as an actor (Holland, 1995, pp. 565, 567). Moreover:

[T]he South African experience showed that Europe, when motivated and in common agreement, possessed the resources and instruments to match current expectations and capabilities (*ibid*, pp. 569 - 570).

Judging from this then, the EU could be successful when working from a normative framework.<sup>26</sup> Other normative values include the espousal of environmental protection and human rights. Using the influence of the EU in environmental matters as a case study, Jupille and Caporaso (1998) applied four criteria — the need of outside recognition, the legal authority to act, autonomy, and a level of cohesion. These features were also followed by Groenleer, and van Schaik. Accordingly:

Cohesion refers to similarity or compatibility of the basic goals and the means to attain these goals. Authority pertains to the policy making powers that member states have delegated to the EU, while autonomy implies both institutions distinct from the institutions of member states (even if intermingled) and independent goal formation, decision-making and implementation. Recognition, finally, refers to acceptance of and interaction with the EU by other (non-EU) actors (2004, p. 4 [*sic*]).

However, Doidge (2008, p. 38) has criticised their analysis as being insufficient as its focus on primarily on multilateral negotiations fails to account for situations which may require the use of hard power.

Caporaso and Jupille (1998) concluded that in international environmental obligations, neither the EU, nor the Member States have full competence in international environmental accords which consequently impacts on EU actor capability. Other studies which have chosen environmental focuses are Lightfoot and Burchill (2004) and Groenleer, and van Schaik (2007). The latter concluded that the EU has fulfilled the criteria for being a credible international actor in the fields of the International Court of Justice and in the Kyoto Agreement. The former noted that in areas of sustainable development the EU is hindered because of its lack of coherence.

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<sup>26</sup> For more information about this, see below.

Although they are only case studies, nevertheless these four criteria are also useful for understanding the EU's actor capability, and indeed, the proposals for the introduction of the EEAS. Whilst the first three criteria are further assessed in the following section, because of its strong overlap with NPE, the last – external recognition – is outlined in more detail in Section 2.4.

#### ***2.2.4 A Reverse Gap***

More recently, some EU scholars have also noted the existence of a 'reverse expectations-capabilities gap', by which is meant that although the EU is growing in weight and influence as an international actor, expectations of the Union in the international arena remain low. According to Tsuruoka, the lack of understanding of the EU's role and importance as an international actor may be attributed to a number of factors, including uninterested third parties, the complexity of EU policy making, a preference for more traditional bilateral relationships, the failure of the CFSP in many high profile issues, and, importantly for this thesis, the absence of a single EU 'voice' (Tsuruoka, 2004). The 'expectations-capabilities gap' could also be dangerous for the EU's supposed goals of becoming a credible international actor and the Lisbon proposals in particular, because if it is perceived that the EU is unable to act coherently and meaningfully, then it will not be taken seriously. Nevertheless, the concept of an EU expectations deficit is helpful in understanding EU foreign policy.

It seems that this so-called gap has been present more in the minds of the EU's public and political leaders close to home who have looked to the EU to provide security in times of crisis, rather than third countries geographically distant from the EU's shores, like Singapore and New Zealand. In the case studies presented subsequently, Tsuruoka's hypothesis seems highly credible – there does appear to be a reverse 'expectations gap' in the minds eye of third country publics, who place little expectations on the EU to act globally. This is in contrast to the Eurobarometer polls<sup>27</sup> which consistently demonstrate that EU citizens wish for the EU to have more participation in foreign affairs (Eurobarometer 61, 2004, p. 62).

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<sup>27</sup> See above.

### ***2.2.5 Predictions for the Future***

The current situation in which the many voices of European Union external relations is confusing, the new role of a Foreign Minister, proposed in the Treaty for a Constitution on Europe and the Lisbon Treaty, could arguably offer a remedy for this confusion. Given the examples and case studies presented above, it is clear that a systematic analysis of the EU's success in addressing its expectations and capabilities as an international actor is difficult, leading many academics to instead choose to do so from limited perspectives. Whilst Hill's analysis was focused primarily on the success (or lack thereof) of the CFSP, this thesis expands the focus of the 'expectations-capabilities gap' to include the specific EEAS proposals. Furthermore, perhaps it is the lack of cohesion of EU foreign policy that acts as an impediment to the EU's 'actorness' and effectiveness. Because of the nature of the EEAS proposals, they have the ability to improve on this aspect of EU foreign policy. For example, in drawing staff from the different institutions and Member States, the EEAS would give the EU a legal and autonomous voice in international relations. Furthermore, and through a variety of mechanisms, it would enable the EU as a whole to be seen as more cohesive from the perspective of third countries. Although a prospective analysis is in many ways more difficult to consider than a retrospective one, the variety of methods utilised for this study, which draw on a number of perspectives, combine to give a robust description of the effectiveness of EU foreign policy and potential of the EEAS proposals.

Caution must also be noted however, as, based on the literature presented here, the introduction of crucial changes does not necessarily correlate with substantial improvements in the 'expectations-capabilities gap'. Krotz (2009,) for example, has claimed that the EU is not a credible international actor, and does not seem likely to become one in the near future even with these Lisbon changes. Even with the introduction of the EEAS, based on the experience of the last ten years, political will for the proposals to go ahead will not miraculously mean an answer to the EU's inconsistent and oft-described ineffective foreign policy mechanisms. Indeed, as Hill and others have mentioned, despite the seemingly great steps taken towards attaining a single foreign policy for the EU, first in terms of the CFSP and later under the High Representative, a continuing expectations gap has remained. Without the necessary

support from Member States and individuals to not only provide the requisite funding, as described above, but to also publicly support and commit to improving the *status quo*, the EEAS may well be paralysed in its effectiveness. Indeed, this may lead to a further ‘expectations deficit’.

Perhaps it was not just a lack of coordination resulting from the EU’s stance towards the war in Iraq which has spurred on the desire for change within the Union and resulted in the Laeken Declaration and the resulting EEAS proposals: perhaps there have been other influences? The following section introduces another line of thought for explaining the desire for change within the European Union. That is, that the EU may wish to distance itself from forceful military operations and in the process market itself as a force for ‘good’, in other words, as a normative power. Although the distinction between NPE and the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ is not absolute (Ginsberg, 1999, p. 436), for the purposes of clarity, it has been presented here as such.

### 2.3 NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE

Since its modest beginnings as the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the EU has progressed economically in a variety of ways, with political evolution happening at a much slower pace. This has resulted in the more traditional understanding of the Union as an ‘exporter’ of its economic values to other parts of the globe, for example, as a model for regional economic integration. NPE goes beyond this concept and encompasses the exporting of values *other than* economic systems, although there may be some overlaps with the former model.<sup>28</sup> NPE is based on the idea that shared values and identity, rather than personal interests, drive the EU. Møller (2008, p.318) has stated that:

[T]he European Union has carved out a respectable place for itself as a player, sometimes, leading player in the efforts to bring into play some of the many sector policies of the European Union, for example, Environment Policy and Energy Policy.

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<sup>28</sup> For example, with trade.

The concept of NPE covers many aspects of the European Union and is particularly important for its external relations policy. Although it is not without its faults, it is a useful place to start to conceptualise the EU's international role (see for example, Treacher, 2004).

Writing in the early 1970s amidst a new international climate, Francois Duchêne (1972, 1973) saw nation states reassessing their interests and increasing their dependence on others. In this context, he witnessed a movement away from military powers towards “the influence which can be wielded by a large political co-operative formed to exert essentially civilian forms of power” (Duchêne, 1973, p. 19[sic]). This movement arose out of the devastating experience of two World Wars, and a wish to avoid any future ones. Duchêne named this movement in Europe as ‘Civilian Power Europe’, and emphasised that the strength of the EC lay not only in its economic power, but also in its position to export its own positive experiences of inter-state cooperation. Ginsberg has noted that ‘Civilian Power Europe’, along with enlargement, is one of the ways in which the EU has the capacity to influence the global arena (1999, pp. 445 – 446).

In Duchêne's view, the external relations of the EC were connected to its own experience of integration, and it emphasised the devaluation of military power and the exporting of values worldwide:

This is the spontaneous preference of an urbanised body of citizens, with rights, values and comforts to secure, for the ‘democratic’ and civil standards of the suburbs over those of the armed camp and the balance of power (*ibid.*, p. 20).

The notion of the EC as a civilian power, which promoted the social values of equality, justice and tolerance both at home at abroad made it appealing to others outside of the trading bloc. These concepts were innovative for the time, heralding a new debate about the role of the EC, and in many ways are still relevant today.

But Duchêne's voice came during a different political climate to the one that Europe operates under today, and was based on the premise that the global geopolitical situation meant that it was impossible for the EC to agree to become a military superpower. Also at this time, the foreign policy of the Community was based on a

loose set of rules and representatives, as opposed to the more fast-set rules of internal policy within the Community. The ECDs were still finding their feet,<sup>29</sup> and EPC was only beginning to materialise.

Institutionally, the Maastricht Treaty of 1993 signalled an important step in the creation of what appeared to be a real foreign policy for the European Union. It was in this context, following the end of the Cold War, that the EU established its role of promoting stability in troubled areas. Subsequently, the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997 introduced the HR of the European Union, finally giving the mandate to a single head to speak on behalf of the intergovernmental European Council. Following this altered political climate, Manners re-evaluated the concept of Duchêne's 'Civilian Power Europe' and assessed the relevance of it in a modern setting. Since then, a number of commentators have assessed the idea that Europe stands for a constructive, non-aggressive entity, aiming to make a positive contribution in the world.

### ***2.3.1 Internal and External Constructions of NPE***

Part of the EU's strength as an international actor lies in its normative capabilities. As the late 1980's extended the legal mandate of the European Union to include foreign policy for the first time, attention focused on how the EU expressed itself internally to its citizens and outwardly towards the rest of the world. The introduction of the CFSP in 1992 not only brought about an introspection of the capabilities of EU foreign policy, but also a re-evaluation of 'Civilian Power Europe'. The following section outlines the characteristics and capabilities of the EU as a normative power. In doing so, it explores whether it is this notion that is a driving factor behind the proposals in the Lisbon Treaty. Ian Manners (2002, 2006, 2008), is the seminal authority in the conceptualisation of the EU as a normative power. Specifically, Manners provoked questions about whether being a normative power is a contradiction in terms. Is it possible, Manners enquired, to be both a benign and a great power at the same time, as NPE implies? There are a number of concepts that need to be addressed in order to

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<sup>29</sup> See Chapter Five.

understand what Manners has named Normative Power Europe.<sup>30</sup> They are based on the reasoning that the EU is *sui generis*; a ‘soft-power’, influential, promotes a set of values, and is a force for good in the world.

NPE is consistent with the broad approach of ‘constructivism’, a contemporary and increasingly popular theory in international relations that seeks “to capture how the pursuit of value-oriented policies is constitutive of actors’ perceived normative identities” (Youngs, 2004, p. 418). Constructivists are interested in the formation of identity and values that develop specifically through communication. In other words, reality is socially constructed (Jackson and Sørensen, 2007, p. 164) and dependent on a shared understanding of what the EU is, and what it should be.<sup>31</sup> Constructivists are of the opinion that in contrast to realism, which emphasises the importance of materials and power in international relations, social relations such as values and identity are the most important (*ibid*, p. 162). According to Wendt, power is still an important concept in international relations, but it is not the crucial concept that needs to be taken into consideration:

The claim is *not* that ideas are more important than power and interest, or that they are autonomous from power and interest. The claim is rather that power and interest have the effects they do in virtue of the ideas that make them up (Wendt, 1999, p. 135).

The idea that the EU needs to be understood as a *sui generis* entity has been fiercely debated. The term has been introduced as a new way to understand the EU in International Relations because the EU is considered a unique form of authority. Commenting on the intergovernmental EPC, Pijpers (1991, pp. 31 – 32) argued that the EC did not display many signs of being unique, as it was still based on nation states. Similarly, Moravcsik (1993, p. 474), noted that: “although the EC is a unique institution, it does not require a *sui generis* theory”. In other words, these academics were of the view that it is more useful to compare the EU with other systems of governance, rather than try to see it as a new phenomenon.

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<sup>30</sup> Although differing terms have been used, they all have the underlying feeling of the EU as being benign and ultimately a good thing. See for example, Leonard, Mark, 2005, ‘Ascent of Europe’, *Prospect* 108, March, and more recently the term Ethical Power Europe has been used.

<sup>31</sup> See section 3.3.2 and Chapter Nine.

However, it is undeniable that the EU is a unique entity. Øhrgaard has argued that the CFSP is indeed a unique form of international cooperation and relations, but a conundrum remains:

While it may therefore fit uneasily into existing theories of international relations because it is *too unique*, it fits equally uneasily into traditional European integration theory because it is *not as unique* as the Community (2004, p. 27).

Indeed, should the EEAS proposals progress, they would further strengthen the notion of the EU as a unique institution in world affairs. With its multi-layered foreign policy, the EU's diplomatic arrangements already challenge the Westphalian system of states, which emphasised the absolute sovereignty of the nation state. The EEAS would mean the transfer of more sovereignty away from nation states.

Given that difference is an important concept for being a normative power, it is actually this condition of being unique which strengthens the concept NPE because "this particular difference predisposes it to act in a normative way" (Manners, 2002, p. 242). NPE goes one step further than just being different, because "it changes the norms, standards and prescriptions of world politics away from the bounded expectations of state-centricity" (Manners, 2008, p. 45).

As institutions are crucial when considering the 'expectations-capability gap', so are they also important in NPE because the different institutions involved in both the policymaking process and implementation make the Union unique (although the roles of the institutions are not static). For example, according to Manners, the responsibility of implementing normative practices externally has gradually moved away from the Commission and the EP to the Council. If one abides by the premise that European foreign policy requires "democratic legitimacy",<sup>32</sup> then this shift presents a concern. The nature of the Council's operations, whereby its agenda is often conducted in secret, and its head, the presidency, changes so regularly, it therefore tends to operate outside of public scrutiny (Fiske de Gouvía, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 12; Wagner 2006). This issue could prove important for officials when considering the construction of the EEAS, because if the officials wish to create something that is seen as legitimate, then it will need to create an EEAS which is

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<sup>32</sup> See Chapter Three.

accepted and legitimate, and therefore may need to include some kind of EP involvement.<sup>33</sup>

Part of the uniqueness of the EU is how it operates internationally. Although the normative values, which the EU promotes, originate within the borders of Europe, NPE highlights that the EU prefers to operate on a multilateral basis<sup>34</sup> that serves as a useful tool for the EU because functioning from an international platform enhances the legitimacy of what it does (Youngs, 2004, p. 419). In this way, the EU is a proponent of globalisation (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 18). Multilateralism means a preference for using and promoting international organisations like the United Nations. According to Michael Smith (2007) the economic weight of the EU, with 27 Member States behind it, means that the EU is able to use and shape these international institutions. Although multilateralism is often viewed as a recent phenomenon, even within Europe, multilateralism between states was used as a diplomatic tool as long ago as the seventeenth century (Berridge, 2005, pp. 151-152). Indeed, Europe is not the only entity to promote multilateralism, as there are many advantages to operating in this manner, according to Berridge, “in certain circumstances multilateral diplomacy actually provides the best chance for successful negotiation” (*ibid*, p. 153). The EU’s action in multilateralism is an area which was traditionally dominated by the United States, who established most of the international organisations which are known today.

Rummel and Wiedermann have commented that the pillared structure of the EU inhibits cooperation with multilateral partners “[b]ecause the Council and the Commission are only entitled to express their own views within some international organisations, like the UN and the WTO, if they do so as the EC’s representatives (1998, p. 60). In fact, the EU’s involvement with the United Nations further complicates matters, because in trade matters, Member States are not permitted to act on their own, because it is the exclusive competency of the EC, however, the EC is not able to ratify decisions, this must be done by Member States. Nevertheless, the EU is able to use its strength within the UN, often employing ‘silent diplomacy’ by

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<sup>33</sup> See Chapter Nine.

<sup>34</sup> Despite this emphasis, it has been pointed out that third countries prefer to deal with the EU countries on a bilateral basis (Holland, 1991a; Tsuruoka, 2004). For information on how New Zealand and Singapore prefer to deal with Europe, see Chapter Seven.

voting on issues as a group (Regelsberger, and Wessels, 2004, p. 28). The Kosovo dilemma (see above) strengthened the multilateral basis of the EU, as it worked closely with the UN and NATO other international actors “to help in the further development of a stable, democratic, multi-ethnic and peaceful Kosovo” (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 15.02.2008). Hence, although the EU is able to use some of the weight of the Member States and the institutions in order to gain strength in multilateral situations, the system is nevertheless ineffective and inefficient at present.

Related to the promotion of multilateralism is the endorsement of a “rule-based international order” based on “consensus, dialogue and negotiation” (Fukuyama, 2002).<sup>35</sup> The legal platform on which the EU operates is another important factor of NPE, and is based on a number of assumptions and constructions about how the EU operates both internally and externally. Operating as a normative power is to operate within the law (Sjursen, 2006, p. 245). The EU is a legally based system, which is reflected in the myriad of treaties that govern it. This has important implications for the normative values of the EU. Article 6 of the Treaty for the European Union (TEU) mentions a focus on ‘liberty, democracy’, ‘respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’ and the ‘rule of law’. More recently, these EU commitments as well as its role as a global leader in development have all been referred to in the Lisbon Treaty.<sup>36</sup> According to Manners, “the constitutionalisation of these normative principles in the highly contested Lisbon Reform Treaty marks the crystallisation and culmination of norms and practices which have been evolving over the past 15 years” (Manners, 2008, p. 48). However, it does not bode well for the European Union’s emphasis on both multilateralism and rule of law that it is largely ignored in multilateral fora (Govaere *et al*, 2004).

The argument that Europe is a normative power is a strong one, with a core argument being the wish to export its values around the world. According to former Commission President Romano Prodi, EU integration has been peaceful as well as successful at combining nations with widely varying social, political, legal and

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<sup>35</sup> This is also the basis on which diplomacy in general is based, so it will be interesting to see if this EU experience means a superior diplomatic actor than most nation states, despite the challenges it presents to Westphalia.

<sup>36</sup> See Chapter Nine.

economic traditions and “[n]ow it wishes to export its successful campaign to other parts of the world” (Prodi, 2000, p. 2). But in order to determine whether the EU is at all successful in this ‘global campaign’, it is important to explore what values it plans to export. According to Manners (2008), there are nine normative principles that the EU wishes to promote in other regions and nations globally. These are (but not limited to) — peace, freedom, democracy, human rights, rule of law, equality, social solidarity, sustainable development and good governance. The promotion of environmental issues and the peaceful resolution of conflicts have also been linked. These values can also be linked to cosmopolitanism<sup>37</sup> (Eriksen, 2006, p. 23), a theory which assumes that mankind is linked through shared understandings. Bretherton and Vogler (2006, p. 223) have commented on the move towards NPE:

The Union has translated its value-based identity into normative action, as promoter of human rights and sustainability across the international system. As a development and humanitarian actor the Union is distanced from the imperial legacy of the Member States and has developed a distinctive approach.

Human rights have tended to be the most researched, which may be because this is the primarily visible, tangent and distinct feature of NPE. However, even in human rights, the EU is divided. There is a clear separation between how the Commission and the intergovernmental CFSP actors approach human rights. In first pillar competences, ‘democracy, rule of law and human rights’ are generally treated as a package. Within the CFSP, the focus on human rights is treated as separate from the promotion and defence of democracy and the rule of law, with these receiving much less of an emphasis (Smith, K, 2003, p. 140). Despite human rights initiatives being at the top of the agenda, it is often declaratory by nature. Indeed, the emphasis in the CFSP on human rights is often viewed as a diversion from the fact that Member States find other areas more difficult to agree on (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 166). Nevertheless, the promotion of human rights is an important mechanism for the EU’s capability and visibility.

Development is a key strategy for the EU as an international actor as “trade and development policies are highlighted as powerful tools to promote reform and ensure

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<sup>37</sup> Which is based on the criteria of principles of human rights, democracy and rule of law also for dealing with international affairs.

stability” (Sjursen, 2006, p. 238). The EU’s development policies are ideally placed to be a strong network for the EU to promote and export its norms (Eeckhart, 2004, pp. 475 – 481). The EU operates a majority of its development policies under the Cotonou Agreement,<sup>38</sup> which was signed by members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and is mainly disseminated through the Commission and its ECDs. Normative rules are viewed as being very important in how the EU deals with post-colonial states (Laïdi, 2008, p. 2), with trade, conditionality and sanctions often used as tools to persuade third parties to take on European norms (Keukeleire, and MacNaughton, 2008, pp. 203 – 207). Conditionality covers the promotion of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, good governance, and market liberalism. From Europe’s point of view, these are all key areas for promoting growth in developing countries, although from the ACP side it is sometimes criticised as being driven by EU self-interest, and is not particularly effective (Santiso, 2002). Wallace has noticed that conditionality is negative, as it encourages the signatories to improve its development through the use of coercion (Wallace 2003a, p. 14). Holland has noted the importance of sanctions as being an instrument of EU capabilities (Holland, 1991).

ECDs have a particular role to play in developmental policy. Indeed, they were initially established to assist third world countries recover in the aftermath of colonialism and currently are in charge of undertaking development cooperation activities under the Lomé and Cotonou Conventions. According to Chris Patten this is one of the most important roles as “they deliver over €5 billion of external and development assistance per year in support of the EU’s agreed goals, and in support of the Union’s policies” (Patten *as cited in* Spence, 2004, pp. 61-76).

Regarding the environment, although the EU does not have a common environmental initiative on the same level as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008 p. 246), the EU has taken over the United States as the world leader in environmental matters (Vogler, 2005, pp. 835 – 837). Its success in environmental matters further supports multilateralism (for example, through the UN). The

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<sup>38</sup> The Cotonou Agreement provides a framework for the European Commission’s development activities in 78 countries in the artificially created region. The agreement will expire in 2020, and is updated every five years.

normative tools employed by the EU in its international affairs in many ways influences how third parties deal with it, because its stance on these issues is widely known and immovable. Therefore, countries are divided between (but not limited to) those who share these values outside of Europe, and those who believe that NPE values such as the promotion of human rights and rule of law are suitable only for Western countries. This will become clearer in the context of New Zealand and Singapore. A previous study on these countries has shown that:

[T]he majority of the interviewees in the fields of forestry and endangered species of animals and plants did not see the EU as a leader, but rather as a defensive and reactive actor, not least because of its internal decision-making process, which was portrayed as cumbersome and protracted and as often resulting in unclear positions (Chaban, Elgström, and Holland 2006, p. 253).

One area of NPE that is no longer as concrete as it once was is the military aspect of the EU. Where once it was taboo to discuss the possibility of the EU becoming an integrated military power, this is increasingly changing.

### **2.3.2 (Semi) Soft Power politics?**

Part of this normative puzzle on which the EU seeks to base the way it operates internationally is the focus on soft power tactics and efforts to create peace without the use of overt force (Sjursen, 2006; Smith, K, 2000; 2004). Nye (2006, n.p. [sic]) defined power as “the ability to alter the behaviour of others to get what you want” and soft power as “[a] country’s soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies” (*ibid*, 2008, p. 94). Soft power is linked to attraction (Nye, 2004) and “[w]hen policies and positions of states or nonstate actors have moral authority, or are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, their soft power is increased” (Gilboa, 2008, p. 61).

For Nye, soft power is “the power of seduction” (Nye, 2008, p. 96). Likewise, the strength of the EU’s soft power lies in its ability to shape the views of its partners (as has been discussed above regarding developing countries). Until the development of the RRF and the ESDP, the EU had no military capability and therefore relied on non-military tactics to promote its set of values to the world. Because of this, the EU was often deemed to be a ‘soft power’ actor in its international relations, as opposed to the

USA's 'hard power' capabilities. Even as far back as Duchêne and beyond, it has widely been argued that the EU's lack of military power is part of its success (in spite of Bull's (1982) belief that it needed military capability in order to become a credible actor).

The emphasis on a lack of a lack of military force is present in almost all academic commentary on NPE, although it is a contentious issue. As has been noted above, the EU's increasing capability as an international actor has been linked to its lack of an effective military arm. The EU's predecessor, the ECSC, emerged out of a desire to escape from power politics. However, the increasing militarisation of the EU in the form of the RRF, ESDP, ESS and the Political and Security Committee (PSC), were steps towards increasing Europe's power and may prove problematic for conceptions of NPE. Whereas Manners (2002) believed that it is important for the EU to remain a soft power, without any military capability, except in extreme situations, and did not believe that Europe would be able to be both a normative, passive power as well as a military one at the same time (*ibid*, 2006a). The EU's international 'presence' had been built on its normative actions and deeds, which helped to gain and keep the trust of its partners and beneficiaries around the world. By gaining a military capability, this would possibly endanger the 'civilian' aspects of the EU, thus indicating that the EU will need to be careful if it wants to continue having the image as a benign, soft power. Likewise, according to Karen Smith, adding a military component to the Union would not give it any more influence as an international actor (2000, p. 20).

Conversely, others do not believe that it would be contradictory for the Union to continue to develop a military capability to work alongside its 'soft power' politics. Indeed, it is viewed as complementary (Pettiteville, 2003, p. 137), and would strengthen the exportation of normative values through the use of civilian crisis management and to promote the 'rule of law'. Diez (2005) noted that the terms civilian power and normative power are not contradictory, and that the question is not whether a state is a power, but the extent to which it is one (p. 620). In other words, the two concepts, military power and the promotion of norms, are not mutually exclusive and hard power capabilities can complement soft ones. For example, the ESS was introduced as a reaction to the war in Iraq, it was threat driven and

emphasised the importance of multilateralism (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 59), and included a focus on the potential of the NPE policies of trade and development:

Active policies are needed to counter the new dynamic threats. We need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention...Trade and Development policies can be powerful tools for promoting reform. A world seen as offering justice and opportunity for everyone will be more secure for the European Union and its citizens (European Security Strategy, 2003).<sup>39</sup>

The current New Zealand minister for finance, Bill English has also noted the ineffectiveness of the EU's use of soft power politics. In a secretly taped discussion he noted that; "Europe has turned out to be particularly ineffective even in its own back yard... there still needs [to be] someone willing to pull the trigger" (Young, 2008). In other words, the EU's soft power is ineffective and requires the additional weight of a military capability.

Because of the number of military and security capabilities that the EU currently possesses, but which are still considered to be non-aggressive, being a 'soft power' no longer adequately describes the EU — 'semi-soft power' may be more fitting. Some, such as Robert Kagan (2003), even go as far to state that the EU would like to have a stronger military force if it was possible. In other words, Europe's focus on being a normative power is not a choice, but the only way the EU is able to exert influence. Should the EEAS go ahead, it is unclear whether security and defence matters will be amalgamated under a common roof. Indeed, the EU will need to be careful when addressing these matters, as they have the ability to be divisive by nature. Until now, the Member States, operating under the EU banner, have been able to shake off negative colonial pasts and meaningfully engage with third countries. Steps towards creating an EU army would possibly impinge on the positive 'soft power' identity that it has created for itself.

Hill's (1993) understanding of EU actor capability was based on it as being distinct from the United States and consequently a normative rather than military power. Since the EU has many western values in common with America, but uses different tools to exercise its will, the US has been used as a gauge to determine how successful

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<sup>39</sup> See Chapter Five for more information on the ESS.

the EU has been in exporting its core values and influencing international events in a positive manner. To an extent, America could also be deemed as a normative force, for example, the desire to spread democracy was often cited as a driving force for America's war in Iraq. In fact, although it is a widely held belief that the United States of America was the first normative power, a number of differences remain. For instance, America holds a belief in "democratic majorities" which is contrasted with the European focus on the "will of an international community" (Fukuyama, 7.09.2002). In addition, Richard Barnett has noted that between 1945 and 1967, the US interfered in third world countries every year (Barnett, 1972, as cited in Said, 1993, p. 285), something which the European Union is certainly not even close to matching.

Another difference between the US and the EU lies in the diverse capabilities of the two actors. While the EU actively utilises its 'semi-soft power' capabilities, conducting its foreign policy under the guise of multilateralism, negotiation and the propagation of norms using civilian tools, conversely, Michael Smith argued that US foreign policy operates under the attitude of "unilateralism, coercion, and the imposition of norms"<sup>40</sup> (Smith, M, 2007, p. 454). Perhaps it is because of the perceived negativity of the American way of exporting democracy that has seen global public opinion about the US decline dramatically.<sup>41</sup> In addition, it has even been argued that China follows a 'soft power' policy in its relations in Asia (Moravscik, 2007).

Others have defined soft power in other ways, for example 'smart power', 'metrosexual power' and 'cultural power'. Nye (2004; 2006) and others have been aware of the weaknesses of the soft power concept and have developed a revised approach epitomised in the term "smart power". Smart power is about tapping into both hard and soft power in order to attract others whilst at the same time avoiding concrete coercion methods (Hamre, 2007, n.p.). Similarly, a 'metrosexual' (in particular the EU) power has been termed as being a power who is effective in

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<sup>40</sup> At least prior to the election of Barak Obama in 2008.

<sup>41</sup> There have a number of surveys confirming this. See for example:  
April 2007: World Publics Reject US Role as the World Leader (GlobeScan/PIPA);  
<http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/14.htm#Apr2007> (retrieved 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008);  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/29/international/asia/29australia.html>.

attracting others through “cleverly deploying both its hard power and its sensitive side” (Khanna, 2004, p. 66). This may be through using tools such as “economic clout and cultural appeal” (*ibid*, p. 67). According to Krzeminski (2004, p. 1), when one thinks of Europe, one thinks of it in terms of culture and herein lies Europe’s power. But at the same time, culture within Europe may be divisive (*ibid*, p. 3).

The United Nations is arguably the world’s most visible normative actor. Indeed, Sills (2004, p. 47 [sic]) has noted that “[t]here is one universal organization in the world today that can set globally accepted standards and norms of behaviour”. In particular, the UN is committed to promoting norms in the fields of international law, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights, and achieving world peace.

Although there are “very few areas of foreign policy where the EU refrains from making a statement of some sort” (Bretherton, and Vogler, 1999, p. 170), at present, there are limits to the EU’s external relations, because its strength lies primarily only in declarations, negotiations, and conditionality. This debate on the mechanisms of European foreign policy raises a number of interesting questions about the current structure of the EU and what changes need to be made in the future. Regarding the establishment of the EEAS, what sort of structure would best suit the needs and desires of both the EU at large, as well as those dealing diplomatically with the EU? It may be helpful to look at the current strength of NPE in exerting influence.

### ***2.3.3 Criticisms of the Value of NPE***

Helene Sjursen (2006) has outlined that it is one thing to call the EU a normative power for good, but it is also important to systematically analyse it. However, it is “difficult to assess the global effectiveness of the EU’s soft diplomacy” (Pettiteville, 2003, p. 134). Despite this, a number of commentators have identified several trends. In the South East European countries, Grabar-Kitarović (2007) demonstrated that the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) has been successful in exporting its values in the EU’s neighbouring countries. But how about further afield?

Guy Harpaz (2007) has made a contribution to the discussion on the effectiveness of NPE as part of his analysis of Europe's involvement in Israel. Israel dealt with the EU under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) framework, which "was launched in 2004 with the goal of expanding the EU's presence and engagement in its "new neighbors" after the last rounds of enlargement" [sic]. The way the EU deals with third countries, regions and ethnicities, especially in the Middle East is based on the assumption that there are structural problems which inhibit the successful creation of NPE values, namely democratic and social principles like human rights as well as economic success. The projection of the EU's internal virtues through politico-economic and normative means is a tool the EU uses to get what it wishes "through attraction" (*ibid*, p. 94). In exchange for opening up its markets, the EU requires its neighbours to abide by certain EU principals, and has enjoyed moderate success in its neighbourhood policy. According to Harpaz, this is in part because of the lack of hard power and an incoherent CFSP (*ibid*, p. 98). The latter point again reflects the problematic institutional arrangements first highlighted by Hill, and is called by Harpaz a 'legitimacy deficit'.

Noya (2005) has examined and critiqued Nye's analysis of the effectiveness of 'soft power', and concluded that "[s]oft power is not a type of power at all; rather, any resource, including military capabilities, can be soft inasmuch as it is perceived as legitimate for a soft purpose, for example, humanitarian aid" (*ibid*, p.16). According to Harpaz the soft power,<sup>42</sup> normative actions of the EU means that it lacks both legitimacy and a presence in the Middle East. The following statement fits in with other descriptions of the EU relating to its lack of presence and confusion of its external relations actors. Because at present the European Union faces many criticisms about its ability to help and shape world events, this could be interpreted as the unsuccessfulness of 'soft power' tactics.

In order to contribute to the Middle East, the EU must speak in one voice and pursue decisive, effective and coherent policies. Yet, the CFSP in general, and the policies of the EU towards the Middle East in particular, are far from matching this description, leading many Israelis to dismiss them as merely declaratory (Harpaz, 2007, p. 104).

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<sup>42</sup> At present, the EU does not have any military capability in the Middle East.

Focusing on human rights in particular, Youngs (2004) did not believe that the EU's focus on exporting this value is solely based on good will. Many commentators believe that NPE may be economically driven, by creating a bigger, stable, export market.<sup>43</sup> This has been highlighted through the demonstration of an inconsistency of how the EU implements its NPE strategies (Eriksen, 2006, p. 20). For example, human rights in the Peoples Republic of China (Diez, 2005, p. 624; Tsuruoka, 2008, p. 6) and the fact that it refused to cooperate with the democratically elected Hamas once it was in power (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 225). These examples indicate that the EU is not a perfect normative actor. In these instances, and in many others, the "EU plays down its own interests" (Sjursen, 2006, p. 240).

From a broader perspective, it appears that failing to elaborate and maintain a consistent and coherent European human rights policy towards the PRC does not bode well for the European attempts to support the establishment of a human rights regime in Asia (Balducci, 2008, p. 27).

In addition, the exportation of EU norms has been viewed as an EU attempt to create a level playing ground in world exports (Läidi, 2008, p.4). Therefore, it is difficult to separate the EU's normative and strategic interests. Another contradiction arises here — between the role of the EU as a normative power and its role in shaping the international order through its institutional impacts. As Michael Smith (2007, p. 442) notes:

There is a set of unresolved contradictions between self-conceptions of the EU as a civilian power or a normative power and the more material impact of institutional power and structural power.

Whereas the conceptualisation of NPE has a distinct liberal-idealist slant, there have been a number of arguments against the relevance of it (Hyde-Price, 2006; Jorgensen and Laatikainen, 2004; Youngs, 2004). Hyde-Price dismissed the EU as being simply a benign, supranational actor, but one with its own interests and driven by Member States, using the neo-realist argument that the foreign policy capability of the EU rests in the hands of its Member States who use the EU as a collective instrument for external control (Hyde-Price, 2006, p. 217). Consequently, Hyde-Price pointed out

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<sup>43</sup> See Chapter Five.

that the policies of the CFSP and ESDP will remain firmly intergovernmental,<sup>44</sup> with the varied success of the EU3 in their dealings with Iran, as a testament to this. However, the Commission was also involved the operations of ESDP and the launch of the missions in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the military operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo in all of these operations, many of which were generically (at least partly) Community and thus Commission competence.

It is difficult to isolate the motives of the European Union because of the different institutions involved. For example, the Commission has management problems in its role as an EU agent for exporting the EU values, which include — overlapping competences of the various external relations Directorate Generals (DGs), bureaucratic structures surrounding aid dispersal and a lack of sufficient staffing which leads to problems in aid administration (Pettiteville, 2003, p. 135). In addition, related to the institutions of the EU, Diez (2005, p. 614) has noted that there are double standards in the application of norms in EU policies towards other parties and the different EU actors (e.g. the European Commission, EP, and Council, as well as different actors within these institutions) pursue different norms and interests.

The concept of NPE relates to the wider concept of the EU as an international actor, with (semi) soft power giving the EU a ‘presence’ where traditional military power is lacking (or at the very least, immature). In NPE, enlargement, human rights and trade are key areas where EU ideals are being exported and which have been explored in the greatest depth by academics. Likewise, it is the lack of force and the possibilities of it being used in the future which are creating an unresolved tension for supporters of NPE. In fact citizens’ support of an EU defence policy has been consistently high (Eurobarometer 55, 57, 60).

Throughout this thesis, an evaluation of NPE is undertaken from by an internal and external perspective. That is, through discourse analysis of EU documents as well as in interviews with EU practitioners. In addition, as with the ‘expectations-capabilities

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<sup>44</sup> Which has the potential to pose problems for its legitimacy (see Chapter Three).

gap', the success of NPE is evaluated through the eyes of the citizens of the Asia-Pacific.

Returning to the original concept presented in this chapter, although the examination and impact of European foreign policy are contested, the conceptualisation of the *presence* of the EU is apparent, given that the EU does indeed appear to be playing a role in the international arena, albeit imperfectly, and often invisibly.<sup>45</sup> Criticisms aside, this presence can only be validated in the distinctness of 'others'. How the EU shapes and communicates its image to others shall now be addressed.

## 2.4 COMMUNICATING THE EUROPEAN UNION

Similar to the concept of legitimacy, the strength of NPE lies in convincing others to follow the normative example which the EU sets out in its dealings with third countries (Diez, 2005, p. 614), as NPE places a heavy reliance on world opinion (Läidi, 2008, p.5). As has been seen, Hill and others have stressed the importance of external perceptions in the 'expectations-capabilities gap' (1993, 1997).<sup>46</sup> Indeed, Ginsberg (1999, p. 432) has noted that:

The gap between the expectation and capability of EFP is mirrored in the gap between the expectation and capability of theoretical concepts explaining EFP behaviour. Theoretical work on EFP has been meagre compared to work on the internal aspects of integration.

This means that the way in which the EU communicates is vital to understanding the foreign policy mechanisms of the European Union. A vehicle through which the Union may communicate to the world is through public diplomacy.<sup>47</sup>

Internally, the French and Dutch 'no' votes in the referenda on the Constitutional Treaty were viewed by EU officials as an indication that better internal communication was needed because of the many different, and sometimes conflicting, views and understandings about Europe and where it is heading. The ramifications of this are important given that external perceptions can help to shape the way the EU is

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<sup>45</sup> NCRE media studies of the EU's presence (or lack of) in the media.

<sup>46</sup> This idea has been analysed in detail at the NCRE, University of Canterbury.

<sup>47</sup> This will be discussed in Chapter Three and Eight.

perceived through the EU's interaction with outsiders – the expectations of others often results in an action by the EU (Elgström, 2006, pp. 11 - 12). Moreover, an improvement in external perceptions of the EU may also be beneficial internally (Holland, 2002, pp. 322 – 323) and a lack of efficient external communication on behalf of the EU could be argued as yet another factor which may contribute to the deficiencies in expectations placed on the EU.

The way the EU is represented is closely related to its exportation of core values – for example universal human rights, sustainable development, and the importance of rule of law. However, it is important to note that the representation of the EU abroad does not necessarily correlate with reality.<sup>48</sup> While the EU might define itself as a force for good, this is subjective and connected to a particular European concept, and as such to others outside of Europe “the EU's ‘normative’ power might simply be an expression of Eurocentric cultural imperialism” (Sjursen, 2006 p. 248). Because of this, NPE has been described as “a practise of discursive representation” (Diez, 2005, p. 626). Nicolaïdis and Howse (2002, p. 767) refer to the image the EU wishes to express as an “EUtopia”. Manners agreed with this artificial construction, arguing that internally there has been an effort to create an artificial single identity<sup>49</sup> for the EU (Manners, 2006b, p. 177). This ideal has been criticised by Nicolaïdis and Howse (2002, p. 787), who highlighted the contradiction that only by having a united foreign policy can the European Union be an influential actor, which goes against the ‘unity in diversity’ motto. There is also a contradiction between the way the EU is perceived in the international arena, as it has both deepened and diverged, shown through emerging divergences between states and institutions (especially apparent after enlargement, as well as the strengthening of the so-called EU3) (Smith, M, 2007, p. 444).

Although identity discourse is debatable, as the notion of identification with the European project is a contentious one, with little agreement on the nature or indeed the desirability of such an identity (Fossum, 2001), this thesis assumes that the EU and all of its factions has its own international identity. Indeed, “...identity is a question of standpoint. To capture the entire complexity of the EU's international

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<sup>48</sup> Although some people argue that perception is reality - we act in accordance with our perception of reality and not in accordance with reality itself, therefore perception is perhaps even more important.

<sup>49</sup> See the following Chapter for more information about The International Identity of the European Union.

identity therefore requires consideration of a multiple number of standpoints” (Manners and Whitman, 2003). The EU’s identity can be linked to its ‘actorness’, ‘presence’ ‘capability’ as well as its normative focus. In this way, the identity of the EU and how this is constructed, is a recurring theme throughout the integration project. Subsequently, at the heart of this thesis, is the question of just how effective the EU has been in creating specifically an *international* identity. The Treaty of European Union stated that the aim of CFSP was ‘to assert its identity on the international scene’ (Title I, Article 2,). Consequently, the international identity of the EU was first introduced in the 1990’s and its theoretical basis was argued to be useful as “a position from which to commence conceptualising the global role of the European Union as being greater than the sum of its parts” (Manners, and Whitman, 2003, p. 281). Therefore, it is a functional reference point to understanding the position of the EU in the international arena.

The debate about the emerging identity of the EU is well documented, with most research focusing on how Europe is perceived by its own citizens rather than externally (for example, Foreign Policy, 2007, p. 1). But external perceptions are also important, as Holland has noted the importance of the EU’s external activities in helping to foster public support at home (Holland, 2002, pp. 322 – 323). Bretherton and Vogler (1999, p. 45) have contended that external “perceptions of the EC’s presence is of central importance”. Elgström (2006, p. 11) has also emphasised the importance of external perceptions, as they may provide feedback of the EU’s foreign policy through “insights into how the EU is actually judged as an international actor”.

This deficit in external perceptions of the EU has been addressed by Martin Holland and Natalia Chaban who have contributed valuable insights into the lack of systematic studies of how the EU is perceived by outsiders. In order to understand how the EU is understood, conveyed and portrayed in these distinct countries, they have undertaken a number of studies in the Asia Pacific region. One of their conclusions is that third publics no longer have any expectations or understandings of it whatsoever (see for example; [www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz)).

Lucarelli has also undertaken research in this field. External perceptions are important because, as Lucarelli (2007, p. 4) noted; “we fail to understand a fundamental

component of the EU's international role as well as of the Europeans' self-identification process if we do not investigate what the external images of the EU are". Furthermore, a gap exists between the EU's self-perception and third countries and "[o]ne of the most prominent conclusions is that the EU is not a widely known and debated actor for public opinion and the media outside Europe" (*ibid*, p. 260). Furthermore, the author has examined concepts of the EU as a normative power, making some interesting conclusions such as: the EU is often portrayed as a possible counterbalance to the USA, as a model for regional integration, and as a champion of the environment (a conclusion, however, which is in contradiction to the empirical data produced by Holland and Chaban in their perception studies). However, the EU is still first and foremost viewed as an economic giant (*ibid*, pp. 262 – 265).

The EU's identity needs to be differentiated from other actors (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p.13). Manners and Whitman have argued that to account for the totality of the EU's identity and how this is understood, multiple standpoints must be considered such as;

"[I]dentity is a question of standpoint. To capture the entire complexity of the EU's international identity therefore requires consideration of a multiple number of standpoints". Thus, to restrict the 'reflection' on the EU's identity to within the Union risks overlooking an additionally valuable perspective from outside (1998b, p. 237).

Hill and Wallace (1996, p. 8) have pointed out that "a European foreign policy cannot exist if a European identity does not exist" and Str ath (2002) has contended that Europe cannot truly exist without 'non-Europe'. From an international standpoint, a number of academics have addressed the issue of the CFSP, particularly focusing on the 'international identity of the European Union', which was argued by Manners and Whitman to be useful as "a position from which to commence conceptualising the global role of the European Union as being greater than the sum of its parts" (Manners, and Whitman, 2003, p. 281). Bretherton and Vogler have argued that an incorporation of this external focus into the EU debate may play an important role in the development of coherent and consistent internal EU policy (1999, p. 45). Thus, the EU's international identity is a functional reference point for understanding the position of the EU in the international arena, and is linked to the EU's 'presence'.

## 2.5 CONCLUSION

There is a correlation between the EU's international identity, the EU's capability, the expectations placed on it, as well as how it communicates and what it has to say. The proposals for the EEAS have experienced a number of false starts. Although some contradictions and critiques exist regarding the conceptualisation of the place of the European Union in the world today and its direction for the future, a number of terms are instrumental. Internally, the unique way the European Union is constructed is of great importance. Its evolution of institution building is critical to both its historical roots as well as the present momentum for change. The amount of sovereignty transferred to the EU's institutions may also reflect the EU's growing presence in the world. Moreover, the tasks ascribed to the institutions impacts on the capabilities, legitimacy and cohesion of the Union more broadly. At present, the institutions of the European Union possess a number of different interests and roles. It is thus possible to conclude that the institutional construction of the EEAS will be of great interest to the many actors both involved and affected by EU policy.

Unlike in its trade relations where the EU acts as one, in its foreign policy the EU is currently represented by a multiplicity of actors. To be considered an effective multilateral actor then the EU must demonstrate that it is a strong global force and yet the sheer number of Union actors currently involved in its foreign policy lends a necessarily disjointed quality to its foreign policy approach. Today, there are very few areas of foreign policy where the EU refrains from making a statement of some sort, but as this study shows, the effectiveness of the EU representation abroad does little to reinforce an image of EU solidarity around the world.

Positively, the European Union sees itself as a force for good in the world, and has attempted to transpose its own legally ingrained values onto the rest of the world through the use of multilateral institutions. To date, it has had rather more success as a peaceful, diplomatic actor than it has as an assertive military one. However, its success is dependent on the way it communicates its image and the effectiveness of its 'soft power' tools. The pessimistic view of the EU is that it has been either unable to live up to expectations to take its place in the world (latterly in the Balkan War, and

more recently in Iraq and the Middle East) or that third publics no longer have any expectations or understandings of it whatsoever. This begs the question, what can the EEAS contribute? And it is this key question that is discussed in the remainder of this thesis. The thesis provides an initial analysis of the validity of these overall criticisms.

Although the two theories presented in this chapter are distinct in terms of their focus, a number of similarities can be drawn. Given the distinct nature of each, they also serve to complement each other particularly with respect to a better understanding of what is driving the need for the EEAS. It is arguable that if the motivating feature of the EEAS is based on the 'expectations-capabilities gap', then this is a reactive response to a pressing issue. If, however, it seems that the EEAS is more internally driven by the perception that the EU's place in the world is to 'make the world a better place', then this would be more of a proactive decision.

Ultimately, this thesis utilises a number of concepts in order to understand the EEAS phenomenon. Overriding all of these is the focus on both the EU's self-identity, as well as its international one. Regarding the agency-centred focus on the EU as an international actor and its capability, a number of key terms are instrumental; sovereignty, institutional set-up, autonomy, coherence, security and legitimacy, along with the way the EU communicates. The latter is particularly important in terms of expectations. The identity-centred NPE covers a number of concepts including whether the EU is (or is viewed as being) a force for good, *sui generis*, a soft power, multilateral and an exporter of common values, and is connected to closely related to both expectations placed on the EU as well as its capability. As this chapter has demonstrated, both of these key theoretical threads have been systematically analysed by leading academics. The rest of this thesis will provide a contemporary and unique way of analysing the strength of the theories and in doing so help to understand proposals to introduce the EEAS, as well as highlighting important considerations in the construction of the proposed diplomatic corps.

First, the following chapter outlines other key concepts important for understanding the topic at hand, with the proceeding chapter demonstrating the methodology, which has been undertaken to support the relevance of these terms. Following from this, the thesis then goes on to demonstrate systematically the resign flaws and failings of EU foreign policy, as well as understanding the diplomatic proposals contained in the Lisbon Treaty. In doing so, this will enable a clearer picture to emerge of the EU's place in the international arena and where it may possibly be headed in the future.

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## CHAPTER THREE:

### REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

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#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two introduced a number of key concepts about the European Union's capabilities, presence and values in the international arena. In order to develop a broader understanding of the issues and concepts surrounding the proposed European External Action Service (EEAS), this chapter locates this thesis within current scholarship on EU foreign policy and diplomacy. The key literature introduced in this chapter focuses firstly on further concepts surrounding the European Union (EU) as an international actor in general which need to be considered, before moving onto the diplomatic capability of the EU and the possible outcomes for what the EEAS may look like should the proposals be ratified.

#### 3.2 THE LEGITIMACY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

As noted in Chapter Two, the ability of the EU to be an international actor is directly linked to the degree of legitimacy it possesses. According to Beetham and Lord (1998, p. 17), from an internal perspective the EU's legitimacy is based on a transference of capabilities from the democratically elected governments of the nation-state to the supranational institutions of the EU (*ibid*, p. 17). In this way, the EU is unique because it derives its legitimacy from two areas: the democratic principles on which its Member States are based, and the transfer of power from national institutions to the institutions of the EU. This can be viewed as problematic however, because the Union itself is often not viewed directly as being democratic and this has led to the EU's so-called 'democratic deficit'.<sup>50</sup> The problem with Beetham's definition is that it does not take into consideration external perceptions,

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<sup>50</sup> See section 3.2.1

which are also important when considering the legitimacy of an organisation, particularly one which seeks to take a role on the international stage.

From an external perspective Hurd has noted that legitimacy is dependent on the perceptions of others' (1999, p. 381). According to Kratochvíl *et al* (2008, p. 1), legitimacy is one of the important aspects that defines an actor. Likewise, Allen and Smith (1991a, pp. 97-98) have noted that in order for the EU to have an international 'presence' it requires legitimacy. The association between external recognition and legitimacy is also closely related to the 'expectations-capabilities gap' as, "[p]aying attention to how the EU is viewed abroad helps us to evaluate whether gaps between expectations and realities have affected the 'reach' of EU influence" (Rhodes, 1999, p. 6).

It is particularly the external legitimation of the EU that this thesis is concerned with. This is all the more pertinent because the way the EU is perceived abroad is important because it has the potential to impact the delivery of foreign policy (Fiske de Gouvía, 2005, p.1). Until now, little research has been undertaken on how third countries perceive the EU (other than that conducted by the National Centre for Research on Europe in the Asia-Pacific region). (For more information, see 'www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz.').<sup>51</sup> The thesis presented here aims to further contribute to the emerging data on how the EU is perceived by third countries.

### ***3.2.1 Linking NPE with Legitimacy***

Legitimacy has also been closely linked to the EU's identity (Edwards, 2000, p. 69). Not only is legitimacy — and being perceived as a legitimate actor and entity — important for the EU's identity and coherence, but it is also connected to its normative capabilities which in turn enhance EU conceptions of EU identity (Lucarelli, S, 2008, pp. 24- 25). Indeed, although there has been no consensus on whether a cohesive EU identity is desirable, it has been argued that the creation of:

[A]n identity which highlights the values and ideals behind the integration project may be one way of helping to foster a sense of belief

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<sup>51</sup> For more information detailing other similar projects, see Chapter Four.

and ownership in the EU, and thus to improve its democratic foundations, and as a consequence, its legitimacy (Bain, 2007, p.78).

From an external perspective, the EU is more likely to be an influential, positive leader and role-model for other regimes if its policies are viewed from the outside as being coherent, consistent, and legitimate (Vogt, H, 2006, p.5). Similar to the concept of legitimacy, the strength of NPE lies in convincing others to follow the normative example (Diez, 2005, p. 614), and places a heavy reliance on world opinion (Läidi, 2008, p. 5).

Many of the tools and values espoused in the NPE model can be directly related to legitimacy. For example: the EU as a promoter of multilateralism, the EU as a soft power, and the EU's emphasis on democracy. The use of multilateralism by the EU serves to improve its legitimacy because it means support from other international partners. When the EU tries to lead in multilateral (and therefore normative) negotiations it needs followers. Furthermore, if the EU is considered to be legitimate, this would support its 'soft power' role, as an actor that is perceived to be legitimate relies less on hard power resources in order to get its ideas accepted. A further NPE aspect has been noted by Beetham et al (1991, p. 35), who have argued that legitimacy is closely connected with the promotion of stability as "helping to promote compliance and cooperation (legitimacy) can enhance the order, stability and effectiveness of regimes".

Furthermore, legitimacy is also intricately linked with democratic regimes. According to Koppell, (2008, p. 178): "[l]egitimacy is understood as the foundation of democratic political authority". However, the problem with linking NPE, legitimacy and democracy is that the EU's espousal and promotion of democratic principles has been often criticised as being hypocritical, largely due to its so-called 'democratic deficit'.

According to Piotr Nowina-Konopk (2003) the 'democratic deficit' is one of the major weaknesses of the EU today.<sup>52</sup> In fact, most criticisms about the European

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<sup>52</sup> For more information surrounding the 'democratic deficit' debate see Moravcsik, 2004; Follesdal, Andreas, & Hix 2006.

Union make reference to the 'democratic deficit'. However, there is little consensus about what this so-called deficit actually means. At the most extreme, the EU is considered to be an undemocratic, centralised, bureaucratic institution. Traditionally, the democratic deficit critique of the EU is based on what is seen as the Union's lack of accountability and transparency surrounding its current institutional arrangements. For example: the secretive Council of Ministers meetings which are thus unaccountable. Moreover, the Commission lacks the legitimacy to provide political direction and the EP, the only wholly democratically elected EU institution, is also largely unaccountable and lacks the power to create law, set a budget, raise taxes or even control the Commission (Kuper, 1998, p. 143) (although this situation is changing, and indeed, the Lisbon Treaty is introducing key developments). The latter institution's issues are otherwise separately known as the 'parliamentary deficit', which contends that: "the overall powers of the executives within the member countries of the EU have increased while parliamentary prerogatives have decreased" (Neunreither, 1994, p. 300).

The democratic deficit debate however, is far from uniformly accepted. Keukeleire (2008, p. 96) for example, has pointed out that it is debateable whether or not the EU even has a democratic deficit. One of the leading anti-democratic deficit proponents, Majone (1998) believed that the European Union and its institutions are scrutinised according to a false premise: that federalism is the ultimate goal of its existence, despite the lack of public support and corresponding lack of legitimacy for this direction. Majone argued that the EU is indeed democratic because it is overseen by sovereign Member States which have devolved to it a number of specific powers (*ibid*, p. 12). Nicolaïdis, and Howse (2002, p. 780) believed that the EU's legitimacy is simply a matter of perception, and that, "[w]here the democratic deficit in Europe looks more serious is where one imagines itself a political community, rather than a structure of intergovernmentalism". Although there is debate about the exact definition of the democratic deficit, this thesis accepts that one does exist and it is an effective analytical tool to understanding the European Union (Follesdal, and Hix, 2005).

For example, various reasons have been cited for the rejection by the citizens of France, the Netherlands and Ireland of the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties

including the out-of-touch feeling by the European public with EU operations and the confusing nature of the union. However, these developments alone actually strengthen the case against the democratic deficit argument, as these few citizens expressed their opinions through a democratic procedure which then dictated the fate of the treaties for the entire EU population (Cerutti, 2008 p. 14).

Not only is the democratic deficit internally problematic, but it is also important for foreign policy. Hill, for example, has noted that the deficit must be acknowledged and indeed improved on as “[a] European foreign policy worthy of the name...will need to enjoy democratic legitimacy and also have a sophisticated bureaucracy at their disposal” (Hill, 1993, p. 316). This is perceived as one of the major weaknesses of the EU today, and contributes to the Union’s ‘identity problem’ (Peterson, and Sjørnsen, 1998, p. 180).

A lack of democracy and democratic accountability is thus clearly currently inhibiting the legitimacy of the Union’s actions. The potential and ability of the EEAS to improve on these issues is discussed in Chapter Nine. As Chapter Two has noted, the institutional structures of the EU also contribute to how the EU is perceived by third parties. This includes how it functions on a diplomatic level.

### **3.3 EU DIPLOMACY**

This thesis not only considers how the EU is perceived and communicated, but also how it conducts its external relations, in particular, in terms of diplomacy. Diplomacy is an important factor of international relations (Harmon, 1971). Although there are many differing cultures around the world, diplomacy is something they have in common and it enables them to communicate in a predictable and organised manner, providing a common organisational platform. Central to the development and understanding of this thesis is the diplomatic arrangements of the EU, both presently and in the future. The EEAS proposals have the potential to make further wide-ranging changes to how EU diplomacy is structured and understood. Fossum has argued that the structure of the EU means that it is “the most radical peaceful challenge to the Westphalian system of states,” (Fossum, 2002, p. 9). Indeed, it is a

distinct possibility that the Westphalian system will be further challenged in the future.

Confusion remains about the exact meaning of diplomacy as it is known today (Harmon, 1971). The term itself is derived from the ancient Greek word, *diplōma*, composed of *diplo*, meaning “folded in two,” and the suffix *-ma*, meaning “an object.” This refers to a folded document, and the term came to denote documents through which princes granted favours. Berridge (1995, p. 1) has described diplomacy as “the conduct of international relations by negotiation rather than by force”. Missiou-Ladi (1987, p. 336) is of the opinion that diplomacy “is the method by which a state seeks to obtain its objectives in foreign policy, namely, to secure for its citizens prosperity and justice through negotiations with other states”. These definitions emphasise both communication and negotiation; in other words, the importance of exerting influence through ‘soft power’ rather than coercing through ‘hard power’.

The study of European diplomacy is also a study of history (Der Derian, 1987). It is widely believed that the first diplomats emerged in Europe, with the first recorded diplomatic system in ancient Greece. As opposed to the systematic selection process undergone by diplomats today, often Greek ambassadors were elected by a city assembly (Hamilton, and Langthorn, 1995, p. 9). Later, the Treaty of Westphalia established a set of rules and structures pertaining to modern diplomatic traditions. The Westphalian system on which modern democracy is based on emerged out of a European practice and culture. The seventeenth century view was that Europe was the universal leader, and thus European history was considered as being world history (Graubard, as cited in Martin, 1966, p. 122).

Although the ambassadorial profession is an age-old tradition, bestowing the title onto someone was taken very seriously. In 1860, Britain only had three,<sup>53</sup> and America did not have an official ambassador until 1893 (Mayer, 1983, p. 33). In addition, following Westphalia, diplomats were not necessarily selected on nationality, for example, “[t]he Danes had a penchant for Germans at the helm of state” (Clark, 1966, p. 36).

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<sup>53</sup> To Paris, St. Petersburg and Constantinople.

Today the Westphalian system of states has evolved into an intricate arrangement that unites different cultures and transcends all differences of nationality or language (Nicolson, 1988 p. 40). Diplomats share a common culture, language (French) as well as common procedures and norms (Batora, 2005, p. 45). The ability of diplomacy to unite is particularly observable within Europe, as it has been noted that through constant diplomatic interaction, European diplomats are socialised through their constant interactions with other European diplomats and structures.<sup>54</sup>

Liska has distinguished between two types of diplomacy: “[r]outine diplomacy smooths and implements established relations with the aid of only marginal adjustments...Conversely, creative diplomacy rearranges the setting within which negotiations for compromise occur” (Liska, 1975, p. 25). It is the latter which transforms diplomacy, and which, if the EEAS goes ahead will no doubt cause a re-evaluation of traditional forms of diplomacy implemented at Westphalia.

Despite being credited with establishing modern diplomatic practices, Europe is now challenging this arrangement. The disruption that the EU has caused to the Westphalian system is largely because it is not a state entity and it has a number of different institutional actors performing tasks which traditionally have been conducted only by nation states. Together, according to some commentators, these make the EU neither a clearly established authority, nor a sovereign entity (Batora, 2005, p. 52). Furthermore, Westphalian diplomacy is based on an anarchical international environment which is in contrast the EU’s legal basis (*ibid*, p. 53) which emphasises unity, peace and consensus. These latter points are a key aspect of the Union’s normative role in the world.

### ***3.3.1 The Structure of EU Diplomacy***

Although there are a number of different levels of EU diplomacy (Batora, 2005, p. 44), it is primarily the analysis of the EU’s relations with third countries like New Zealand and Singapore, which is of interest to this thesis. At this level, Duke (2002, p.

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<sup>54</sup> This concept is explored below.

853) has outlined the existence of a further two levels of European diplomacy. The first of these is the national diplomats who are mandated to promote the common European interests, and secondly the ECDs, which are often traditionally associated with development and assistance in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

Given these two different ways of conducting EU diplomacy, how effective are they currently? According to Duke (2002, p. 850), European diplomacy on the international stage operates on the basis and understanding by the diplomats that cooperation is vital between the parties (Member States) and involves the sharing of information, consultation with the ultimate goal being the harmonisation of viewpoints. Hill has argued that it is important for the EU Member States to act collectively, as this provides a stronger *force* against outsiders (Hill, 1997, p. 88 (emphasis added)).

Another important aspect of NPE is the promotion of multilateralism. This is particularly relevant for the conduct of EU diplomacy. According to interviews conducted by Elgstroem, the EU is “a great power” in “multilateral negotiations” (cited in Chaban *et al* 2006, p. 250). Moreover, in multilateralism, “[t]he EU is a blocking power: without the support of the EU nothing happens (*ibid*, p. 251). Conversely, for Hamilton and Langthorne (1995), the EU’s greatest contribution to the practice and evolution of diplomacy has not been in the area of multilateralism, but in the realm of “associative policy” with the developing ACP countries.

According to the literature, there are a number of contradictions when considering the EU as a diplomatic actor. As previously mentioned, in contrast to the anarchical Westphalian system, NPE is based on rule-based coordination (Batora, 2005, p. 53). In addition, despite the increasing level of EU integration, Member States at present continue to conduct bilateral relations with third countries (*ibid*). In fact, up until now, CFSP has not reduced the need for individual EU embassies in non-EU countries, but as part of the EU, it has increased their status, as foreign states attach more importance to them (Hocking, 2002, p. 280). For example, Germany, Spain and some new Member States are increasing the numbers of their embassies. A pertinent question thus arises: will this trend continue should the EEAS go ahead? This question is addressed in Chapter Nine. A final contradiction can be found in the

nature of foreign services which are traditionally very secretive organisations, a characteristic which is, to some extent, unacceptable within the EU because of its emphasis on transparency (Batora, 2005, p. 57).

As the core actors in the conduct of diplomacy, understanding the role of the EU Member States is crucial. Hamilton and Langthorne (1995) have acknowledged that there has been a change in the way diplomacy is conducted globally and this means that EU Member States have also been subjected to change. Hocking and Spence (2002, p. 2) contend that this is due to the impact of globalisation on the way national governments conduct diplomacy, resulting in a challenge to foreign ministries generally. The result is foreign ministries becoming more “permeable” (Duke, 2002, p. 853).

Hocking and Spence (2002) have discussed the role of foreign ministries in this changing environment. They have suggested that foreign ministries have developed a ‘boundary spanner’ function, which means that in order to survive, foreign ministries are required to negotiate across boundaries which have traditionally been kept separate. This new role for foreign ministries provides a link between the domestic and international environments. But just as Member States have been forced to adjust to external forces, they have also created their own particular diplomacy.

Bale (2004) believed that Member State cooperation under EPC and CFSP has been limited, with little prospect of EU embassies opening in the near future. This prediction is interesting in light of the EEAS developments, and will be further analysed in Chapter Ten. He has examined the problems surrounding full diplomatic cooperation and inhibiting the way forward, one of which is the fact that bilateral contact is still the most common contact for third countries in dealing with the EU, in contrast to the multilateralism espoused by NPE, which third countries find puts them at a disadvantage (*ibid*, p. 53).

When a European External Action Service is created, there are bound to be conflicts based on differences in national foreign ministries, for example, the place of foreign ministries within the national setting, and also differing norms within the bureaucratic

culture. Membership of the EU likewise impacts individual nation states. As former Commissioner for External Relations, Chris Patten, has noted:

Member states accept that they can maximise their potential by pooling certain powers and decisions. However, they differ about the point at which the benefits of integration begin to be outweighed by unwelcome erosion of national sovereignty (Patten 2002 p. ix (*sic*)).

Although some ground towards establishing common EU diplomatic practices, and even collective embassies, has been made,<sup>55</sup> it would seem that collective action is not always possible and it is usually the larger European countries that prefer to go it alone. According to Bale, “[c]ollective representation might make sense in terms of cost...but these costs are ultimately far outweighed by the benefits that accrue from having personnel on the ground” (2004, p. 55). This trend is likely to be continued even with the advent of the EEAS and reflects the comment by Sandholtz and Zysman (1994, p. 192) that further integration only occurs when Member States acknowledge that “joint policy making in supranational institutions” is the only way to solve a problem.

According to Batora, in order to solve the tensions currently facing EU diplomacy, the EU either needs to become a fully-fledged state, or the way diplomacy operates globally will need to adapt to the challenges the EU presents (Batora, 2005, p. 60). These two potential scenarios will become clearer throughout this thesis. Should the EEAS go ahead, there is no doubt that it will fundamentally challenge the way in which EU diplomacy is conducted.

A key proponent of EU diplomatic practice are the ECDs, who have also been through their own set of evolution. Although the role of the ECDs has been almost entirely ignored by academics, who have tended to focus their attention regarding EU foreign policy on intergovernmental initiatives, the ECDs’ role has been instrumental in establishing a European diplomatic identity, and thus they form an important focus of this thesis.

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<sup>55</sup> For example, for practical reasons, some Member States are already sharing facilities in Nigeria, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Tanzania, and Namibia.

From an historical perspective, Dimier has charted the first reform of DG VIII (now known as DG Development) and noted that “[i]ts [DG VIII] institutional identity and management culture were built around this very task [development] and may have survived until now” (Dimier, 2004, p. 75). More recently, Carta (2006) has looked at speeches, declarations, official statements, information materials and Commission ECD websites, as well carrying out interviews and questionnaires with ECD officials, in order to define Commission officials’ ‘images of Europe’. Carta found that there was an awareness by the Commission officials that the Commission has a unique diplomatic role to play (*ibid*, p. 19). The author also noted that there were some differences between the official Commission line and the personal perceptions of the officials, and that the “officials seem to believe that it is precisely the unique character of the Union as a global actor that can give rise to a different player in the global scenario” (*ibid*).

The role, size and visibility of the ECDs have all increased markedly, especially since the Treaty of Maastricht, which required Member State embassies to cooperate with the Commission ECDs. However, as Cameron has pointed out, the level of this cooperation varies from country to country and can be dependent on personalities (Cameron 2002, p 14). Bale (2004) has also noted that the ECDs have their own vested interests, and sometimes step outside their specific province.

The limited cooperation between the Member States and ECDs has been described by Duke (2002, p. 855) as leading to a tension between the two parties because of the confusion amongst third parties about how EU external relations work and who they should contact, and the fact that a number of parties prefer to deal with the Commission. For the Commission, there is the added problem that they participate in diplomacy in the absence of a state to represent (Bruter, 1999, p. 183) and it has also been used as a scapegoat by Member States, who wish to place the burden of unfavourable policies at the feet of the EU institutions (Thiel, 2008 p. 351).

Furthermore, Hooghe has pointed out that conflict exists between Member States and the European Commission as the former are concerned with national sovereignty and the latter with guarding the common European interest (Hooghe 2001, pp. 95-96). It is the contention of this thesis that new understandings and conceptualisations of the

Commission and its function are needed, and it is hoped that this thesis can provide a starting-point for this discussion, especially since the role of the Commission in the EEAS has not yet been finalised.<sup>56</sup>

Thus, specific areas of responsibility exist in EU foreign policy conduct in which “[t]he presidency of the Union carries the responsibility for CFSP and the troika is also at the disposal of the Union. Likewise, the Commission and Commissioners also have overt roles to play” (Manners, and Whitman, 1998, p. 243). Yet, these many, varied actors arguably work together to make the EU’s global role lack in coherence. Coupled with this, the Union itself has only very limited resources available for the conduct of serious diplomacy (Fiske de Gouvia, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 22).

### ***3.3.2 The Europeanisation Process***

One way of overcoming these tensions and those which may exist amongst the Member States themselves is through the process of Europeanisation, which refers to the process whereby the people and institutions of the countries of the European Union become more European and less national, and is encouraged through constant interaction. Indeed, this idea was mentioned both directly and indirectly in the interviews conducted for this thesis (discussed later in Chapter Ten). Despite the arguments supporting the case that EU foreign policy remains a purely intergovernmental process, at a diplomatic level it has been noted that foreign ministries have been increasingly Europeanised (Hocking 2002, p. 3; Duke, 2002, p. 850; Allen, 1998; Hooghe, 2001; Duke and Vanhoonacker, 2006). The emergence of this phenomenon is important as it has the potential to impact on one of the problems facing EU foreign policy in general and the EEAS in particular: how to encourage ministers and officials from 27 countries as well as the EU institutions to agree on a single policy.

The Europeanisation<sup>57</sup> of foreign ministries is taking place for a number of reasons. Firstly, because of the nature of their work, European foreign ministries are forced to associate with colleagues from other Member States. Hocking attributes this

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<sup>56</sup> See below and Chapters Nine and Ten.

<sup>57</sup> Sometimes called ‘Brusselisation’.

phenomenon to the gradual culmination of the EPC and CFSP policies transforming the European foreign ministries into “a form of high-level networking with transformationalist effects” (Hocking, 2002, p. 2). Diplomats in the EU are now obliged to share information and to consult and negotiate with other Member States, in part because of European treaties that require them to uphold the ideals of the European Union.

The process of Europeanisation is not without problems, however. Within diplomatic procedure, there exists a tension between the need to balance national interests with the socialisation that occurs between diplomats through their use of common language and protocol (Batora, 2005, p. 45). Nevertheless, the socialisation of EU diplomats is important because it assumes that the more diplomats associate with each other then the more they will begin to share goals for the EU. Thus, because of the nature of the EEAS proposals, where the officials of the EEAS would be seconded from Member States, the Commission, and the Council, this would arguably increase the rate at which Europeanisation is happening, thus increasing the rate of spillover.<sup>58</sup>

### ***3.3.3 The EU and Public Diplomacy***

The diplomatic practices of the EU are externally influenced through the impact of globalisation, which has led to another diplomatic development worldwide: the increase in the use of public diplomacy to positively promote regimes. The practice is also linked to promoting legitimacy and is an important development for this thesis, in particular in the way that the EU communicates with third countries. Although public diplomacy has been around in some form (i.e. in the form of governments communicating with foreign publics) (Cull, 2006), the term was officially coined in the mid-1960s by Edmund Gullion (*ibid*). Later, Bernard Cohen (1973) provided coherent analyses of the effects of public opinion on foreign policy.

This new type of diplomacy has been defined by Fiske de Gouveia as “efforts by a state to communicate to, and engage with, foreign publics” (Fiske de Gouvia, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 6). The Planning Group for Integration of the United States

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<sup>58</sup> A neofunctionalist term which believes that integration between states in one economic sector will quickly create strong incentives for integration in further sectors

Information Agency into the Department of State defined public diplomacy as seeking to “promote the national interest of the United States through understanding, informing and influencing foreign audiences” (as cited in the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association, retrieved 11.11.2008). Hence, there is a clear emphasis on *informing* and *communicating* with third countries.

The focus of public diplomacy differs from traditional diplomacy in that the former deals not only with governments, but also non-governmental individuals and organisations and is based on a complex relationship between three major components: the government, the media, and public opinion (Soroka 2003). Regarding the influence of public opinion over foreign policy, there is a history of public opinion influencing policy makers, particularly in an American context. For example, according to Nicholson; “[s]ince 1918 public opinion in democratic countries has become increasingly interested in foreign affairs” (Nicholson, 1988, p. 1).

As Chapter Two has outlined, having adequate and active communication is highly valued in a regime’s drive to be recognised as a legitimate and worthy actor. Likewise, the way the EU communicates is important, as this has the potential to affect how it is perceived abroad and consequently to impact on the delivery of its foreign policy. Public diplomacy is a way of communicating and constructing an ‘image’ to third countries and publics as, “[i]mage and reputation may be said to have become essential parts of the state’s strategic equity” (van Ham, P, 2008, p. 128).

There have been many documented cases of public opinion having influence over foreign policy initiatives, but in order for this to happen, there must be a mechanism by which the public is informed (Cohen, 1973, p. 43). The setting up of the Marshall Plan to help Europe rebuild after World War Two has been linked to public pressure to alleviate poverty in Europe in the post-war era (Jones, as cited in Cohen, 1973, p. 14). In the case of the European Union, the Eurobarometer is often seen as a reliable source of gauging public opinion. Indeed, it is often called upon by policy-makers so that they can understand the opinions of EU citizens on certain topics. Because of the dependence on the external support of an entity and its actions in the world, ‘public

diplomacy’ is a key component to attaining legitimacy, and is a way to “cultivate beliefs”, which is necessary for an entity’s “right to exist” (Wæraas, 2007, p. 281).

On the negative side, Berridge has linked public diplomacy directly with propaganda, since it is, to some extent, the promotion and advertisement of selective information about an actor with special attention made to ensuring the media pick up on these messages (2005, p. 17). In fact, the equating of public diplomacy with propaganda is a common practice (Brown, 2008). However, according to Brown there are a number of important differences between public diplomacy and propaganda (see Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: The Differences between Public Diplomacy and Propaganda**

<b>Public Diplomacy</b>	<b>Propaganda</b>
Provides a truthful, factual exposition and explication of a nation’s foreign policy and way of life to overseas audiences	Forces its messages on an audience, often by repetition and slogans
Encourages international understanding	Demonises elements of the outside world and claims the nation it glorifies can do no wrong
Listens and engages in dialogue	Simplifies complex issues, including history
Objectively displays national achievements overseas, including in the arts	Misrepresents the truth or deliberately lies

(Information sourced from *ibid*).

Therefore, although public diplomacy is far from perfect, indeed it may be argued that actors engage in public diplomacy to ensure that the world knows just how great they are, it is probably unfair to label the conduct of public diplomacy as propaganda. Indeed, public diplomacy is a useful way for foreign entities to increase knowledge about themselves, something which is especially important if they have positive, altruistic goals in mind in doing so.

In the United States, Russia and Japan, there is a poor awareness of the EU in areas such as foreign policy and security issues (Tsuruoka, 2004). If the EU is a normative force in the world and if it is actually living up to its expectations, it is clear that this needs to be communicated. Along with the ‘expectations deficit’ some commentators have also pointed to a ‘communication deficit’ suffered by the EU as noted by Meyer

(1999) who contended that an effective dialogue between the EU and its citizens was would help to engender debate among the citizens of Europe, consequently increasing the EU's legitimacy.

Whilst Member States have recognised the value of public diplomacy (Bale, 2004, p. 55), it is clear that EU efforts in this field is still lacking. Although essentially aimed at developing a public diplomacy capability, most of the EU's outreach activities are not officially referred to as "public diplomacy", but rather are described as information and communication campaigns, or education and cultural exchange programmes. Fiske de Gouveia *et al* (2005, p. 1) have noted the importance for the EU of learning "how to better speak, and listen to third-country publics". This is especially pertinent since when it comes to asserting itself globally, the different representatives of the EU are "almost as varied as the communication itself" (Fiske de Gouvia, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 7).

While other EU bodies have also initiated public diplomacy programmes, the Commission provides the executive role. The European Commission is the institution responsible for conducting the Union's diplomacy and public diplomacy efforts; however, it does not always have the mandate to represent the whole of the Union. The Commission is an important communicator for the European Union, and its potential for conducting foreign policy and public diplomacy is huge. The Commission has a variety of Directorates General (DG) involved in foreign policy, including: External Relations (DG RELEX) Trade, Enlargement, Development, Economic and Financial Affairs and the European Community Humanitarian aid Office (ECHO), and the institution itself is required to be 'fully associated' with the Common Foreign and Security Policy. The Commission is already actively practising public diplomacy. Each DG has an 'information and communication' unit, in addition to the DG Communication, which is currently headed by Commission Vice-President Margot Wallström. Although it would seem logical for this DG to head the EU's public diplomacy efforts, in fact it has "no real involvement in the EU's external relations" (Korski, 2008, n.p.).

The ECDs, too, are a key resource for the Commission's public diplomacy efforts, being already on the ground in 136 countries around the world. According to Bruter,

because of the unique way the ECDs are formed and run, they make consumer services more important than any other function, for example, technical help and providing information for locals (Bruter, 1999, p. 200). The Commission's ability to play a more important role in public diplomacy has suffered from the "nationally-focused and often competitive" activities of the EU-27 (Korski, 2008).

In a paper co-written by this author, in 12 different countries, it was found that although the ECDs are actively involved in promoting the European Union in third countries, they are not as effective as they could be (Chaban, Kelly, and Bain, 2009). The study concluded that "for the EU's public diplomacy to truly launch itself, the Union should pay attention not only to 'what the EU says', but also to 'how it says it' and how loud, clear and engaged it sounds" (*ibid*, p. 288). The study's findings are highly pertinent for the research topic at hand. Indeed, Chapter Eight expands more broadly on the current effectiveness and potential role of the ECDs in the new EEAS system.

Other actors of the EU have varying and sometimes contrasting methods of communicating to the outside world. Despite also being the most well-equipped and experienced EU actors in the diplomatic and communication arena, Fiske de Gouveia (2005, p. 11) has also noted that there is a clear indication that the Member States "would be un-willing to surrender or share their expertise and funding" for a wider common good of the EU in the area of public diplomacy.

Within the arena of Member State representation at the EU level, is the Council of the European Union (formerly the Council of Ministers). Although the Council is typically associated with a range of Member State voices, recent developments have been made. Of particular significance has been the creation of the role of 'Mr CFSP', a High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (HR) and seen to be one step towards establishing a common European 'voice'. However, in his/her capacity, the HR does not have the authority to speak on behalf of the EU as a whole. Furthermore, the nature of the Council's operations, whereby its agenda is often conducted in secret, and its head, the presidency, changes so regularly, makes it largely unsuited to public diplomacy functions (*ibid*, p. 12).

An often overlooked EU institution in the foreign policy debate is the European Parliament. Despite the EP being seen by many as the guarantor of democracy and legitimacy within a traditionally 'elite' EU, its mandate is very limited and it is often dismissed in its European foreign policy role (*ibid*, p. 13). The EP itself is often discussed in the debate surrounding the apparent democratic deficit of the Union; a pressing issue for commentators and the public alike.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, by locating the EP's responsibilities somewhere within the decision making process of European foreign policy, this direct representation of the EU public could go some way to addressing the democratic imbalance. Thus in future developments of EU foreign policy, there is, arguably room for a stronger international role for the EP and the primary data collected for this thesis does address this issue, by enquiring whether there is a desire within the EU for such a development.

In EU policy making, public diplomacy is yet to become a core component of its external relations mechanisms (Korski, 2008, n.p.). How the EU is promoted through the use of public diplomacy is closely related to its normative values. In particular, van Ham (2008, p. 127) has described public diplomacy as being a soft power tool. Similarly, Gilboa has noted (2008, p. 56) that, "[s]cholars and practitioners have often equated public diplomacy with 'soft power' and measured results solely by public opinion polls and media coverage". But this may be changing as "[t]he EU is making an effort to shift its identity from soft power to hard power, which requires a rebranding exercise of major proportions" (van Ham, 2008, p. 139 (*sic*)). Not only is the EU's image as a soft power important, but other aspects of NPE are also important, particularly for EU citizens who "long for an EU that reflects and stands up for their values" (*ibid*, p. 137). Just how successful the Union has been in creating the normative European brand shall become clearer throughout this thesis.

Fiske de Gouveia has also warned of the dangers surrounding 're-branding' — that misunderstandings may occur for third parties who are trying to understand the entity at hand (i.e. the EU) (Fiske de Gouveia, P, 2005, p. 3). For example, confusion may be found in the many names that the EU has had over its 50 year life-span. From the European Coal and Steel Community, European Economic Community, European

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<sup>59</sup> See above.

Community and most recently, European Union, this evolution makes the EU more difficult to characterise. Similarly, the Union's structure with its many levels and institutions is possibly too complex for general public understanding.

Until now, a number of points have been made about the challenges and deficiencies facing the European Union if it wishes to become a credible international actor. This thesis argues that these factors have accumulated to the point that the officials and implementers of EU foreign policy have agreed that institutional change is required in order to address them. While it will become clearer in Chapters Nine and Ten exactly how it is envisaged these changes will play out, the following section looks at the proposals to introduce the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy (HR-FASP) and EEAS from an academic perspective.

### **3.4 CONSIDERING THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE**

The range of suggestions from academics and important EU officials about what form the EEAS should take is broad, but the focus thus far seems to be primarily on an internal perception of how it should look, with external conceptions being vague and mostly concerned with the transatlantic relationship. This thesis attempts to fill this void by exploring how European diplomats stationed in New Zealand and Singapore conceive of the EEAS and their role within it, as well as the way that the news media in these countries frames the EU's public diplomacy efforts. The focus of this thesis is also unique because none of the literature thus far has focused specifically on both the ability of the EEAS to improve the 'expectations-capability gap' and promote the idea of NPE. The remainder of the literature review focuses specifically on literature pertaining to the proposed EEAS.

#### ***3.4.1 The HR-FASP: Responsibilities and Concerns***

In light of the proposals for establishing an EEAS and its head, the recently renamed 'High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy' (formerly called the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs in the failed Constitutional Treaty), former head of the Council's Directorate General of External and Political Military

Affairs (DG-E), Brian Crowe (2005) has analysed possible implications for the then named Union Minister for Foreign Affairs. Crowe has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed before the role of HR-FASP can be successfully undertaken by someone. Not least because, he claims:

the Minister runs the risk of schizophrenia in triple-hatted accountability to the Council which he chairs and leads; to the Commission of which he will be the Vice-President responsible for external affairs; and to the President of the European Council who will represent the EU abroad 'at his level' (*ibid*, p. 2).

In other words, Crowe is referring to the potential problem that the future HR-FASP will face trying to juggle the dual role of the heading both the Presidency and the Commission. Crowe also saw that one of the biggest issues would be in managing relations with the US:

[The minister] will have a major contribution to make to tending the relationship both generally and over particular issues. But it will not be easy....The poor future Minister will find himself struggling to produce and maintain both a common EU view and a common, or at least compatible, trans- Atlantic one (*ibid*, p. 21).

Further pertaining to the role of the HR-FASP, some literature has focused on the current role of the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), whose role is to promote European Union policies and interests in troubled regions and work directly under Javier Solana, as an example for the practicalities of the role. Adebahr and Giovanni (2007) were particularly interested in three aspects of the work of the EUSRs: the scope of their mandates, their cooperation with both the Council and Commission and the way they have developed their mandates. The EUSRs are an important example for the EEAS' construction not least because double-hatting has already been practised in Macedonia, because the EUSRs were developed free from any pre-existing models (*ibid*, p. 62) and because they represent EU values and interests (*ibid*, p. 59).

As with the EUSRs' roles, personalities are going to be important to the success of the EEAS' set-up (Missiroli, 2007, p. 20). Commenting on how the EEAS should be established, Lieb and Maurer (2007, pp. 65, 69 & 70) believed that in order to avoid possible problems with its establishment, areas of political tension between the

involved parties should be acknowledged early on. To this end, the authors claim, an advisory group would be helpful, headed by a ‘personality’.

Furthermore, taking into consideration the potential of the Lisbon proposals to improve on the democratic deficit, the HR-FASP could also be responsible for reporting to the European Parliament (Rayner, 2005, p. 8). Although the High Representative is currently required to do so, this tends to happen in reality only on an ad hoc basis.

Although the new Foreign Minister would be ‘double-hatted’, Rayner believes that it seems natural that the new head should have closer links with the Council rather than the Commission,<sup>60</sup> and thus be more intergovernmental rather than Community-oriented by nature (*ibid*, p.16). If he/she holds both the position of the vice-president of the Commission and the Council’s representative for the CFSP, in an attempt to unify all instruments of external action, there could be tension between the two institutions that he or she is mandated to represent (Rayner, 2005, p. 7; Maurer 2003 p. 19; Duke 2003a p.20).

### ***3.4.2 Establishing the EEAS***

Relating to the set-up of the EEAS itself, the Constitution and Lisbon Treaties remained deliberately quiet on its exact formation. One thing that is certain however, is that it needs to be embedded in both the Commission and the Council and that it must draw on staff from the two institutions as well as Member State expertise. The vagueness of the proposals has led to much speculation by academics on its potential shape. It has been foreseen that a European diplomatic service, working alongside national diplomatic services, would draw its staff from the Council, the Commission and the diplomatic services of the Member States, and would seemingly make the Member State role of the rotating presidency redundant. Nevertheless:

[T]he new system brings closer together the *national* and *European* levels of diplomacy, by creating a structure in which national diplomats and officials of EU institutions will work side by side (Avery, 2008, p. 30).

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<sup>60</sup> This remains far from certain and discussions are ongoing about whether this will occur.

Duke (2004) and Rayner (2005) outlined a continuum of minimalist and maximalist possibilities, where the minimalist approach would mean an amalgamation of the Directorate General for External Relations with the Council Secretariat (Duke, 2004, p.5). Rayner has supported incorporating all of DG Relex (Rayner, 2005, p.22). In regards to such an arrangement, Cameron (2004) has pointed out that the minimalist structure would mean that, from a practical viewpoint, separate Commission and Council services would be retained. As some Member States want to keep the EEAS weak, and therefore avoid being in competition with their own national foreign ministries, “[t]his could be achieved by keeping existing structures loosely coordinated, with the only change being the appointment of a foreign ministry” (Hocking and Spence, 2005, p. 12).

By contrast, for the Commission itself, the development of the EEAS will be important for many of its DGs (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 1). A maximalist approach would “incorporate all of the policy units from the council secretariat, all of the external action DGs from the community, the Union ECDs as well as EuropeAid and ECHO” (Duke 2004, p. 5 [sic]) and integrate the geography desks in all EU central bodies (Rayner, 2004, p. 12). However, this situation would risk weakening the Commission (*ibid*, pp. 10-11) since presumably it would mean a stronghold of control over the Commission being given over to the Council and Member States. According to the head of the ECD in New Zealand at this stage:

DG RELEX and DG DEV [development] desk officers are expected to be incorporated into the EEAS. This is because DEV desk officers perform the same function for ACP countries that RELEX desk officers do for the rest of the world. Both their incorporation into the EEAS ensures worldwide coverage, except countries which have a perspective to join the EU which may potentially stay out of the arrangement.

Although the intention that the Commission should be an international actor goes back to the Monnet era, it “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” (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 5). In spite of the scepticism, Lieb and Maurer have emphasised what they see as the critical importance of involving the Commission not only in the composition of the EEAS, but also in the consultation process, which ultimately will determine the initial shape of the service (Lieb, and Maurer, 2007 p. 68).

Missoni has argued that should the EEAS go ahead, this would mean a reduction in the Commission by an incredible third of its size (Missiroli, 2007, p. 24). There has been a trend in the literature to want to ensure that the Commission does not get too much power in the so-called ‘institutional struggle’ between the Commission and the Council (Heuser, 2005, p. 1). According to Missiroli (2007, p. 19) it is hard to imagine the Commission staying out of foreign policy given the many foreign policy aspects that the institute currently partakes in, not only in being ‘closely associated’ with the CFSP, but it also undertakes many initiatives on its own merit (*ibid*).

If the EEAS really is focused on improving the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’, where there is currently confusion about who represents the EU as well as inefficiency when there is a duplication of work, then the argument for the maximalist position should be taken seriously. Crowe (2005, p. 9) has supported this suggestion:

[A] credible outcome would be to put in the EAS all the Commission’s geographical desks/responsibilities now spread among several Commissioners and Directorates General... [they] could remain under their own Commissioners outside the EAS.

The advantages of the maximalist scenario is based on the chance for the service to have “top-notch, specialist staff”, the disadvantage would lie in the upheaval that would follow such a move (Duke, 2004a, p. 34). Perhaps it was for this reason that Rayner believed that the minimalist version would be the most likely scenario. If Moravcsik’s theory of intergovernmentalism is still a strong case to be argued as a driving force in EU integration, then bargains are only made based on the ‘lowest common denominator’ reasoning, primarily between the three strongest countries – Britain, France and Germany (1991, pp. 223 – 224).

For Rijks and Whitman (2007), the maximalist and minimalist approach is based on the size of the reach of the EEAS rather than competency. This means that a minimalist approach would result in the EEAS being present in only the important centres around the world, or even only where the need is great (*ibid*, p.43). This distinction demonstrates that how the institutional arrangements pan out will impact not only the institutions and Member States involved, but crucially for this thesis, it will also impact on the presence of the EU in third countries.

In spite of these discussions, it is undeniable that both the Council and the Commission will be intricately involved in the EEAS, thus the traditional 'dualism' of the EU, which means the division between the two institutions (Missiroli, 2007, p. 12), would be bridged in some way. In addition, Howorth and Le Gloannec (2007, p. 32) have highlighted that "[i]t is not a question of inter-governmental *versus* supranational, but of the most practical way to make them work in harmony".

### ***3.4.3 The Potential Impact on Member State Embassies and ECDs***

One focus of this thesis is the potential impact of the EEAS on Member States embassies around the world. It has even been questioned whether Member State embassies will be entirely replaced in the new system. Until now, EU states have been somewhat unsuccessful in coordinating their foreign policy positions, and as such, relations with important partner countries have been negatively impacted (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 5). Indeed, Bale (2004, p. 54) has argued that EU foreign policy is "the last bastion of nationhood".

Hocking and Spence have analysed what impact the EEAS will have on Member State foreign ministries. Member States have already begun to jockey for positions in whatever structure will emerge. Some want to keep the EEAS weak, and therefore avoid being in competition with their national foreign ministries and "this could be achieved by keeping existing structures loosely coordinated, with the only change being the appointment of a foreign ministry" (Hocking and Spence, 2005, p. 12).

The establishment of the EEAS would pave the way for "Member States to reduce their diplomatic presence in areas where EEAS could take over" (Korski, 2008, n.p). Some commentators believe that small and medium embassies would close down (Rayner, 2005, p. 23). For Rayner, this assumption is based on budgetary considerations.

The new status of EU embassies should be treated as an opportunity by Member States to redirect scarce national foreign ministry resources to high priority national interests and transfer the common EU foreign policy progressively to new EU embassies such as has already happened in trade negotiations (*ibid*, p.24).

In this way, it may lead to an introspection of Member State foreign ministries, and a scaling down of services. The reactions of the senior diplomats in Singapore and New Zealand to the proposals are outlined and discussed in Chapter Ten.

Irrespective of the outcome on the physical presence of the Member States, it is undeniable that Member States (some more than others) bring with them key skills and expertise in the conduct of diplomacy. A number of the Member States are especially skilled in certain geographical areas, which should be taken into account when considering secondments (Rijiks and Whitman, 2007, p. 42). What tasks may then remain for the national embassies could be foreign policy issues which the Member States have still not been able to agree (Edwards and Rijiks, 2008, p. 18).

Ultimately, at present, both smaller and larger states are disadvantaged when holding the presidency in third countries because of the relatively small representation that they have abroad which means that those countries with larger foreign ministries often carry the burden of the presidency abroad in third countries (Hocking and Spence 2005, p. 4). Furthermore, Rijiks and Whitman have posited that although Member States will want to keep their diplomatic interests world wide, the EEAS would possibly provide office space for countries wishing to consolidate their resources while at the same time retaining a presence in certain countries (2008, p. 45). However, at this stage, Rayner believes that consular work would distract the proposed ECDs from their core job of:

[D]eveloping and maintaining relations with third countries in the areas of trade, development aid, humanitarian assistance and the development of crisis response capabilities' (Rayner, 2005, p.27).

Regardless of whether the maximalist or minimalist approach is adopted, it is indisputable the ECDs will be involved in the new system. Hocking and Spence envisage the result being that:

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 (*ibid*, pp. 11 - 12).

The ECDs would be renamed as Union Delegations, and be given the official mandate to represent the entire EU, thus improving EU efficiency and coherence. Hocking and Spence believe that the ECDs are well suited for this change, given that they have already experienced several phases of reform themselves (*ibid*, p. 3). They are also important since they are the only consistent element in the Troika. However, at this stage it is still questionable whether or not the Commission will form the core of the new system for European diplomacy. The possibility of this occurring, and how it may function from a practical perspective, is explored in Chapter Nine.

According to Hocking and Spence, there are still two key questions arising from issues about the career trajectories of the officials involved — what kind of training they would receive, and who would provide it? “Failure to deal with such issues could have a major impact on the success of any arrangements associated with the EEAS” the authors have claimed (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 14). Indeed, issues surrounding training for the new diplomatic corps are striking for many:

A European diplomatic training facility should be established as quickly as possible to ensure that EEAS staff from two different institutions and 27 different bureaucracies share common professional and administrative standards and are sufficiently knowledgeable of EU practice and procedure (Edwards and Rijiks, 2008, p 19).

However, in terms of the current situation of recruiting and training diplomats, Duke (2002, p. 863) points out the problems relating to the significant differences in selection backgrounds. Indeed, this pressing question has also been raised by Hocking and Spence (2005, p. 14). Whilst the proposed EEAS offers the prospect of additional postings and career development, how would the secondment of a national diplomat to the EEAS affect career patterns within the home diplomatic service? As Chapter Nine demonstrates, this question is still at the forefront of the interviewees’ minds.

#### ***3.4.4 The Potential Benefits of the EEAS***

Finally of interest to this thesis is the potential benefit of the EEAS, both internally and externally. Rijiks and Whitman (2007, p. 41) see an internal benefit in the increased dissemination of information to all Member States and institutions. Moreover, increasing the EU’s stability and predictability in the way it conducts its

foreign relations has also been cited as one possible benefit (Hocking, and Spence 2005, p. 11).

According to Howorth and Le Gloannec, although both the ECDs and EUSR's have worked to improve the 'presence' of the EU:

[T]his presence has not been matched by visibility: despite the EU initiatives in the Middle East and other areas, it is less visible than other foreign policy agents. The EEAS should add value here, although it obviously cannot solve this problem on its own (2007, pp. 33-24).

A number of commentators have mentioned the need to improve EU coherence, efficiency and visibility (Avery 2008; Howorth and Le Gloannec, 2007). However, these bold claims have not necessarily been backed up by primary data which demonstrates exactly how coherent, efficient and visible the EU currently is. It is this absence of empirical literature which Chapters Seven and Eight aims to overcome.

Some of the conceptualisations of the potential benefits of having an EEAS have been more conceptual in nature. For example, for Howorth and Le Gloannec (2007, pp. 23 – 24) the strength of the EEAS would lie in:

[F]ostering a European spirit, of devising European ways of thinking, habits, codes and procedures – which might eventually contribute to harmonising the foreign policy process ...It is also likely to reinforce the EU's presence and visibility in third countries.

Accordingly, the real potential of the EEAS is not to improve the capacity of the already numerous EU foreign policy vehicles, but rather it is a way to develop and project the European way of thinking through a more intense 'Europeanisation' process. Ultimately, it is envisaged that this could eventually lead to a stronger platform on which the EU can export its values (for example, those mentioned in the theoretical framework) to the rest of the world.

Whether the EEAS will in reality be able to provide the EU with a common voice will still be dependent on whether it has a single message to convey (Edwards and Rijks, 2008, p. 20). Lieb and Maurer have also noted that "the objective should be to speak with one voice and, therefore, to produce *joint* statements" (2007, p. 72). As this thesis progresses, it will become clear whether these potential benefits are appreciated

by the implementers of EU foreign policy in New Zealand and Singapore, and also by foreign affairs officials in New Zealand.

### 3.5 CONCLUSION

The above discussion provides a useful contextualisation for the rest of the thesis. The myriad of topics has extended some concepts from the two theories introduced in Chapter Two such as questions surrounding the legitimacy of the European Union both internally and externally. It has been argued that the EU suffers from a lack of legitimacy, which in turn is linked to the democratic legitimacy of the regime. Such a finding is important, as it has the ability to impact on both the ability of the EU to be a strong international actor and it also impinges on a core aspect of NPE. This thesis aims to establish whether these conceptions about a lack of legitimacy of the EU are valid from a unique, external perspective. Moreover, it asks whether the EEAS proposals have the potential to improve the situation in any way.

At the heart of this thesis is a concentration on diplomacy. Therefore, concepts and practises of diplomacy both in general, and how they relate to the EU specifically, have also been introduced. These have been both practical and theoretical in nature. The current way EU diplomacy is organised means that a number of considerations must be taken into account. This includes, how the various actors and institutions currently participate in external diplomacy (both traditional and non-traditional), and what considerations must be taken into account before the EEAS can have a positive impact on conceptions of the EU around the world.

As has been seen, until now, the focus of scholarship on these topics, have primarily focused on the internal questions – how the EEAS will work, how this will impact on the Member States, how the EU will be improved. But there has been no parallel focus on how these developments will impact on the external context – on the very partners the EU hopes to communicate with through its improved public diplomacy. This thesis thus offers a novel and insightful attempt at filling this void in the literature.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

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#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

A core element of this thesis is to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of EU foreign policy and the European External Action Service (EEAS). In order to reach this understanding, a robust and comparative methodology and research design has been developed. This chapter outlines the methodological approach, detailing its strengths and delimitations. Owing to the challenge of analysing the different theoretical approaches discussed in the previous chapter, as well as the range of concepts, attitudes, and actors that need to be considered when critically evaluating EU foreign policy, it was necessary to employ multiple methodologies in the collection of data for this thesis.

Primary data was sourced through semi-structured interviews with a number of key informants, working either within various EU foreign policy frameworks, or having been in contact with these in some way previously. Further primary data was sourced through public opinion surveys, newspaper content analysis from the third countries of the case studies, and official documentation from the European institutions. Secondary data was drawn using the archival method — from journal articles, books and chapters, especially theoretical works focusing on European integration and integration theory, as well as examining the identity of Europe, Europe's role as an international actor and the EEAS proposals in general.

The chapter focuses in particular on the systematic collection of a unique set of primary data. The resulting data set enables a critical discussion on how third parties view the European Union, and whether this is the same as how the EU views itself, or how it would like to be viewed, and to understand how these 'visions' are formed. The conclusions drawn from the data are therefore important in conceptualising how

the EU should proceed with future institutional and informal developments in its relationships with the outside world, especially with the development of the EEAS. It is important to understand the contextualisation of the collected data, as well as factors which may restrict the conclusions.

#### **4.2 THE METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION**

This methodology discussion is divided into two sections, although there is some overlap. The first section deals with primary data collected personally by the researcher. The second concerns the primary data collected during a wider transnational study on external perceptions of the EU by the National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE), to which the doctoral candidate has contributed. In both streams of data collection, open-ended, semi-structured interviews with key informants and ‘elites’ were undertaken.

Interviews are commonly used in both qualitative and quantitative research projects as a way of gaining a wide-range of information. The interviews’ chosen formats were semi-structured because it offers both a comparable data set and “valuable flexibility” (Berry, 2003, p. 679). The expression ‘elite’ refers to people who are “in positions to make decisions having major consequences...they are in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society...[t]hey run the machinery of the state and claim its prerogatives” (Mills, 1956, n.p.). Observing the American example, Chittick and Billingsley argue that elite power operates to “both structure public debate on foreign policy and influence the decisions of top foreign policy officials”(Chittick, and Billingsley, 1989, p. 201). The term ‘elite’ itself has come under considerable criticism, but although it implies “connotations of superiority...(there is) no other term that is shorthand for the point I want to make, namely that people in important or exposed positions require VIP interviewing treatment on the topics which related to their importance or exposure” (Riesman, 1964, p. 528). Such interviewees are considered to have privileged positions in society, giving them important insights into policy making and decision-making. Regardless of the debate surrounding the term, ‘elites’ are important as they have the ability to influence their country’s choice of international partners, and their views were included in this study for that reason.

One challenge with this type of data collection can be found in the validity of the answers given. As Dean *et al* have noted, it is impossible to extrapolate what a person has said for “public consumption” from what they really think (Dean *et al* 1964, p. 119). Taking this into consideration, it is important to keep in mind a desire by the interviewee to please the interviewer/reader or to simply ‘toe the party line’, rather than give a truly honest response. To avoid this as much as possible, care must be taken when creating the questionnaire and conducting the interviews that the respondent is not inadvertently encouraged to give what they feel might be the ‘right’ answer. In this study, this was particularly important as determining the elites’ personal perception of the given situation was the focus, rather than testing their knowledge on the issue. Perceptions were considered important because, as Brecher (1968, p. 298) has noted, decision-makers “act in accordance with their perception of reality, not in response to reality itself”.

EU foreign policy, while being to a large extent driven by internal ideas and processes, is also partly shaped in response to others expectations and reactions (Herrberg, 1998). Moreover, “[o]utsiders’ expectations and perceptions influence the impact of EU foreign policy role performance” (Chaban, Elgström, and Holland, 2006, p. 248). Furthermore, external perceptions are a source of knowledge of EU foreign policy as they have been interpreted as “important indicators of how well intentions have been translated into observable actions” (Rhodes, 1999, p. 6).

However, one restriction in the data generated for this study can be found in the types of respondents interviewed. Owing to the nature of the subject matter at hand, 17 interviews were conducted with ambassadors and diplomats. However, the secrecy of the diplomatic profession (Batora, 2005, p. 49) means those respondents may not necessarily have been as candid in their responses as other types of interviewees. In spite of this, any changes to the conduct of European Union foreign policy would be impossible without the valuable work of diplomats, from both the Member States and officials from the Commission Delegations. Because of their intimate, first-hand knowledge of how diplomacy is practiced by the EU, their opinion regarding the structure of the EEAS was imperative, and thus including them in the sample was considered vital to the overall validity of the research.

### **4.3 SECTION ONE: PRIMARY DATA TO ASSESS THE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE**

The first set of interviews was conducted in late 2005 with ambassadors and diplomats representing various EU Member States and the European Commission Delegations (ECDs) in Wellington, New Zealand. The time-frame of these interviews was significant because it was not long after the French and Dutch public rejection of the Constitutional Treaty. An identical questionnaire was also used in interviews with EU diplomatic representatives in Singapore, conducted in September 2008, shortly after the Irish rejection of the subsequent Lisbon Treaty.<sup>61</sup> Access to these representatives gave crucial and invaluable insights into the benefits and potential problems which could be conferred by the EEAS. In order to conduct these interviews, funding was secured through various sources.<sup>62</sup>

Email contact was initially made with the relevant ambassadors to ascertain whether they were familiar with the EEAS and if so, whether they were willing to comment on the matter on record. In some instances, interviews were redirected to other civil servants with more experience in EU policy. In total, six diplomats out of a total of seven EU Member State embassies represented in New Zealand were available for interview, with another two diplomats responsible for New Zealand, interviewed in Canberra.<sup>63</sup> In Singapore, eight out of the thirteen EU countries represented in Singapore were interviewed, as well as an ECD official. With the exception of two Singaporean interviews which were conducted over the telephone, the remaining interviews were done face-to-face and each lasted approximately 45 minutes in duration.

The aim of the interviews was to ascertain and convey the opinions of the implementers of European Union foreign policy in New Zealand and Singapore about the broader effects of the EEAS service. The semi-structured interviews were

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<sup>61</sup> It is interesting to note that in spite of the different timings, both sets of interviews produced an overwhelming determination that these proposals will go ahead at some stage in the future irrespective of public rejection.

<sup>62</sup> This included, a 'Jean Monnet mobility award', 'New Zealand Post Graduate Study Abroad Award', and an 'NCRE travel award'.

<sup>63</sup> Spain opened an embassy after the interview process had been conducted.

recorded for verbatim transcription, in order to ensure consistency and accuracy. The open-ended questions were designed to allow the interviewee to relate the EEAS proposals to his/her diplomatic posting. Over time, the questionnaire evolved alongside the theoretical framework, as well as depending on who the interviewee was. For example, an additional important question was added for the final round of interviews held in Singapore. The topic appeared to be viewed by the interviewees as both interesting and valid, as they were willing to spend time discussing the issue at length. The questionnaire posed to the interviewees had two primary foci — how EU foreign policy currently operates in third countries and how they felt this may change with the establishment of the EEAS.<sup>64</sup>

It was assumed that the participants were knowledgeable about the proposals to introduce the EEAS, and therefore no in-depth description of the EEAS was given at the time of the interview. Because the interviews were conducted on the understanding that participants should express their personal thoughts rather than maintaining traditional national or party ‘lines’ about the effect that a European foreign service would have, some of the respondents chose to keep the identity of the country they were representing anonymous.<sup>65</sup> It is possible that some differences in the answers to the particular questions can be rooted either in the well-known differences in approach of their countries toward further EU integration in general, and CFSP and EEAS in particular, or in the intensity of their country’s historical, economic and cultural ties with the country where they are represented. However, because of the potentially controversial subject at hand, and the secrecy of the diplomatic profession, some participants felt that if their identities had to be on record, they would have been much more restricted in their comments. On the basis of the respondents’ comments therefore, it is assumed that anonymity makes their answers more substantial and more revealing.

The opinions of first hand practitioners abroad do not tell the whole story, however. In order to extend the analytical value of this thesis, interviews based on the same questionnaire used in Wellington, Canberra and Singapore, were also conducted in

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<sup>64</sup> For a full list of the questions asked, see appendices i - iii

<sup>65</sup> In New Zealand, there was a joint decision made at one of the regular meetings that all of the interviews would be presented anonymously.

Brussels, in order to gain vital information about not only who, and what institutions, are driving the creation of the policy, but to obtain a more thorough understanding of EU foreign policy as it is understood from its core. These were undertaken in March 2007, with both present and former officials from the Council Secretariat, the Commission, and the European Parliament. The respondents were contacted directly, and were well-known practitioners in the field of EU foreign policy. In some cases, these were officials who had been involved in discussions and working groups pertaining to the EEAS, in others they were communication spokesmen for the institution. In the case of the European Parliamentarians, emails were sent at random to MEPs with a particular interest in foreign policy. In total, 17 officials in Brussels were interviewed. This included four respondents from the European Parliament, eight from the Commission, and five from the Council Secretariat. Some respondents from this group requested to remain anonymous. When this is the case, only the institution that they worked for is mentioned.

The result was a total of 35 interviews. Given the relatively exclusive nature of diplomatic posts, and the key insider information that these respondents had regarding the EEAS and EU foreign policy, their responses proved to be enlightening. While a sample of 35 respondents could be conceived as a limited number in relation to the wide spectrum of EU foreign policy actors, nevertheless, the respondents revealed some interesting similarities and differences, which serve to help conceptualise how EU actors view the EU. Thus the sample size is considered to be sufficient to draw conclusions from. Furthermore, if this project was to be extended in the future, it is advisable that an identical questionnaire would be used in each country so as to generate even greater comparative analysis.

The second part of the methodology focuses on the specific approach used in the Asia Pacific Perceptions Project, and how that data enables us to quantify, to some degree, how the EU is viewed as an international actor from the ‘outside’.

#### **4.4 SECTION TWO: PRIMARY DATA TO ASSESS THE ASIA-PACIFIC ANGLE**

Although many studies have examined how the EU is perceived by its own European citizens (Beetham, and Lord, 1998; Egeberg, 1999; Bruter, 2004), in 2002 Holland and Chaban identified that there was a dearth of studies that explored how the EU was perceived *externally*, and embarked on a number of multi-tiered projects with the aim of addressing this academic gap “by identifying, measuring and raising public awareness and extending knowledge of the European Union within many countries in the Asia-Pacific region” (National Centre for Research on Europe, retrieved 2.2.2009).

While there had been a few single-country studies which had explored certain aspects of EU external perceptions around the same time as the NCRE studies began (see for example, Philomena Murray’s rudimentary examination of Australian elite perceptions of the EU (2002, p. 29)), the NCRE’s research has generated a surge of scholarly attention to the area. In 2006, Ole Elgström from Lund University, Sweden, addressed and analysed perceptions of the EU in multilateral and trade negotiations. Sonia Lucarelli from the University of Bologna, has also highlighted the importance of examining EU external perceptions, noting that; “we fail to understand a fundamental component of the EU’s international role as well as of the Europeans’ self-identification process if we do not investigate what the external images of the EU are” (2007, p. 4).

Thus far the Holland and Chaban’s study has been undertaken in 15 countries across three regions; Asia, Africa and the Pacific. It traces perceptions and attitudes towards the EU as an international actor in three public discourses across those regions; public, elite and news media discourses. The project is multidisciplinary, using content analysis of newspaper articles, public surveys and in-depth interviewing techniques. This thesis draws specifically on findings from New Zealand and Singapore from this unique cumulative dataset. Of particular interest to the study at hand is what sort of actor the EU was perceived to be, and how was this communicated? In other words, was the EU viewed as a normative ‘good-guy’ and was it seen as an influential power in international relations?

Regarding the former, two forms of primary data was drawn upon — public opinion surveys and face to face semi-structured interviews with national elites. Yeric and Todd have defined public opinion as “the shared opinions of a collection of individuals on a common concern” (1983, p. 4). Although public opinion is important from within democracies, the opinions or perceptions of ‘outsiders’ also have the ability to influence outcomes since arguably the public in a given country have the potential to influence key decision-makers – the ‘elites’ who craft their country’s foreign policy agenda. The public opinion surveys and interviews from this section were conducted in 2007 in Singapore, and 2005 in New Zealand.

For the surveys, 400 telephone interviews were conducted in New Zealand using a professional computer-assisted telephone interviewing technique (CATI), while for Singapore an online survey with 400 respondents was employed. Professional survey companies were contracted in both countries to carry out the survey on behalf of the NCRE-coordinated project. A total of 23 questions were asked of respondents in New Zealand, with an additional two asked in Singapore pertaining to the Asia Europe Meeting process. Like most surveys, one hindrance is that specific details about perceptions are unable to be addressed, something that has been noted by de Vaus (1985, pp. 7-8) as one fault of the method. Nevertheless, the technique meant that a broad and varied range of people were surveyed. Indeed, each national sample was stratified according to national census figures on region, age, gender, ethnicity, and education. The margin of error was  $\pm 4.9$  per cent. One of the questions posed to the public was: “When thinking about the term ‘the European Union, what three thoughts come to your mind?” The reason for introducing the answers to this question is (the researchers believe) that it gives an honest, unprejudiced answer about initial impressions about how the EU is perceived in the eyes of the public and provides a unique insight.

The responses were categorised according to the theoretical framework introduced in Chapter Two. The first classification was whether or not the EU was perceived as being powerful. In other words, were there expectations on the EU to be a strong international power? Because of the traditional vision of the EU from an economic paradigm, answers which made any reference to the EU as an ‘economic power’ were

classified separately. The data presented for this thesis also attempts to evaluate whether the EU's self-belief as a normative/soft power has been effectively communicated to publics outside of the EU. Therefore, responses which made any reference to normative values outlined in Chapter Two were categorised together and this included references to whether the Union was seen as an environmental actor, as promoting peace, or as a leader in human rights.

Secondly, semi-structured elite interviews were again used in order to determine the opinions about the European Union held by Singaporean and New Zealand 'elites'. The elites were drawn equally from four cohorts – political, business, media and civil society in each country.<sup>66</sup> These interviews were conducted by individual native-language speaking researchers from the host-countries, who attended a number training workshops. Again, for reasons of anonymity the results have been outlined noting only the cohort of the respondent.

In the case of New Zealand (2005) and Singapore (2007), the interviews were undertaken in English. In total, 32 interviews were conducted in Singapore and 28 in New Zealand. They were conducted in a number of different locations at the interviewees' convenience. The elites were chosen at random, with initial contact made via email or letter with a follow-up phone call or email sent sometime afterwards to arrange the interview.

The 'elites' were asked the same question presented in the public surveys: "When thinking about the term 'the European Union', what three thoughts come to your mind"? Again, the answers were categorised and analysed according to the outline presented in the theoretical framework, making an interesting comparison between the 'movers and shakers' of Singapore and New Zealand, and ordinary citizens.

In an effort to understand the perceptions and understandings of one of the important actors in the proposed EEAS, the Commission, another question from the elite interviews was: "The EU has its Commission Delegation in [your capital city]. How could the activities of the Delegation be of use to you and your organisation"? This

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<sup>66</sup> New Zealand had no civil society cohort.

was pertinent because it has been assumed that the Commission Delegations will house the EEAS and the answers are significant in light of the previous chapters presented here, as well as the proposals brought to the fore in the failed Constitutional Treaty and Lisbon Treaty. The results could prove to be valuable for improving how the EU communicates abroad and directly to the construction of the EEAS. As the questionnaire given to the media cohort was slightly different from the other cohorts, these answers are not presented in this thesis.

Using a similar methodology to the above interviews, formal and informal interviews concerning the issues surrounding the EEAS were also undertaken with five officials who either were currently working, or had worked in the New Zealand Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry. Although no similar interviews were conducted in Singapore, thus limiting the comparative aspect, these interviews nevertheless provide some insight into the perceived relationship between New Zealand and the EU.

Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to attempt to understand and evaluate the various sociological or historical factors which may inform how the public and elites of the respective countries view the EU, one tool which may influence ‘outsiders’ perceptions of the EU can be found in how an entity is presented in that country’s news media. The final aspect of this methodology thus draws on the systematic collection and analysis of newspaper articles mentioning the EU in Singapore and New Zealand, collected as part of the Asia-Pacific perceptions projects.

Whilst some commentators have claimed that the media plays a role in ‘manufacturing consent’ for the interests of political elites (Bennett, 1990), it has been widely acknowledged that the media’s strength lies in its power to shape ‘outsider’ perceptions and influence policy choices (Gilboa, 2005, p. 27). Likewise, the visibility of an actor in the media, be it a politician, an institution or an international entity like the European Union, will influence how it is perceived by that media’s audience. Indeed, “[a]ccounting for the EU’s external perceptions is argued to be instrumental in understanding images which potentially impact the Union’s external actions and capabilities, and thus affect its internal rhetoric and self-visions of foreign policy” (Chaban, Kelly and Bain, 2009, p. 279).

The NCRE media projects have been informed by a 1979 UNESCO study which looked at “how the media presented other countries, peoples and related issues to readers, listeners and viewers” (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985, p. 3). It did this by collating relevant newspaper items and analysing their content. The study provided information about the quantity and also the quality of foreign news coverage and has been instrumental in consequent media and content analysis studies.

Because the establishment of the EEAS has the potential to change the ‘face’ of the EU foreign policy, it was deemed important to understand who currently represents the EU for international news audiences in this regard. The data for this section came from an analysis of reputable daily newspapers in Singapore and New Zealand for the same 12 month period in which the public opinion surveys and elite interviews were conducted. In New Zealand, this period ran from January and December 2004. In Singapore, this was between January and December 2006. It was a conscious decision for the study to sample only news articles which referenced specifically “(the) EU” or “(the) European Union”, as well as “European Central Bank/ECB”, “European Commission/EC”, “European Parliament/EP”, “European Court of Justice/ECJ” and the officials representing them.<sup>67</sup> The newspapers were accessed via online databases where available, or directly from the hardcopy of the publication.

In keeping with the comparability with the other countries which were part of the wider study, in Singapore three newspapers were chosen based on their high readership, as well the major focus of the newspaper; a ‘popular’ newspaper, (*Lienhe Zaobao*) a ‘business’ newspaper, (*Business Times*) and an ‘English-language’ newspaper (*Straits Times*). In New Zealand, there is no single popular newspaper, nor a business daily publication. For this reason, five reputable newspapers based in the leading regions were systematically canvassed for their content on the European Union. These were the *New Zealand Herald*, *Waikato Times*, *Dominion Post*, *The Press*, and the *Otago Daily Times*.

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<sup>67</sup> EU Member States were only counted if they appeared in the texts of the sampled articles.

Reputable national newspapers are recognised as reliable sources of current political information, being trusted by both the general public and national decision-makers. According to Schulz (2001, p. 3) “leading newspapers are an important news source of a country's elite and opinion leaders”. Because of the restrictions of time and space in the print news media, editors must necessarily be selective about what they include in their newspapers. In this way, inclusion and exclusion may also say something about the object under analysis – in this case, reports on the European Union.

Using the same researchers who carried out the elite interviews described above, the newspaper articles were collated and analysed according to a number of characteristics. Of particular interest for this thesis was which actors of the European Union were mentioned? In other words, who were the most visible EU actors? The relevance of this is based on one of the arguments against the EU as an international actor – its lack of coherence, which has been directly linked to the lack of a single voice on foreign policy issues specifically. Consequently, the actors of the European Union which were mentioned in one of the articles were separately categorised, whether they were EU Officials, EU Bodies, EU Member States, EU MS Officials, EU MS Bodies, or Others. The results (shown in Chapter Seven) demonstrate the extent to which the EU is represented by a cacophony of voices in the media of Singapore and New Zealand, which actors are present and what this might mean for the EU's international presence.

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

In summary then, the total of 97 interviews, plus approximately 800 public respondents enables a number of conclusions to be drawn about the internal and external conceptualisations of the European Union as a global actor. In addition, the interpretive content analysis of the EU's news media coverage undertaken as part of a wider study of print media is useful in drawing a number of conclusions about how the EU is portrayed to the public in Singapore and New Zealand and even further afield. Critically, the datasets presented enable a critical evaluation of the extent to which the EU's self-belief mirrors the view of it from outside its borders. In the future if resources permitted, it would be useful to use data from the same timeframe and also extend the project to cover additional countries.

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## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **CHARTING HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

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#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Before introducing this study's empirical research, it is first necessary first to situate the study within the evolution of EU foreign policy — in order to understand how and why it has developed from the initial, albeit failed attempts, at integrating defence (1951-1954) to the European Political Cooperation (EPC) up until the Nice Treaty.<sup>68</sup> Not only does outlining these developments enable a better understanding of the EU's current activities, but it is also helpful when making predictions about the future. The EU is a legal-based entity, which means that the last agreed text is the most authoritative. Consequently, the founding documents of the EU also contribute to future policy developments, something that also extends to foreign policy. Indeed, Hill and Smith have highlighted that previous the institutional developments of the EPC and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) “are of more than historical interest, because they are a useful tool for decision-makers to refer to, ensuring that proper procedures are being followed in consultations with third country partners and associates” (Hill and Smith, 2000 p. 71). In this way, they are important tools for exploring the EU's contemporary relations with third countries.

Viewing the most important historical developments in the EU's foreign policy through the lens of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Two, this chapter will explore the factors that have led to the EU's current ‘actorness’, ‘capability’, ‘values’, ‘communication’, ‘representation’ and ‘identity’. In doing so, it will outline the evolutionary steps that have taken the European Union from being primarily an economic entity, to encompassing wide-ranging tasks such as security and defence, and the promotion of human rights in third countries.

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<sup>68</sup> The Treaty preceding the Laeken Declaration.

Following the EU’s path from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), to the European Economic Community (EEC), the European Community (EC), and the EU, this Chapter is divided into two sections – firstly, those integration developments that have been primarily motivated by the EU Member States and secondly, the least well known aspect of EU external relations – the work of the European institutions, in particular, the Commission. This is because European foreign policy has, what Missiroli (2007, p. 9) has termed “an intrinsic ‘dualism’ between its Community and intergovernmental dimensions”. Similarly, there has consistently been a division between both theorists and practitioners of EU integration involving those who envisaged the EU as a federal entity (supranational), and those whose goal it was/is to see the supremacy of nation state remain for important decision-making (intergovernmental).

**Figure 5.1: Timeline of the Major Intergovernmental Developments in EU Foreign Policy**

<b>1950</b>	Creation of NATO
<b>1951-1954</b>	Failed attempt to establish EDC
<b>1969</b>	Start of EPC
<b>1969-1991</b>	Slow and uneven development of EPC
<b>1970</b>	The Davignon Report
<b>1973</b>	The Copenhagen Meeting
<b>1976</b>	The Tindemans Report
<b>1981</b>	The London Report
<b>1992</b>	The Maastricht Treaty ratified, including the establishment of CFSP pillar in the EU
<b>1997</b>	Helsinki – Agreement on ESDP (formalised in Nice 2000) and the role of the High Representative
<b>2003</b>	A secure Europe in a better world – the European Security Strategy
<b>2004</b>	Draft EU constitution
<b>2007</b>	Approval of the Lisbon Treaty by Member State governments
<b>2008</b>	Report on the implementation of the European Security Strategy – providing security in a changing world
<b>2009</b>	(October) 26 Member States ratified Lisbon Treaty

## **5.2 THE FIRST PARALLEL IN EU REPRESENTATION: INTERGOVERNMENTAL CAPABILITY**

The way the EU functions and is understood today is the result of a multi-paced evolution. For Hill and Smith (2000, p. 1) this evolution of European foreign policy has been a “change without anyone noticing”. The Union’s early stages were based almost entirely on economic integration, despite some attempts to introduce security aspects into the fold. Since then, however, political integration has slowly emerged to become a key component of the integration project. Because Chapter Two has already outlined many of the relevant developments post-Maastricht, this Chapter only summarises the key points that occurred after 1990. Figure 5.1 highlights important developments in the establishment of EU intergovernmental foreign policy mechanisms.

### ***5.2.1 From ECSC to EEC***

The capability of the EU as an international actor has been increasingly questioned and analysed throughout its half-century existence. While both the ECSC and EEC were based primarily on an internal motivation to create economic stability for their members who were recovering from the devastating effects of World War Two, it also had external ramifications, but mainly in the foreign economic sphere (Bebr, 1953, p. 24). The immediate focus of the ECSC was on creating an internal stability for itself. ‘The Schuman Declaration’, which many people now consider to be the birth certificate of the EU, aimed to establish “a community of production” (Europa, retrieved 28.05.2008). From a normative perspective, the first line of the declaration mentions the promotion of ‘world peace’ and the need to provide mechanisms to safeguard it (*ibid*). But there was no mention in this ‘founding’ document about what those mechanisms should be.

What followed was the Paris Treaty, signed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1951 and established the ECSC, laying the foundations of functional economic cooperation between the signatories — Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and Netherlands.

In addressing the old European conflicts, the signing of this treaty was a definitive step towards achieving a united, prosperous Europe, which has ridden many waves of success and failure, but has now, ultimately, resulted in an integrated, peaceful European continent. The external relations of the ECSC and the latter EEC may be divided into two streams – relations with partner countries, and relations with (post) colonial countries. For example, from an external relations perspective, the ECSC took into consideration two points. Firstly, a concern with:

[T]he extent to which non-member nations may participate in the activities and information of the Community and the reconciliation of its program with those of international economic organizations functioning in Western Europe” (Merry, 1955, p. 176 [*sic*]).<sup>69</sup>

In other words the ECSC wished to involve non-member countries and institutions from its immediate neighbourhood on the European continent.

Secondly, the Paris Treaty ‘Association Agreements’ were signed with third countries and “formed the basis for the construction of a vast network of differentiated and multi-faceted agreements between the EC and countries and regulated organisations in all parts of the world” (Bretherton and Vogler, 1999, p. 4). Of particular consideration for the ‘Association Agreements’ were the former colonies, which were beginning to be seen as a costly burden to the new ECSC member states (Springhall, 2001, pp. 14 – 15; Metz, 1984, p. 532).

Six years later, the process of integration was considered to be successful and was thus extended with the signing of the Treaty of Rome on 25<sup>th</sup> of March, 1957, which founded the EEC and extended economic integration and the promotion of peace and stability. It has been suggested that an external development – the Suez crisis – led to the signing of the Treaty of Rome (Mayer, 1983, p. 274). Its aim was to establish:

[A] Common Market and progressively approximating the economic policies of Member States, to promote throughout the Community a harmonious development of economic activities, a continuous and balanced expansion, an increased stability, an accelerated raising of the standard of living and closer relations between its Member States (Treaty of Rome, Article 2).

The primary focus of the Treaty establishing the EEC was the creation of a general

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<sup>69</sup> Great Britain, the United States, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, and Japan.

common market characterised by a customs union which was based both on the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital and the drawing up of common policies, in particular in the sectors of agriculture and transport. In addition, Euratom, which would operate alongside the EEC, enshrined the civil importance of atomic energy and created a common nuclear market. Thus, the importance of economic values in this fledgling European community was entrenched. In other values, such as those promoted by NPE, the Treaty of Rome was largely silent.

Out of the six first countries to join in the new arrangement, Belgium, Holland and France still had colonies, while the Italians and Germans had lost their overseas territories in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World Wars. Colonial ties were important in this early step towards European integration, as European colonial powers had built much of their wealth on gaining resources from the East and Africa, but the age of these great colonial powers was coming to an end. Following their political independence, the infant nations required finance and expertise from their previous rulers to help them transition to full economic independence and stability. Europe's answer to the post-colonial problem was to hand over much of the development cooperation to the ECDs and focus on giving preferential treatment to those former colonies.<sup>70</sup>

Prior to the Treaty of Rome, the Spaak Report had failed to mention Europe's existing colonies (Holland, 2002, p. 26). However, the inclusion of a special arrangement for these countries was something that France considered to be non-negotiable (Dimier, 2004, p. 76). Consequently, the Treaty of Rome ensured that the remaining overseas territories of the signatories were given the benefits of free trade in their exports to Europe. In addition, the first step in Europe becoming a developmental actor can be seen at this stage through the creation of an investment fund of \$581.25 million under Articles 131 and 136 (Schenk, 2003, p. 146). The establishment of this funding, now known as the European Development Fund (EDF), remains at the core of Europe's policies in dealing with developing countries, later known under the regional organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP).

At this early stage, there was a heavy reliance on the Member States for authority,

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<sup>70</sup> See below for more information about the Commission.

meaning that the ECSC and EEC lacked legitimacy and sovereignty in their own right. Member State dominance was especially important in defence arrangements, with France the only member with a seat at the United Nations Security Council (a point which contradicts NPE's assumption of multilateralism).<sup>71</sup> Consequently, the scope of the EEC was exclusively a civilian body and made no mention of any sort of foreign or security policy. Under a de-facto agreement with Russia, it was agreed that the Community was unable to establish military links. In this way, the Community's security and defence relied heavily on the support provided by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), established in 1950, and whose headquarters was also in Brussels.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, until recently, the EU has avoided giving any credence to having a military capacity. However, this situation could have easily seen another outcome.

Although the EEC was beginning to establish an identity for itself, an ambitious attempt at moving it beyond the purely economic realm failed. France's Premier, Rene Pleven, first proposed the idea of creating a European Defence Community, which would include establishing a common European army and a minister of defence in 1950. The goal was to enable West Germany to re-arm, whilst under the strict control of a central authority in Brussels (Willis, 1978, p. 5). The plan proposed "the creation, for our common defence, of a European army tied to political institutions of a united Europe" (The Pleven Plan, 1950).

A European Political Community was proposed, which would be given the mandate to command the proposed army. Consequently, the European Defence Community Treaty was signed at Paris 27 May 1952. Even at this early stage, European integration was emphasising the importance of multilateralism, with the treaty stating that it was created, "in the spirit of the United Nations Charter, and in close liaison with organisations having the same purpose" (European Defence Community Treaty, 1952). However, the plan was outvoted by 264 – 319 by the French National

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<sup>71</sup> Britain, who joined in 1971 also has a seat.

<sup>72</sup> The relationship between the European states and the United States was unstable and resulted in France defaulting from NATO in 1966. In 1995, France rejoined NATO's military committee, which advises NATO's political authorities on military policy and strategy and provides guidance on military matters. It also contributed troops and funding to NATO activities, including the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Kosovo and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

Assembly on 30 August 1954 (Judt, 2005, p. 245). It was defeated because defence was considered a fundamental part of national sovereignty, something that France was not prepared to give up.

Given the developments and importance of the influence of the larger military powers in the United Nations, as well as the establishment of the NATO and the failure of the EDC, it is possible to conclude that little or no expectations were placed on the European Economic Community beyond the economic sphere.

In addition, given the fragmentation of the EU's external relations, inconsistency was also prevalent. The 1967 Merger Treaty, which combined the Executives of the European Communities – ECSC, EEC, Euratom – attempted to solve this, as from then on, the newly named European Communities (EC) would have both a single Commission and a single Council, with the Commission taking over the running of the few already existing Delegations.

Related to NPE, it is clear that, at this stage, few shared values were agreed upon by Member States beyond economics and although the EEC was originally established with stability in mind, this was from a purely internal perspective. Finally, because of the lack of military capability, the EC was almost by default a 'soft power'. Positively, the result of the 'no vote' for creating a European army began the normative tradition of relying on multilateralist support for the defence and safety of the economic bloc.

### ***5.2.2 European Political Community throughout the 1970s***

In spite of the failed attempt of the EDC, a number of internal and external developments inspired a move by the then-named European Community to once again attempt to become more closely associated towards the end of the 1960s. In the first instance, it has been linked with a desire for the EC to be more effective and to take on more responsibility, commensurate with its economic relations. El-Agraa (2007, p. 32) has noted that:

Having completed the early tasks laid down in the treaties, further internal objectives had to be formulated and a way found to ensure

that the EC could act more effectively on the international stage...its international responsibilities neither matched its economic weight nor allowed effective consideration of the political dimensions of its external economic relations.

The result was The Davignon Report, which aimed to pave the:

[W]ay for a united Europe capable of assuming its responsibilities in the world of tomorrow and of making a contribution commensurate with its traditions and its mission... to bring nearer the day when Europe can speak with one voice (The Davignon Report, 1970).

Hence, the Community was preparing the way to assume a greater responsibility in world affairs and to become more coherent, capable and effective. A second reason driving further integration was a need for institutional changes to deal with the forthcoming first EC enlargement<sup>73</sup> as the Davignon Report also looked at “the best way of achieving progress in the matter of political unification, within the context of enlargement” (*ibid*). The result was the development of EPC which was launched informally in 1969. As no previous enlargements had taken place, it was unclear how this would affect the current institutional arrangements.

EPC extended the EC’s scope from economic integration into a more political sphere, thus the Community was beginning to acquire an (albeit limited) international identity, based on a “highly formalised, multi-level, intergovernmental cooperation” (Bretherton and Vogler, 1999, p. 165). The biggest development that it presented was regular contact between the Member States’ foreign ministries, enabling them to communicate their positions in international affairs.

Rather than creating a common foreign policy, the aim of EPC was to identify *common aims*. Therefore, EPC was not based on legal obligations (Bonvicini, 1988, p. 51). Although it was only a small step towards forging a common EU external representation, it was nevertheless instrumental in shaping the future developments of the hitherto trading bloc. Through this regular contact, EPC informally began the process of Europeanisation in foreign affairs, thus starting to break down the

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<sup>73</sup> The EU enlargement to 25 (now 27) countries has also been cited as a reason for the Constitutional Treaty proposals.

classically intergovernmental/segregated way in which the EU had been operating. Moreover, the birth of EPC enhanced the role of the Commission.

The framework which was established for the EPC allowed for the Foreign Ministers (or Heads of State) of the Member States to meet at least once every six months, and the Political Committee was set up in order to prepare for those meetings. The Commission was only to be consulted if its power of legislation was to be affected by the conclusions of the meeting, with the EP involved through informal meetings to discuss proposals, and, once a year, the President of the Council was required to provide the EP with a progress report on the work in question — something that was established to ensure the democratic legitimacy of the EPC (The Davignon Report, 1970).

It was around this time that Duchêne began to formulate his view of a Europe as a ‘civilian power’. Duchêne used the term ‘civilian power’ because it relied on mechanisms which were different to those used traditionally by the superpowers of the day — economic and diplomatic instruments in order to exert external influence (Smith, K, 2000, p. 13). EPC incorporated the fundamental aims of the protection of human rights and democracy which would be achieved through a harmonisation of views and ensured that the EC continued to recognise the needs of developing countries. The 1973 enlargement to nine countries, and the subsequent enlargements that followed, indicate that the EC’s unique way of organising itself was clearly working as it signalled its desirability; an important point for normative theorists. But the EC’s attractiveness was only projected towards its neighbours and the values that it was espousing were still based primarily on economics (at least the official ones).

Although the institutional framework of the EPC outlined important goals for establishing a common external policy for what was then the European Community, the scheme faced a number of limitations. Firstly, it did not actually specify the institutional structures through which it was meant to establish this ambitious external policy. Secondly, the EPC remained outside of the legal sphere of operation, and therefore relied heavily on the good will of the actors involved. This is a marked difference to how the CFSP operates today, and is a clear point of difference with current conceptualisations of the EU being a normative actor, which note the

importance of legal structures. Furthermore, the challenges faced by the fragmented, inconsistent nature of the EPC were famously highlighted by the American Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger who pointed out that there was no single telephone number for him to call the EC on. Indeed, how seriously could an EC foreign 'policy' be, without a traditional foreign minister to carry it out and be on the phone if the US wanted to call?

At the Copenhagen meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of December in 1973, the nine Member States once again agreed to meet more frequently in order to discuss the future of the Community process. They also confirmed the importance of a European identity in the EEC's external relations, as noted in the 'document on European identity' which laid down the guidelines for establishing an EC foreign policy (Copenhagen Meeting, 1973). The document wanted to ensure, "that the cherished values of their legal, political and moral order are respected" with the aim to, "defend the principles of representative democracy, of the rule of law, of social justice-which is the ultimate goal of economic progress-and of respect for human rights" (*ibid*, p.2).

EPC and its activities could be regarded as 'effective' on several occasions during the 1970s. In particular, three events stand out. Firstly, the political solidarity of 'the Nine' was clear in their joint appeal for a ceasefire in the Middle East on 13 October 1973. Secondly, their coordination was clear in the various joint statements in support of a peaceful solution to the Cyprus crisis in summer 1974 and finally, members were unanimous in their condemnation of apartheid in South Africa.

The Tindemans Report in 1976 further signified the European goal of speaking to the world with one voice. It recognised the need for a unified European voice which would mean extending majority voting in the Council. In order to allow the Presidency system to be more coherent the report suggested placing a legal obligation on the Member States to agree on a common position, by a majority vote, as and when necessary and demonstrated a move towards a more legal and coherent EU foreign policy (The Tindemans Report, 1976). However, the report's suggestions failed, primarily due to a Member State resistance to further limitations on their national sovereignty.

### *5.2.3 Intergovernmental Developments in European Community Foreign Policy in the 1980s*

The changing international environment of the 1980s signalled the need to once again address the issue of whether the EC needed a single foreign policy. Following from the loose arrangements under EPC, some important changes were made in 1981 to improve the capability of EPC. In particular, the London Report established mechanisms for crisis procedures which meant three Member States or the Political Committee, could call for a meeting with all of the Member States' ambassadors within a 48 hour timeframe. It also established a formal mechanism and commonality for dealing with third countries though this did not replace the traditional bilateral relationships (Rummel, 1988, p. 124). The London Report stated that:

Political Cooperation, which is based on membership of the European Community, has developed to become a central element in the foreign policies of all member states. The community and its member states are increasingly seen by third countries as a coherent force in international relations (The London Report, 1981, pp. 1 – 2 [*sic*]).

The last sentence in the above extract is of particular interest and it arguably indicates a clear difference between how the EC sees (or saw) itself, and how it was seen by the rest of the world. It also denotes the importance of clarifying just how third countries *do* see the EU, yet, as has been noted previously, it was several decades before third country perceptions were really explored with any systematic rigour. Given the incoherence and ineffectiveness of the EU even today, and the lack of a clear view of its international 'actorness' among its third country partners (see Chapter Seven), at the very least the above assertion is a considerable over-exaggeration of the EC's actor capability at that time.

As with other political developments, the 'Solemn Declaration on European Union', signed on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1983 in Stuttgart, had references to both the importance of the EU taking a more active role in international relations and the importance of the EU as a normative power. For example, Article 3.2 mentioned that, "in order to cope with the increasing problems of international politics, the necessary reinforcement of European Political Cooperation must be ensured" (Solemn Declaration on European Union, 1983), and the Preamble also for the first time explicitly made reference to

normative values such as the ‘Protection of Human Rights’ and the ‘European Social Charter’ (*ibid*). However, the statements were only internal directives with little ability to be actualised, and did not extend to include its relations with third countries.

The fall of the Berlin Wall, and the subsequent end of the Cold War ushered in a new era of world politics and was to dramatically change the functions, direction, and role of the EC in the global arena. Because of the EC’s unique geopolitical position, it had the potential to become a key player in the new unipolar world system.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, the threat of instability for the post communist states, following the disintegration of their respective governments, led to a strong demand for a more intensive EU engagement internationally. Indeed, as one commentator noted, “Europe was feeling very optimistic about its future global role” (Hill, 1998, p. 22-23).

Ratified in 1987, the Single European Act (SEA) formalised EPC<sup>75</sup> and stipulated that Member State embassies and Commission Delegations had to “intensify cooperation” (Title III Art. 30 point 9) and in doing so, cemented the EU’s foreign policy into a legal (and thus normative) framework. Established in the context of a crumbling Eastern Bloc, the Preamble to the SEA was a step towards improving the actor capability of the EC, but with an inward looking goal in mind, as noted in the Preamble:

Aware of the responsibility incumbent upon Europe to aim at speaking ever increasingly with one voice and to act with consistency and solidarity in order more effectively to protect its common interests and independence.

The SEA also attempted to close the “lowest common denominator bargaining”, which had been prominent in the other arrangements, by establishing qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council of Ministers; a phenomenon crucial in increasing the scope of the EC’s political identity and for streamlining decision-making.

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<sup>74</sup> Although not all aspects the new world system was viewed positively for the EC, as at this stage there was a faction of commentators who even questioned its reasons for survival.

<sup>75</sup> See below.

#### ***5.2.4 Common Foreign and Security Policy and Beyond***

The 1990 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) resulted in the Treaty on European Union (also known as the Maastricht Treaty) which radically transformed the way Europe's international affairs operated, in particular by establishing a new pillared structure, and legalising the bifurcated way the EC had traditionally operated. As noted in Chapter Two, the intergovernmental Common Foreign and Security Policy was a signal that the EU was ready for a more involved future, importantly incorporating security and defence in its new strategy.

Maastricht was important as it made two important developments which would change the nature and face of the EC forever. Firstly, it incorporated foreign policy into the new EU pillared structure. Secondly, it legally turned the Community into a Union, with the term 'European Union' being officially adopted. It seemed that the newly formed EU was ready to take its new place in the world, and by incorporating foreign policy into its legal framework, it was now in a position to take on not only a new role in the world order, but also to market itself as being a unique global actor. However, as demonstrated in Chapter Two, the failures of the CFSP meant that the EU "was not an effective international actor in terms both of its capacity to produce collective decisions and its impact on events" (Cameron, 2002, p. 3).

From a normative perspective, the Maastricht Treaty introduced humanitarian, rescue and peacekeeping tasks into the EU's agenda. Moreover, one of its principal aims was "to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (Treaty on European Union, Title V, Article J.1; and Treaty of Amsterdam, Title V, Article 11). The criticisms which followed Maastricht have led to a number of subsequent developments.

The first EU Special Representative was appointed to the Great Lakes African region in 1996, followed by a second appointment for the Middle East Peace Process. Henry Kissinger's question about a phone number for Europe has resonated since he made it, and the establishment of the EUSRs were considered to be a way of establishing both a "voice" and "face" for the EU and its policies (Council of the European Union), and now "are the visible expression of the EU's growing engagement in some

of the world's most troubled countries and regions" (Solana, 2005, as cited in Adebahr, and Grevi, 2007, p. 57). Although the Special Representatives were not established at the same time as the Maastricht Treaty, there were legal provisions for them to be established therein. Hence, the EUSRs are a continuation of the importance of law for the EU and for the principles of NPE. Article 18 of the Treaty of European Union states that "[t]he Council may, whenever it deems necessary, appoint a Special Representative with a mandate in relation to particular policy issues".

The Treaty of Amsterdam, signed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1997 has been viewed as a direct attempt to address the expectations deficit which has plagued the EU. Two particular developments stand out from this treaty - the establishment of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and the role of the High Representative (HR). The creation of the role of 'Mr CFSP' was considered to be one important step towards establishing a common European 'voice', with a mandate to act on behalf of, and offer support to, the intergovernmental Council. However, in his/her capacity, the HR does not have the authority to speak on behalf of the EU as a whole. Instead the HR represents only the European Council.

The HR also assists the rotating Presidency in the external representation of the EU. Mr. Javier Solana was appointed as the first HR and took office on 18 October 1999. Solana's appointment was seen as symbolically important for two reasons, as Hoffmann (2000, p. 195) has described: "[Solana] was a political figure, not a bureaucrat, and he was a symbol of a shift from NATO predominance to a potentially autonomous European security policy". At first, the Member States wanted a low-profile figure, but after the crisis of the CFSP in Bosnia, where the EU failed to adequately respond to the situation, they decided to appoint Solana (Keukeleire *et al*, 2008, pp. 54 - 55). It has been widely accepted that Solana has been highly successful in the HR role, and has, to an extent improved the coherence of EU foreign policy. This has been credited as being not only because of the importance of the role, but also because Solana is well regarded internationally as a former Secretary General for

NATO.<sup>76</sup> However, although he is often referred to in the media as the ‘EU foreign minister’ Solana is only mandated to represent the Council. According to Cameron, it is unreasonable for journalists to remember all of the telephone numbers of the EU’s Member States (Cameron, 2002, p. 13).

Another looming problem for the EU’s ability to act was “the lack of a powerful instrument, a ‘military arm’ of the EU” (Rummel and Wiedermann, 1998, p. 57). The creation of the ESDP and later, the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) which was agreed on at the Helsinki Summit in 1999 and had the capacity to deploy 60 000 troops, were steps towards the EU taking on greater global responsibility and towards enabling the Union to realise its ambition of possessing greater capabilities for playing this more active role. The RRF was pushed through as a result of the experience of the war in the Balkans, and its purpose is “to intervene in crises before they become full-scale wars, and to release NATO from participating in some military interventions” (Lindborg, 2001, n.p.)

The Nice Treaty was agreed on by Member States in December 2000 ahead of the biggest ever single enlargement of the EU. The treaty called on the Commission and Council to ensure consistency of the enhanced cooperation (Article 45) and prepared the way for further institutional and cooperation. The final point of the Nice meeting announced the ‘Declaration on the Future of the European Union’, which laid the foundation for the controversial Constitutional Treaty.

### **5.3 THE SECOND PARALLEL IN EU REPRESENTATION: COMMUNITY COMPETENCES**

Some of the incoherence and ineffectiveness of the ECSC, EEC, EC and the EU has been attributed to the number of faces the EU presents to the world outside. Although a large body of literature exists on the foreign policy mechanisms of the successors of the ECSC, most of the work focuses on intergovernmental arrangements, therefore stressing the role of the Member States. But behind the intergovernmental bargaining

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<sup>76</sup> He has been categorised with the likes of UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, and former US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice.

of the EU there is another important representative of the EU that has been largely ignored in the literature – that which controls a large proportion of the EU’s diplomatic mechanisms – the Commission and its Delegations (ECDs). The following section traces the development of the EU’s supranational international actor capability, charting the role of the ECDs whose role it is to represent the EU in certain areas abroad (see also Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5.2: Timeline of the Major Commission Developments in Foreign Policy**

<b>1954</b>	First Delegation opened in Washington
<b>1964</b>	The Yaoundé Convention signed
<b>1971</b>	Italian Ambassador, Aldo Mario Mazio appointed as head of Delegation in Washington.
<b>1975</b>	First Lomé Convention signed
<b>1975 - 1978</b>	The number of ECDs world wide doubled in the ACP countries
<b>1988</b>	Merging of the European Agency for Cooperation and the <i>Unité des Bureaux Extérieures</i>
<b>1994</b>	Establishment of the Unified External Service
<b>1996</b>	The Williamson Report
<b>2000</b>	Signing of the Cotonou Agreement
<b>1999 – 2004</b>	The Prodi Commission and reform of the Commission, including deconcentration

The ECDs have faced a number of changes and challenges since their establishment. The Commission itself started life as the ‘High Authority’ which was designed to monitor the merging of Germany and France’s coal and steel industries, and was announced in Robert Schuman’s plan, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1950. This High Authority

was established as part of Jean Monnet's vision of establishing an efficient, technocratic governing organisation. Following American diplomatic recognition of the ECSC in 1953, the first European Delegation was opened in 1954 in Washington and served as an information and communication office, with no diplomatic functions. Thereafter Monnet, the President of the High Authority of the ECSC, opened an information office in London, which was greeted as a sign that Europe was committed to its integration efforts, in spite of the failure of the EDC (European Communities, 2004). However, it would be almost 50 years before Commission Delegations were opened in Singapore and New Zealand.

Subsequently, the Treaty of Rome established the basic institutions of the EEC – an Assembly (parliament), a Council (Member State representative), a Commission (to take over the role of its predecessor, the High Authority, to ensure provisions were applied and to formulate recommendations) and a Court of Justice. The Commission took on the identity as the so called 'rule-making wise men' and was granted independence and increased its power. Indeed, many of the 'democratic deficit' arguments against the EU stem from this original set-up of authority which saw the main power vested in the unelected Commission (Zoller, 2006). Although ECDs were established for a variety of reasons, the most numerous were those operating in the ACP countries.

### ***5.3.1 From Yaoundé to Lomé***

As noted above, an emphasis on relations with third world countries dominated the experience of the EU in its external relations from the beginning. Development policy, which many of the original Delegations, and later the ECDs, were mandated to carry out, has been informed by three agreements with the host countries – Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou. The Yaoundé Convention was signed in 1964 and continued the tradition of European development and assistance in former colonies and dependents. In order to administer the necessary funds for Yaoundé, the semi-autonomous European Agency for Cooperation (EAC) was created in 1964 and funded under a Commission grant. It recruited and managed contracted Heads of Mission and their technical staff in Commission offices in the associated countries and was composed of

officials from Member State administrations or professionals from the private sector with the skills necessary for helping developing countries (Dimier, 2004).

Although the presence of the ECDs in third countries started out in a rather minor way, it was a significant step towards establishing a tangible 'presence' for the EC. However, it is unlikely that the establishment of these measures was driven by any desire to create an EC identity in itself. Instead, "the growth in the delegation network corresponded to objective need for field work rather than ideology" (Spence, 2004, p. 65). This was because "growing difficulties of separating economic issues from general political questions became increasingly apparent" (Duke, 2002, p. 850). If anything, the Yaoundé 'association' policy may have had a negative outcome, as it proved to be imperfect and was considered neo-colonial by many ACP States (as have the conditionality agreements which have come to shape EU-ACP relations since).

### **5.3.2 Lomé and the ECDs**

The UK accession to the EC changed both the foundation and delivery of the EC's aid programme. The first Lomé Convention replaced Yaoundé and was signed between the EC and 46 founding African, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP) in February 1975. According to Holland (2002, p. 32), "[m]ore than any other factor, the enlargement of the European Community from the original Six to Nine in 1973 foreshadowed a restructuring of external relations". Not only was enlargement deemed a reason to improve on the previous mechanisms by removing reciprocity, but:

"[S]ome member states viewed the prospect of future British membership as an opportunity to open a wider development debate, an idea that was vigorously supported by the Commission who wished to see its bureaucratic authority strengthened in this area" (*ibid*, p. 33 [*sic*]).

Hence, Lomé signalled a step towards the EEC becoming a more effective developmental actor, with both Member States and the Commission playing an important role. Although it concentrated primarily on development cooperation Lomé also covered trade, regional integration and cultural cooperation. Importantly, Lomé assigned free access to EU markets for manufactured and primary goods and provided preferential prices for goods such as bananas, sugar, and beef (Bruehlhart and

Matthews, 2007, p. 484). A number of subsequent changes were made to Lomé, with the third Convention including the normative values of human rights, trade, and cultural cooperation (Holland, 2002, p. 45).

Between 1975 and 1978 the number of ECDs worldwide doubled in the ACP countries (Spence, 2004, p. 66), which coincided with a directive enabling them to represent the Commission in trade negotiations. Regarding how close to NPE these early Delegations were, at this time, a contradiction seems to have existed regarding the Union's desire to be a normative force. The then Commissioner for External Development, Claude Cheysson, noted that the aim of the EEC's aid distribution was devoted to supporting food self-sufficiency, including a focus on increased national production in order to improve living conditions in the predominantly poor rural areas. However, despite this seemingly positive focus, newspaper articles at the time demonstrate that Cheysson's primary focus seemed to be on the economic importance for the EEC's relationship with the third world, as he was primarily interested in establishing export markets for the Community. For example, it was noted in one article that, "Third World countries, as a group, are now the EEC's best *customers*, outranking the United States" (The Globe and Mail, 5.12.1979, emphasis added). This recognition and acceptance of the blatant wish to conduct relations with third world countries because of the financial benefits that they presented to the EC Member States is notably absent from news articles about the European Union today.

### ***5.3.3 The Cotonou Agreement***

By 2000, it was clear that further amendments needed to be made to the external development policy of the EU. The Cotonou Agreement was signed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, 2000 in Cotonou, Bénin, and was the result of a number of different bargains. In the first instance, it must be remembered that the EU's interest in regional integration as a development strategy stems from its comparative advantage in regionalism. Consequently, as an integrated regional entity, it prefers to deal with other regions wherever possible (Lamy, 2002). This is because of the perceived efficiency of dealing with six sub groups within the ACP, rather than negotiating 78 bilateral partnership agreements. Article 34 of Cotonou noted that:

Economic and trade cooperation shall build on regional initiatives of the ACP states, bearing in mind that regional integration is a key instrument for the integration of ACP countries into the world economy.

According to Holland, the lack of an official route of communication in Lomé meant that European policy in the region was fragmented (Holland, 2002, p. 60). Subsequently, Cotonou aimed at strengthening political relations by placing a greater emphasis on effective dialogue and highlighted nine development strategies which coincided with the emerging EU normative identity encompassing the principles of democracy, good governance, human rights, and environmental sustainability across all of the strategies (European Commission, retrieved 26.02.2009). According to Holland (2002, p. 50) “[g]ood governance, democracy and human rights typically came to dominate the EU-ACP political dialogue”. But the conditionality of aid assistance that formed part of this dialogue has been criticised as being driven by EU self-interest, and not particularly effective (Santiso, 2002).

#### ***5.3.4 ECD Events Outside of Development Policy***

As with the intergovernmental evolution of EU external representation, the status of the ECDs has also experienced a number of improvements and criticisms over the years. Indeed, one of the ECDs’ most hard fought battles has been in gaining official diplomatic recognition. Although most have now been accorded with such status, in the early 1970s it was beginning to be clear that the ECDs faced a lack of external recognition and legitimacy in their work. Although today the Heads of EC Delegations are often styled ‘Ambassador’ by courtesy, they are not Ambassadors under the Vienna Convention and if privileges and immunities at the Vienna Convention level are accorded to the Delegation by the host State, this requires a special headquarters agreement between the EC and the relevant State (Denza, 2002, pp. 164, 185).

Since 1971 the title ‘Ambassador’ has slowly been ascribed by host countries. This trend began in 1971 with the appointment of a former Italian Ambassador, Aldo Mario Mazio, as head of the Delegation to Washington (European Commission, retrieved 27.02.2009) which added a certain credibility to the ECD there, and no

doubt increased its presence and prestige. In 1977 it was decided that all Commission external offices required better staffing and support in order “to engage in external representation and enjoy high-level access and diplomatic protection based on the 1961 Vienna convention on diplomatic relations” (Spence, 2004, p. 66). After these initial steps, agreements were made on an individual basis to grant the ECDs diplomatic recognition:

From the mid-1970s, DG I Delegations fought to win – and gradually obtained one by one from their host countries – full diplomatic privileges and immunities (Dimier, 2006, p. 496).

Thus, the diplomatic identity of the Commission was beginning to take shape and with the mention of the Vienna Convention, the ECDs role was beginning to gain a certain degree of legitimacy. In 1982, Adrian Fortescue’s Commission report to the Council was able to respond to criticism of the ECDs by highlighting the fact that the Commission now had an emerging diplomatic capability, comparable with Member States:

[E]xternal Delegations are doing work directly comparable to Member State embassies...Like embassies, they need proper back-up from headquarters so that they have the information and instruments to do the job (Fortescue, as cited in European Communities, 2004, p. 30).

Positively for the ECDs, in the 1980’s, EPC meant that Member States began to rely on their unique expertise. However, the status of the Delegations varied:

[F]rom the EAC-run ACP missions with their mainly contracted staff and modest political profile, to the Washington Delegation, which by now was virtually a fully accredited diplomatic mission (European Communities, 2004,).

The advancement of EPC served to enhance the ECDs’ role, as can be seen in the fact that by 1988 the Commission was present in 89 missions spread over six continents, and because of this it was a key representative of the Community’s interests in third countries and international organisations. However, confusion about their mandate still reigned; something which was attributed to the two different entities that the ECDs operated under. An attempt to solve this confusion was made in 1988, when the two entities – the European Agency for Cooperation (which had traditionally been based in developing countries), and the *Unité des Bureaux Extérieures* (which was created in 1982 to manage the Delegations answerable to DG I (for External Economic

Relations) — merged. Despite this positive step towards consolidating the competences of the ECDs, it was not enough to dramatically improve either the logistical running of the EC in general, or its overall image.

Although the Maastricht Treaty cemented the division of foreign policy between intergovernmental and community competences, it also aimed at providing a more coherent and coordinated diplomatic framework:

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. (TEU title V J.6).

The number of ECDs also rose dramatically and by 2000, the Commission was present in 123 third countries as well as 5 international organisations with a dramatic increase in its non-ACP delegations, which had grown by 240 per cent since 1989 (Duke, 2002, p. 858). Indeed, in 2008, the ECDs worldwide were present in 136 countries and territories.

Although the decade between 1990 until 2000 started out full of potential for the EU, the ECDs themselves continued to suffer from a great deal of criticism and suspicion from European and international governments and publics alike. In addition, according to Faure (2000), although the responsibility which the Commission was under increased dramatically during this time, staffing and management structures were not adequately aligned. For example, Member States had between 4 and 9 officials to manage €10 million, while the Commission had only 2.9 members of staff for the equivalent tasks (Commission 2000, as cited in Faure, 2000).

One response to these criticisms and challenges was made in the form of the Unified External Service (UES) of the European Commission. This service was created in 1994 to allow a single management system for all of its Delegations operating in third countries and with International Organisations (European Commission, retrieved, 08.08.2005) ultimately leading to the creation of Directorate General for External Relations (DG RELEX) to manage it. According to Batora (2005, p. 59):

The primary reason of the UES is to tap resources and experience of Member States' foreign services while developing to own human rights to develop a unified foreign policy of the union.

Furthermore, in 1996, David Williamson, the Secretary-General of the Commission, produced a document on the professionalisation of the UES in which the primary focus was on the professionalisation of the ECD staff (Spence, 2004, p. 66), with key recommendations including: the obligation for all officials working in the external relations field to serve abroad and a commitment to career development and professional training. Further changes occurred in 1998 with the establishment of a Common Service for External Relations with the mandate of "clarifying, simplifying, increasing efficiency and the visibility of the Union's work overseas" (Duke, 2003, p. 9). The UES scheme has since been deemed as successful, especially considering the diplomatic integration that took place Abuja, Nigeria in 2001 which saw the construction of a common embassy compound housing Member States and the ECD with shared facilities like a Visa section in order to reduce costs.<sup>77</sup> This move indicates an acceptance by Member States that the ECDs and their staff have a legitimate and valuable contribution to play in conducting EU foreign policy. However, confusion has remained with the over-lapping competences of the various Commission DGs.

### ***5.3.5 The Prodi Commission: Deconcentration and Reform***

Romano Prodi, who headed the Commission from 1999 until 2004 has become well known for his overall reform of the Commission's management systems. This firstly included the establishment of a new DG – EuropeAid – which aimed to improve the quality and delivery of aid and technical assistance. Secondly, the 'Chêne Report', which proposed that the ECDs should be managed by DG RELEX (Spence, 2004, p.71) went some way to addressing the inconsistency of ECD activities, and thirdly, radical staffing reforms were undertaken for the ECDs. This came to be known as 'deconcentration'.

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<sup>77</sup> Other shared embassies have been undertaken by the British, French, and Germans in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan and Minsk, Belarus as well as joint Nordic embassies in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania and Windhoek, Namibia.

The movement towards ‘deconcentration’ was significant. The concept, defined in a May 2000 Communication, envisaged that “anything that can be better managed and decided on the spot, close to what is happening on the ground, should not be managed or decided in Brussels” (Commission 2000) and aimed at ensuring that ECDs were given the human, technical and financial resources they needed to manage and decide on the spot. According to Spence (2004, 70), the role of the ECDs has thus changed significantly, and means that:

Devolved Delegations are now closely associated in the programming process and are fully responsible for identification and project preparation. They also take on technical, contractual and financial implementation of approved programmes and projects.

The direct consequences of ‘deconcentration’ are largely unanalysed. The Member State diplomats interviewed for this thesis were asked if they thought that their relationship with the local ECD had changed since these changes were implemented. One respondent said, “I don’t think so” while another said that, “yes of course, the Commission has become much more active”. The first response was the commonly held belief, and only the one respondent perceived there had been a change. However, perhaps this lack of a noticeable change signifies the different type of relationship that the EU has in New Zealand and the lack of a pressing need for reform there. Moreover, the ECD in New Zealand was relatively small and newly opened at the time of the interviews.

#### **5.4 THE ACTORS IN EU FOREIGN POLICY**

The developments in the two spheres outlined above have culminated to mean that at present, the EU has a number of actors operating on the world stage. The traditional representatives of the European Union abroad are the Member States, who are required under Maastricht to cooperate with each other and the ECDs ensuring “that the common positions and common measures adopted by the Council are complied with and implemented” (Treaty on European Union, title V J.6). Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to look in depth at the foreign policies of all 27 Member States, some conclusions about their preferences can be made. While Member States have transferred large aspects of competency to the EU, until now, they have preferred to keep foreign policy decisions within the intergovernmental decision

making process — Thereby giving the impression that foreign policy remains a core aspect of national sovereignty.<sup>78</sup> Perhaps most importantly for Maastricht, and for future European integration attempts including the EEAS, was that for the first time Member States agreed to give up “three essential sovereign rights of the modern state – currency, internal security and external security” (Fischer, 2000). Bretherton and Volger (1999, p. 168) believed the CFSP was based on a “[h]ighly institutionalised and complex process of consultation and cooperation between Member State governments”. Therefore, the real strength (or lack of) of the CFSP remained in the hands of Member States, instituted through formal, intergovernmental relations.

Each Member State undertakes the role of holding the rotating six monthly Presidencies. Included in this mandate, the country holding the presidency chairs EU meetings between Member State embassies and the ECDs. This is an important internal construction, as according to de Vreese, the time spent by Member States holding the Presidency is positive — it raises the profile of both the EU and the host country, and tends to improve that country’s engagement at EU level (de Vreese, 2003, p. 33). However, for external perceptions of the EU this positive correlation does not necessarily exist and can instead add to the difficult and fragmented image of the Union. The Presidency has also highlighted differences in the ambassadorial capability of the Member States which may help to explain the inability of Member States to agree on important common viewpoints (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 131). In addition, not all EU Member States are represented in third countries, adding further to the confusion.

The European Council is the Member State representation at the EU level. It administers CFSP and works alongside the Commission to ensure the consistency of the Union’s external representatives. The Maastricht Treaty stipulated that the European Council should define the Principals of, and general guidelines for, the CFSP, and operates on a Qualified Majority Voting system (QMV) “when adopting joint actions, common positions or taking any other decision on the basis of a common strategy; when adopting any decision implementing a joint action or a common position” (Article 13). The scope for QMV is restricted, however, as

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<sup>78</sup> See Chapter Nine.

Member States still have the right to request a decision by unanimity on the basis of national priorities. Furthermore, QMV does not apply to decisions having military or defence implications.<sup>79</sup>

The Council of the EU has a number of tools at its disposal as well as various configurations. For example, 80 per cent of European proposals are agreed at COREPER. The most important for this thesis is the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), as its role covers foreign trade, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, international agreements, CFSP and ESDP. A paradox of the Council is that although it is at the heart of EU foreign policy, it decides on very little and is “struggling to live up to expectations” (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 71). Another may be found in the Situation Centre. Thus far, the Situation Centre has been described as increasingly successful and has enabled the EU to advance the capability of intelligence gathering, something which was lacking hitherto (Giegrich, and Wallace, 2004, p. 176).<sup>80</sup> Yet a further of the Council’s tools is the Policy Unit<sup>81</sup>, which has been credited with acknowledging the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ after Maastricht.

This body, along with the Political and Security Committee (PCS) (formerly the Political Committee), the EU military Committee, the EU Military Staff and Policy Unit became permanent in 2000.<sup>82</sup> PSC is made up of national representatives and meets twice weekly, monitoring international situations covering ESDP. This was followed by a police mission in Bosnia Herzegovina, a follow-on military mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and a two month operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Comprising senior officials from the Member States, Council and Commission, the PSC monitors international affairs, guides the work of the Military Committee and all CFSP working groups. It also prepares and oversees the implementation of CFSP decisions, leads the political dialogues at official level and maintains links with the NATO.

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<sup>79</sup> In reality, since Amsterdam, there has never been a vote on CFSP matters (apart from electing the chairman of the Military Committee).

<sup>80</sup> It is beyond the scope of this thesis to analyse the scope and effectiveness of the Situation Centre.

<sup>81</sup> Included in the Amsterdam Treaty.

<sup>82</sup> Known more frequently by its French acronym (COPS).

The role of 'Mr CFSP' was only established in 1999, and involved the creation of the HR role and was seen as being one step towards establishing a common European 'voice'. However, in his/her capacity, the HR does not have an autonomous decision-making authority. The HR assists the Presidency in the external representation of the EU and also assists the Council in the implementation of policy decisions in CFSP matters. Mr. Javier Solana was appointed as first HR and took office on 18 October 1999. This decision was seen as an important symbol for two reasons. "[H]e was a political figure, not a bureaucrat, and he was a symbol of a shift from NATO predominance to a potentially autonomous European security policy" (Hoffmann, 2000, p. 195). It has been widely accepted that Solana has been highly successful in this role, and has, to an extent improved the coherence of EU foreign policy. However, although he is often referred to as the 'EU foreign minister' he is only mandated to represent the Council. According to Fraser Cameron, it is unreasonable for journalists to remember all of the telephone numbers of the EU's Member States (Cameron, 2002, p. 13).

In addition to the traditional representatives of the EU, the European Union currently has eleven Special Representatives (EUSRs) in different regions of the world that may offer important lessons for the EEAS and its staff. They are charged with carrying out a support function for Javier Solana, to "promote European Union policies and interests in troubled regions and countries and play an active role in efforts to consolidate peace, stability and the rule of law" (Council of the European Union, retrieved 9.9.2008). According to the Council's website, they play an important role in the development of a stronger and more effective CFSP and in the EU's efforts to become a more active, more coherent and more capable actor on the world stage (*ibid*). Just as Henry Kissinger's question about a phone number for Europe has been resonating ever since, and the EU has been accused of being ineffective in its foreign policy stance, the EUSR's are one way that the EU has tried to establish both a "voice" and "face" for the EU and its policies (*ibid*), and "are the visible expression of the EU's growing engagement in some of the world's most troubled countries and regions" (Javier Solana, cited in Adebahr, and Grevi, 2007, p. 57).

Another important actor in foreign relations is the European Commission which has a variety of directorates involved in foreign policy, including DG RELEX DG Trade,

DG development, DG Enlargement, and the DG for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) and is required to be “fully associated” with the work of the CFSP. Because the Commission has 136 Delegations worldwide, it is an important factor in administering European Union foreign policy, particularly in aid distribution and trade negotiations. The result of institutional changes made by previous treaties is sometimes viewed as a conflict between Member States protecting their national sovereignty and interests, and the European Commission, whose goal is to safeguard the common interests of the European Union (Hooghe, 2001, p. 95-96). This conflict hinders the Commission’s efforts to become a credible international actor (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 4). The Commission has not sought a role in the military dimension of ESDP, but equally it has argued that it has an important role in the non-military dimensions such as defence industrial cooperation, funding and training of police, customs officials and border guards, economic sanctions, de-mining operations, election monitoring, and restoring local administrations in societies emerging from conflicts.

Finally, the EP’s role in international affairs is relatively limited to a consultative function, and primarily relies on receiving information from the presidency country and Commission. The Maastricht Treaty gave the EP the right to ask questions, to put forward recommendations to the Council and to be regularly informed by the Council presidency and the Commission about the progress made in the CFSP. How regularly the information was to be provided was however still open to differing interpretations. The progress made in this instance was modest. The rotating Presidency structure means that the different countries involved have varying methods and views when it comes to communicating with the EP (Cameron, 1998, p. 65). The improvement of these mechanisms and an increase of the parliament’s role may be crucial for improving the legitimacy of the EU in general as it could help to improve the ‘democratic deficit’.

## **5.5 CONCLUSION**

Like the process of European integration itself, efforts at establishing a cohesive EU foreign policy have been through many highs and lows. Indeed, the Union itself was initially based on an internal need to create stability and was focused at first entirely on economic factors. Any inclusion of external relations in the early manifestations

was based primarily on a residual responsibility to former colonies, and amendments to this were driven by changes either in the post-colonial relationships or internal developments such as enlargements.

Nevertheless, a number of trends are observable. Firstly, the emphasis on the promotion of EU norms when dealing with third countries has emerged at a much slower rate than an emphasis on providing a strong, united front to the rest of the world. Secondly, since the establishment of the EPC, the Member States of the (then) EC desired to present a united European front to the rest of the world. Although it was originally intended as a loose arrangement, the EPC evolved over time to encompass a number of mechanisms for establishing a common European policy when dealing with third countries. However, although the declarations and reports pertaining to the EPC were rather grandiose, they proved to have little substance, thus perhaps sparking the trend of viewing EC efforts at becoming a major world player as lacking substance. Herein lies the irony of EU foreign policy – at this time the EU was not taken seriously, whereas after the Maastricht Treaty too much was expected of it. Clearly the EU now needs to be careful that it clearly and actively communicates exactly what sort of power it wishes to be, and that it does not bite off more than it can chew when it does so. It is clear that although the EU has consistently attempted to improve its actor capability and the need to be more coherent on the world stage, a lot remains to be done. In order to understand the desirability for change, the following chapter presents an internal perspective of how the EU is viewed, in doing so introducing reasons for why the EEAS has been proposed.

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## CHAPTER SIX:

### AN INTERNAL PERSPECTIVE

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“Recognising that something is important is not the same as recognising *why* this is the case” (Javier Solana).

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

It is clear that although the EU in its various forms has in some respects displayed a number of characteristics of becoming an actor, or at the very least acknowledged its desire to do so; it has lacked the mechanisms required in order for it to fulfil this goal. Moreover, while some scholars including Duchêne have argued a vision of the EC as a civilian power, this has not been clearly communicated or adhered to by the Union itself.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, strong arguments have been made which claim the Union's civilian approach is as deficient as its foreign policy. Following the same format as presented in the Chapter Two, this chapter will provide a more detailed examination of whether the ‘expectations-capability gap’ currently exists, and whether the EU is a normative actor, with the proceeding chapter addressing EU identity and the way the EU communicates this.

Both New Zealand and Singapore lie outside of the main areas of focus for EU foreign policy (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 255). This is significant because it means that the focuses of this study has previously been largely ignored in both EU foreign policy and generally. To investigate the topic of this chapter, primary data was required — specifically, the personal comments and perceptions of ambassadors of EU Member States represented in New Zealand and Singapore. Due to logistical issues, including the physical distance of New Zealand from Europe and Singapore, and the costs involved in conducting such primary research, it was only possible to interview a limited number of people. However, the generated dataset of individual responses are still highly valid, particularly given that international diplomats are a relatively

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<sup>83</sup> Nor is it agreed that the EU is a normative power.

small group in the first place. As such, the results of the interviews provide a unique insight into the intricacies of the EEAS. In fact, as shall be seen, the combination of 33 interviews presented in this chapter, each often demonstrating a different view, allows a number of conclusions to be drawn.

## **6.2 A RECURRING ‘EXPECTATIONS – CAPABILITY GAP’?**

Since the 1970s, EU foreign policy has evolved dramatically from EPC to the recent constitutional proposals advocating more unity through the establishment of an EU Foreign Minister, and a supporting ministry, unofficially named the European External Action Service. It has been postulated that closing the ‘expectations–capabilities gap’ could be one of the driving reasons behind the push to establish the EEAS. This so-called gap covers areas connected to presence, actorness, coherence, and the institutions of the European Union. Although Hill first presented the idea in 1993, it has been constantly revised and re-assessed in scholarly circles. The following section thus presents what problems the *practitioners* of EU foreign policy currently perceive to be driving the goal towards establishing the EEAS and to evaluate whether or not these connect to the theorised explanations.

In order to understand why there has been such a sustained attempt at changing the EU's foreign policy mechanisms', this chapter will explore the reasons for which the implementation of the EU Minister for Foreign Affairs and the European External Action Service are considered important by the front-line officials of the EU. This is important given the constructivist view that “[s]tate identity is expressed through key decision-makers” (Jackson, and Sørensen, 2007, p. 172). Connected with this question is how the image of the European Union might be improved with the implementation of the EEAS. By focusing on these two aspects, this empirically-driven chapter addresses the fundamental inter-institutional, political and constitutional themes of European Union foreign policy. The interviewed practitioners were asked what issues they felt EU foreign policy currently faced, and a number of themes emerged which illustrate how the EU is perceived internally. The findings can contribute to further develop the conceptualisation of the EU's global role. The interviewees were both Member States diplomats, and officials from the various institutions in Brussels. It is possible that some differences in the answers to the particular questions can be rooted

either in the well-known differences in approach of their countries toward further EU integration in general, and CFSP and EEAS in particular, or in the intensity of their country's historical, economic and cultural ties with the country where they are represented.

### ***6.2.1 The EU's Presence***

It is undeniable that the EU has a 'presence' in the world. However, it has often been noted that this has been limited. The EU's 'presence' is very important to this study, as having the resources of the EEAS supporting it, as well as having representation in 136 countries and territories (European Commission, personal correspondence) around the world would substantially increase Union 'presence'. Having a 'presence' indicates an ability to influence outside events. It was acknowledged by some respondents that the EU needs a larger presence. According to His Excellency Marc Calcoen:

If you are stronger internally (and) also externally, they will take you more into account and you will also have a stronger possibility of influencing world events, or influencing positions that are being taken (Belgian Ambassador, Singapore).

Ambassador Calcoen was also referring in the above statement to the importance of outside recognition; an aspect of 'presence' and 'actorness' that is explored in greater depth in the following chapter. To another respondent, the EU's lack of 'presence' is out of balance with its financial clout: "The problem is that this [the EU's economic strength] is not reflected on the international stage, because we are seen by some as not credible partners if we don't have a military power" (ECD Official, Singapore). A colleague of his also supported this idea: "The European Union has always had a problem that our international clout...has always been smaller than our economic clout" (Swedish diplomat, Singapore).

Following these views, a senior official at the European Council noted the importance of being not only economically strong, but also having a large 'presence'.

There are two reasons why a big country is better than a small country. One is that it has a big market, so economically. And the other is that it has a big army. Now a big army is a kind of metaphor for big presence in the world (Council Secretariat official, Brussels).

The interviewee is noting that one does not necessarily need an army,<sup>84</sup> but rather a ‘presence’ in order to influence global direction. Furthermore, the lack of influence that the British held during the Iraq war crisis would have been strengthened. “If you wish to have input, you have to do it as Europe”, he noted. To paraphrase the interviewee, the strength of Europe lies in it acting cohesively.

### ***6.2.3 Cooperating Europe***

The EU’s ‘presence’ is also connected to its coherence. Toje has noted that one of the problems facing the EU as an international actor is its lack of “an integrated command structure” (Toje, 2008a, p. 207). Not only is this about the way Europe operates, but from a broader perspective, how integrated the EU diplomatic representatives are abroad. One of the problems of the EU is its inability to act cohesively, which in turn impacts on how it is perceived in importance. According to Keukeleire and MacNaughton (2008, p. 98) “it is impressive that the EU manages to achieve the foreign policy output that it does”. According to Article 20 of the Maastricht Treaty, Member States and ECDs are required to work together in order to “promote the image of Europe”. This requires not only promoting Europe’s image, but also participating in regular meetings, sharing information and, where possible, taking common stances on issues that may arise. Bale (2004, p. 53) has noted that EU cooperation in third countries is stronger when the country in question is perhaps more hostile, or requires the involvement of the CFSP. Although Holland (1991a, pp. 238 - 239) has noted that it is difficult to evaluate EU diplomatic cooperation in third countries, this section attempts to do so from the personal experience of the diplomats themselves.

One ambassador noted that the EU Member States cooperated in Singapore in a variety of ways. “We have our various common endeavours to promote a common understanding of Europe”, he noted (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore). His colleague at the ECD supported this idea: “We work together”. The concept is not static however, as it was noted that the arrangement to have regular meetings and successfully

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<sup>84</sup> For more information see below and the Theoretical Framework.

cooperate “depends on where you are” (Member State Ambassador, NZ). It can also be dependent on personalities: “Our relationship with EU Member States works well as long as you are not a secretive person, that EU Member States can feel that you are able to keep things moving in the right direction for them and that you have the necessary skills and competence” (ECD official to Singapore). The frequency of the meetings depends on what is happening at the time, as well as who is holding the presidency, as is reflected in the quote below:

We have regular meetings at various levels. Every month there is a meeting with the heads of mission. Under that we have the economic counsellors meeting once a month. The consulate counsellors also meet once a month. The scientific and technological counsellors also meet once a month on average. If there is a need for another meeting it is more frequent, if there is not much to discuss we postpone sometimes. But that is the general pattern (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore).

The respondents in Singapore were quite positive about their effectiveness in participating in regular meetings: “We have regular cultural counsellor meetings, regular political counsellor meetings, regular commercial counsellors meetings, and heads of mission meetings” which were emphasised because they “are very important, so that a kind of consensus is agreed” (Spanish diplomat, Singapore).

Even if the problem at hand is related to something seemingly 'low brow' such as ensuring ease of airport access for diplomats, the EU Member State embassies would “collectively go in and make some kind of approach” (Member State diplomat in Singapore). So this would be a way of using the diplomatic presence the EU has in Singapore to their advantage. On other issues it was noted that “if they feel quite strongly about something they might produce a report on behalf of all of the heads of mission on what they all agree to feedback to the policy making process in Europe” (Member State diplomat in Singapore). In this way, the actors in EU diplomacy note the effectiveness of acting together rather than taking a go-it-alone approach. There is a perception, from the inside at least, that the EU ambassadors are taken more seriously as a collective. Evidence of this could be seen in any number of areas, for example: “We like to convey EU positions to the rest of the world on various issues like the Middle East, like ASEAN, you name them” (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore).

In spite of the emphasis on cooperation and working together, an ECD official in Singapore noted that the meetings were not always multilateral:

We have a monthly economic and trade meeting. But in the meantime, if one Member State has a particular concern, then we can meet bilaterally... collectively that we meet once a month to de-brief each other ... it is much more regular than it looks like.

Daniel Blockert, the Deputy Head of Mission for the Swedish Embassy in Singapore also highlighted that the emphasis was not always necessarily cohesive for all of the Member States present in Singapore. Rather, there are differences for countries who shared common interests and histories more with some than with the others. He noted that cooperation was especially important with “the other Nordic countries, which is usual for us”.

In Singapore, it was pointed out that meetings with other ambassadorial staff were not necessarily based on whether they are part of the EU or not. Rather, it was an emphasis on shared values in general that had lead to cooperation:

We might even do this [meet] with other countries which are not even part of the EU, you know, we might have the United States. But because if you do something on a like-minded basis, you find that other like minded countries, and that reinforces our links even if it is not [within the] CFSP (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

In addition, one respondent highlighted the difference between larger and smaller Member States, noting that the smaller countries are more likely to be flexible and willing to cooperate from the platform of a united EU, especially when compared with the countries that have strong colonial ties with Singapore and with other countries based there:

I would say from my experience that the smaller countries are more cooperative in their work. They are more ready to do something with other EU Member States, whereas some of the bigger nations who have perhaps been in Singapore for centuries, they have often their own contact network and their own systems and they are not that dependent on the EU (Swedish diplomat, Singapore).

Regular meetings and the exchange of information does not necessarily mean that the EU Member States in Singapore are always able to reach a consensus. Through the exchange of information, they “try to follow what they are doing, but in [some] fields

it is not so easy” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). Nevertheless, the process of meeting and cooperating by necessity means that there is a moderation of views:

Maybe many particular positions are not unified, but the consensus is known and certain limits to the degree of freedom are put there, so you are not really going to break ranks with the other countries in a very scandalous way” (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

Cooperation between the EU Member States and the ECD extends beyond the political sphere. Cultural promotion and social events were also included by interviewees in the list of cooperative activities, as evidenced by the following two quotes: “This season we have had a European film festival which has been going for a number of years” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). “Of course the Commission Delegation house, every year the European celebration party together with the presidency” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). The Member States in Singapore are also closely associated with a recently opened academic institution, the European Union Centre.<sup>85</sup> This association was used by the Dutch ambassador as an example of a positive step towards fostering a common European identity in Singapore.

Finally, it was noted that working so closely together means that some of the professional relationships can spill over into friendships. “So we get to know each other very well and have a good feel of where we stand on all sorts of issues” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). Another added “On a personal level, a lot of them are sort of mates” (Member State diplomat, Singapore).<sup>86</sup>

From this discussion of the interviews conducted in Singapore, a number of conclusions can be made. On the whole, the EU Member States and the ECD in Singapore are positive about the cooperative measures that they currently undertake, and they noted the benefits of doing so. However, this cooperation does not necessarily dictate the interaction that they have with third countries, and it was noted that bilateral relations are also important with like-minded countries within the EU framework as well as with other ‘outsider’ countries.

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<sup>85</sup> For more information see <http://www.nus.edu.sg/euc/> retrieved 9.3.2009.

<sup>86</sup> It is interesting to note that these respondents were considered by the interviewer in a lower age bracket than some of the other respondents.

In New Zealand, there were some similarities as well as several differences in how the EU cooperates in the Pacific-island nation when compared to Singapore. There is clearly still an emphasis on multilateral meetings in New Zealand, but the frequency of these is again dependent on which country one is in, as well as pressing issues:

In this country we have monthly meetings on a Commission level. Then of course if there is any issue in between contacts, different things that have to be done. Then there are meetings on other issues, economic, cultural fields. Economic are the most regular ones (European Ambassador, New Zealand).

The role of coordinating common stances was considered important “especially when we hold the Presidency” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). The New Zealand interviews highlighted something which was not introduced in Singapore – the idea that EU Member States have collective meetings with the New Zealand government, highlighting just how strong the solidarity is among the EU countries present there:

When you have a foreign minister, like the Turkish Prime Minister who came last week or the week before, it’s so much easier to have a common meeting with MFAT<sup>87</sup> afterwards with all the European countries (present) (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

It is rational to organise meetings in this way as European countries often hold similar points of view and have the same way of working:

European countries are so close today that the dialogue that we have with MFAT on European topics we have exactly the same point of view. We (have) the same formations; we have the same questions (so) it makes sense to do it together. I’m sure that in MFAT when we lobby together it shows to the New Zealand foreign ministry the nature of solid Europe (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

In addition, it was noted that EU Member States share common interests, an attribute that distinguishes them from other countries.

You couldn’t have meetings with all of the countries who have embassies here, because there are things that you can tell to a European country that you couldn’t tell in the same manner to another country like Africa or India [*sic*] (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

The New Zealand-based Member State diplomats focused particularly on their role in promoting Europe. Although the promotion of national issues was the priority, there was a clear emphasis on the idea of a common European identity.

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<sup>87</sup> The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

We are European. You see that we are European, we have the European flag next to (our) flag, Europe is very important. We are proud first of all to be (X), but then we are proud to be European” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Although being European was not of a higher priority for the Ambassadors than representing their own Member State, it was nevertheless seen to be in their interests to promote it.

It is in our national interests to also promote Europe. Not just of course because of our participation in the European Union, but also because we have a lot in common (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

However, there was also some caution noted by interviewees about attaching too much importance to the relationship between the EU and its Member State representatives. One official in Canberra pointed out that it was by no means their primary focus: “I can tell you pretty frankly that we do what we can, but it’s not one of our primary responsibilities or primary role” (Member State diplomat, Australia and New Zealand). This same respondent noted that the role of promoting, coordinating and supporting the European Union in Australia and New Zealand falls primarily to the European Commission:

I mean there is a European Commission office... and they are the front line people in terms of promoting Europe and things European. Not us, we do when the opportunity arises, but it wouldn’t be one of our primary functions.

Likewise, another diplomat acknowledged that their embassy was not doing as much as they potentially could in promoting Europe, again highlighting the role of the ECD in this regard. In particular, there was a perceptible lack of communication about Europe. “Maybe we don’t do enough communication about Europe for New Zealanders. I think it would be the job of the European Delegation” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). Although it was felt that the ECD and the Member States’ representatives in New Zealand could be doing more, it was not clear among interviewees why this was required: “Maybe we could have more information about the topics where the European Union decides to have a common position. But do we need it?” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). The way the EU communicates and is communicated is central to its legitimacy as an actor. These issues of

communication, as well as the perception of the EU, are addressed in the following chapter.

There was a sense derived from the interviews that the EU Member States in New Zealand cooperate even more closely than do their Singaporean counterparts. There are a number of reasons why this could be the case. Firstly, the diplomatic community is much smaller in New Zealand's capital, Wellington. Secondly, perhaps the nature of the New Zealand–EU relationship, whereby there is a history of shared values<sup>88</sup> makes the practice of joint EU-wide meetings more acceptable.

Overall, there is a strong level of cooperation amongst the EU actors in Singapore and New Zealand. However, this level of cooperation varies and does not fully explore why the EEAS has been proposed. Although cooperation is high, it seems that the issue of who represents Europe is still a pressing one for both academics analysing the actor capabilities of Europe, as well as for the practitioners of EU foreign policy in Brussels and stationed in third countries.

### ***6.2.3 A Coherent Europe***

The lack of coherence of the European Union is often cited as determining factor in how the EU is perceived both externally and internally. For example, Holland *et al* have found that externally the EU is deemed too complex to understand (National Centre for Research on Europe, retrieved 11.11.2008). Navigating how the EU conducts its foreign policy can be a rather complicated matter, not least, because third countries need to deal with the Council, the Commission and Member States in their EU interactions. Therefore, the need for a ‘singular voice’ of the EU is considered to be the solution to a much bigger problem — the EU is too complex, and needs to become more coherent.

It seems that Henry Kissinger’s infamous gripe is still pertinent today — the EU still lacks a single ‘telephone number’ for third countries to call to speak to ‘Europe’. New Zealand trade minister Phil Goff (2005) believes the move to a European External

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<sup>88</sup> See below.

Action Service would be extremely positive, because the EU currently lacks this single point of contact. The ‘insiders’ spoken to in this study had a similar feelings about how the EU is perceived externally. Many felt that the EU needs a more unified approach when dealing with the world.

Indeed, the idea that a common voice for the EU is needed was the most reiterated concept by interviewees. For example, some of the comments in this regard included:

“I think that it is important for the Europeans concerned, that Europe has a common foreign policy and for foreign countries to have only one number” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

“It is very important for Europe to have one voice” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

“The EEAS will definitely help us to speak with one voice” (Luc Vandebron, Commission official, Brussels).

“The idea of the European Foreign minister is to make sure that Europe sings from the same hymn sheet on foreign policy” (David Martin, MEP).

“It would be good to have a single interlocutor” (Senior Commission Official).

Clearly then, there is some level of agreement that a common voice is still a goal that needs to be achieved for the EU to become more effective globally. The role of HR has made some inroads in this respect, but a wide variety of institutions and Member States within the European Union are clearly motivated to give the EU a single figurehead. The idea of having a single voice for the EU was deemed important for increasing the EU’s presence on the world stage. For example: “because there is no single Member State with enough power to be a voice or have an impact on the current world scene” (Cesira Daniello, Council Secretariat). A single voice would help Europe to “be heard on the international stage” (ECD official, Singapore). The emphasis on the single voice is by no means agreed upon however. Hill has noted that, “[u]ltimately what is important in a practical sense for European foreign policy, given that a federal centre is not close at hand, is that Europeans should agree on giving out the same message, even if through a plethora of voices” (2004, p. 161).

It is clear though, that amidst the increasing power of other nations, acting more coherently would in turn mean that the EU would be more effective. “I do think if 27

Member States can speak with one voice they are a more effective force in the world” (Charles Tannock, MEP), and therefore would be able to take a greater international role. Two diplomats, one in New Zealand and one in Singapore, who were concerned about the rise of other national powers pointed out the significance of this role:

Given the rise of many powerful countries in Asia, we are not necessarily the centre of the world forever and ever, (so) we need to be, to act more coherent and be more of a coordinated action. So even in the foreign policy, it would be practical... to take on a bigger role as a union” (Swedish Diplomat, Singapore).

Europe is losing its place in the world right now... I don't know why it's losing, but it shouldn't lose it because Europe is a very important player of the world (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

Not only would the EEAS give the EU a single voice, make it more effective internationally, but also it was noted by participants in this study that it is difficult to understand how the EU operates at an international scale. For example it was noted that: “I think that the image of the European Union is confusing for everybody and I would support anything which gives a coherent image” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

Academics interested in EU policy and EU capability and ‘actorness’ have pointed out that the EU needs to be more effective and more efficient in how it operates. Although in total, the EU has four times the number of diplomatic staff than the United States this is not usually obvious in terms of visibility. Likewise, in the interviews, one former Commission official noted that this was directly related to the “duplication of resources from Member States” (former Commission official, Brussels). This doubling up was noted by the Polish Ambassador to Singapore who highlighted a number of areas which could be more efficient and coherent:

In many cases for example we are doubling up whatever the other European Member State countries are doing as their prime responsibility in external relations. For example, consular issues... trade wise, environmentally wise; all of the big ticket areas of international relations could be dealt with collectively.

In creating the post of a European foreign minister, and an associated ministry, there seems to be consensus that EEAS would make the running of the EU more efficient:

The idea of being the European Union ambassador somewhere is more attractive than being the Swedish ambassador and you have far

more resources at your disposal (Council Secretariat official, Brussels).

Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the EU cannot happen without an overhaul of its complicated institutional set-up, however. Constant redevelopment and evolution have meant that the EU is currently represented by a multiplicity – or as is sometimes claimed, a confusion – of actors in its relations with third countries. These representatives include the European Council, the Commission (including the Commission Delegations), the rotating Presidency, as well as Member States. One high-ranking official from the European Council noted that if Europe wants to have a louder voice then “you have to have a better organisation rather than let’s see if we can agree on a line” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels). Indeed, the lack of an effective institutional order for the EU has led to inefficiency in its capabilities as an international actor. The complicated pillar system is often cited as the leading reason for the Union's institutional failures: “But there are problems, for example, the pillars that mean not all tools are together” noted one Senior Commission Official. Another high ranking Commission official likened it to a badly built building:

The European Union has been built up, bit by bit and the second pillar stuff started out after the first pillar and so it’s not like they tore down the first pillar and built a new house (European Commission official, Brussels).

It is therefore clear that the EEAS “is important because it should provide much better information, advice and immediacy to the foreign policy decision-making process in Brussels”(Brian Crowe, former Council Secretariat official). In addition, the lack of EU coherence is closely interlinked with the institutional set up of the EU and was cited by a Council official as one of the reasons why the revived idea to implement the EEAS is especially important:

One was the lack of coherence between what was going on in the Commission and what was going on in the second pillar CFSP which is the Council of course. I think a problem they identified was the problem of consistency in foreign policy and CFSP where the Council is essentially in the driving seat (Council Secretariat official, Brussels).

The way the EU currently operates has a glaring dichotomy between one institution having the authority and the other having the resources necessary to be an effective actor, as described by a former Commission official:

The basic divide is that Solana has rather more authority but no troops. The Commission has lots of money and bank power but he doesn't have the Council's authority in CFSP, so that's the dilemma in the both sides.

The institutional arrangements lead to confusion about who is mandated to speak on a given subject. This is seen as a problem for diplomats based in third countries. One diplomat in New Zealand noted that "it is often very difficult to draw the line where the Commission has a right to speak in public and where not" (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). Another in Singapore also noted this issue:

It sometimes leads to misunderstandings because who is responsible for what...European legislation and European functioning is very complicated so that often, even when the people especially in the presidency, in third countries find it difficult to see where stops the Commission's responsibility and where is my responsibility? (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore).

The following quote clearly indicates a perceived need for change regarding all of the EU institutions directly involved in implementing EU foreign policy:

We can clearly see that there is a need for more coordination for the institutions of the European Union, within the Commission's prerogative, within the Council's prerogative as well and also between the Member States (Polish Ambassador, Singapore).

The respondents reflected a concern about how the EU is perceived, as well as its current operation. They believed that the EU is overly complicated and lacking in coherence and effectiveness. Moreover, the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar organisation, instituted in the Maastricht Treaty was often highlighted. The importance of these perceptions was further emphasised by interviewees who felt that by addressing concerns like giving the EU a single access point for third countries and changing the structure of EU foreign policy formulation and how it is articulated, the Union would gain greater influence on a world stage. Moreover, the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, and the proposed institutional changes would grant the EU more autonomy. Exactly why Europe needs to impact world affairs, and why it is an important player is outlined in the next section.

### 6.3 EUROPE'S ROLE IN THE WORLD

Following from the idea that the EU is not as effective as an actor as it could be, it is necessary to ask just what sort of actor it is. When the EU does manage to speak with one voice, what does it have to say? According to Toje, it is the shared values which bind EU countries that have no previously shared history or border: "In the absence of any defined *raison d'état*, the stability, coherence and endurance of the EU is, to an uncommon degree, rooted in shared cultural and ideological experiences as well as values" (Toje, 2008a, p. 209). Is Europe's place in the world as a normative power? The EU's appealing image in the rest of the world has been built on its support for social-democratic values, environmental issues, human rights, and poverty eradication. Nearly nine in ten Americans agree that the EU can help solve world problems through diplomacy, trade, and development aid, even though it is not as militarily powerful as the US (Nye, 2004). Do the implementers of EU foreign policy share this vision? The question was posed to the practitioners of EU foreign policy in Singapore: "Do you have an opinion about what Europe's role in the world is, or should be?" In other words, why is the EU needed in the world? The answers reveal some interesting findings. Because of the evolution of this thesis, this question was only asked in the final round of interviews (in Singapore). However, a reference to the EU's normative focus did emerge in some of the earlier interviews, pointing to the fact that it is high on the agenda of some officials. The Polish Ambassador to Singapore believed that the EU's role was as a balancer in the current unipolar world order:

We have a major role to play as a balancing partner in world affairs, as somebody who can make a difference in tackling major security and political issues, on par with other strategic superpowers that exist in the world out there.

Marc Calcoen, the Belgium Ambassador to Singapore noted that if the EU wants to share its values abroad, then it needs to do so collectively:

We have all these qualities that we want to promote and we want to see in the world and we can only do that even more strongly if we are banding together (we) have a stronger position, a stronger view.

A Swedish diplomat in Singapore indicated that the EU has something to offer in a variety of global issues including:

On environment, on gender issues on family policy on human rights issues, so I think that it is in these areas where we see the biggest challenges in the future that we still have something to offer (the world).

In both Singapore and New Zealand, there are a number of areas where EU cooperation may be linked to the concept of the EU as normative power. For example, cooperation is evident in fields of mutual interest, such as security issues, energy and climate change. According to New Zealand's Prime Minister, Helen Clark, part of the EU's importance for New Zealand can be put down to its parallel views on international issues. These include sustainable development, the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court, the path to peace between Israel and Palestine, and on disarmament and human rights issues in general (Clark, 2003). This note by Clark suggests that New Zealand supports the concept of European as a normative actor.

In contrast, the EU seems to be mindful of its relationship with Singapore, with the focus on human rights and the abolition of the death penalty high on the agenda. This is despite ASEAN rhetoric such as that expressed at the twenty-sixth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Singapore in 1993 "that ASEAN should also consider the establishment of an appropriate regional mechanism on human rights" (ASEAN Secretariat, 1993), and that ASEAN is the only other scheme of regional integration that has incorporated human rights in its Charter (El-Agraa, 2008 p. 398). The Europa website has noted that in its relationship with ASEAN:

Since 2004, the EU is further upgrading its economic and political relationship by negotiating Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with individual ASEAN countries which are based on the respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law and which cover the whole array of bilateral, regional and international subject-matters (retrieved 9.3.2009).

However, following the end of the Cold War "Asian governments...increasingly opposed Western value-based policies and began to denounce them as neo-colonialism and cultural hegemonism" (Rüland, 2001, p. 18). The emphasis on human rights has been "the most significant field of intellectual debate and contention within EU-Asia relations" (Wiessala, 2004, p. 4). For one respondent, there currently exists a gap between admiring the achievements of the EU and an unwillingness of ASEAN to mirror these achievements:

It seems quite strange because you do hear over and over again that they do admire European integration, that it is an inspiration for ASEAN integration. But then you hear over and over again that the European treaties are tens of thousands of pages long, which really surprises me, because they should know that it is just two hundred pages or something. It surprises me that people haven't read the treaties when obviously they are so serious about drawing lessons from us, from our integration (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

The *sui generis* nature of the EU has been consistently debated. It is interesting to note that a number of the interviewees acknowledged the uniqueness of the EU in international relations. For example: "I think I have a sense of what Europe thinks makes it unique" (Member State diplomat, Singapore). There is a real sense that the EU's uniqueness is connected to its successful form of regionalism. For Singapore, the EU is often looked at as an example for regional integration and that "maybe there is the feeling the EU could have something to teach ASEAN" (Member State diplomat, Singapore). However, there was a word of caution about attaching too much emphasis to this comparison because "it is unfair to compare it to ASEAN because they are entirely different organisations" (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

Part of the EU's uniqueness is connected to not only the unique service that it provides, but also what it can provide for its members in order to act internationally:

EU foreign policy is different from national foreign policy. What is the meaning of Britain foreign policy in Japan? Nothing, because does not interfere with internal matters (Commission official, Brussels).

The EU can "help attitudes towards parts of the world because of the colonial history" (Commission official, Brussels). In addition, the EU really displays a unique way of operating and has a different agenda from other forms of government, including in both normative and non-normative areas of governance:

The EU provides that service. Nobody else is looking at banking regulations, or the insurance market, and human rights Or plant health and against nuclear weapon proliferation (Commission official, Brussels).

However, there was a word of caution from a respondent against attaching too much importance to the EU in this way: "Whether there is something better, or magical about the EU that it could never be replicated anywhere or at anytime, I mean

personally I don't think so" (Member State diplomat, Singapore). What has been proven, though, is its history of promoting development and stability.

The drive to improve stability around the world has arisen out of Europe's own experience and it was noted that "traditionally we have been very European because we profited very much from the stability... for the first time in history we have only good friends around our borders" (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand). Now the EU wishes to export its road map towards stability to the rest of the world. As a whole, Europe more than two-thirds of international grant aid (Schulz, retrieved 4.3.2009); a number which amounts to four times more than the United States. Ambassador Calcoen pointed out that the EU "is the biggest development aid giver in the world". Also in Singapore it was noted that "wherever there is an opportunity to promote peace, stability and prosperity we try to do that within the limits of what our common policies are" (Dutch Ambassador). Hence, even within this positive statement about the promotion of stability, there was a word of caution noted by the interviewee about the institutional constraints currently experienced. Moreover, close to home, the Ache Monitoring Mission, the EU's first peace-keeping mission to the Asia-Pacific region, was noted to be a signal of the EU's commitment to promoting peace and security internationally:

We have played an important role in south Eastern Europe in the last decade to try to promote stability and peace there, but that goes worldwide - we have been participating in the mission in (Bande) Ache which is close to Singapore (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore).

The Ache Monitoring Mission also helped to foster deeper EU relations with other countries in the region, including with ASEAN. Indeed, "the chance to coalesce with ASEAN provided a further incentive" (Keiser, 2008, p. 99).<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, the Commission alone was noted for its important role in stability missions as "there are instances where the Commission is giving a lot of assistance and the programmes promoting good governance" (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore).

The idea that the EU teaches through its own experience of encouraging stability was also a prominent feature. One of the areas where the EU and New Zealand share common views is in their involvement in promoting stability and security in the

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<sup>89</sup> See also information on multilateralism.

Pacific (Goff, 2005, p. 72). An ambassador thought that it was the EU's experience in integration that they tried to promote in the Pacific:

It is my personal opinion is that integration brings more stability, levels conflicts and all this. This is why New Zealand and we have the pacific plan ...so in our view integration is really a strategy for long-term stability, peace, smooth development - there is not so much up and down and so on (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Indeed, when it comes to promoting stability in New Zealand, this tends to extend beyond New Zealand's shores to working together to promote stability in the nearby Pacific region. Likewise, in Singapore the emphasis on the relationship is not based on development assistance. A Commission official in Singapore noted that this affects the size of the Delegation there. This official went on to compare Singapore to China, where there was a much bigger emphasis on development:

It is a small delegation compared to other countries, but for an obvious reason that Singapore is a developed country, so they don't benefit from EU cooperation and development aid...So if you look at a delegation like Beijing the Delegation there has more than a 100 people; about half of them are working on development and cooperation aid. Singapore is not China...and partly the development aid aspect is one of the reasons why our Delegation is much smaller [here]" (ECD official, Singapore).

Another area which makes the EU unique is its lack of having a military power. Although the theoretical framework outlined a number of steps that the EU has made towards becoming a military power, the interviewees made it clear that a key part of the EU's identity is based on it being a soft power. This was particularly supported by the interviewees from the Commission based in all three locations. For example, one high-ranking Commission official thought that there was "no fear of [the Union] becoming powerful, because it is not imperialist" (European Commission official, Brussels) Moreover, a colleague at the Delegation in Singapore noted that "if you really look at the way the EU has always been, it has always been a soft power" and according to a New Zealand ECD official "things are moving slowly on the defence side" (George Cunningham, ECD official, New Zealand). Indeed, there was a clear level of support towards the retention of soft power politics:

The EU is mainly seen as an economic bloc. On the military side, most of the EU Member States belong to NATO. I would say that Europe should do what it is best at, which is to be a soft power with an

intermediation role and not to necessarily follow the Americans in everything they do (ECD official, Singapore).

I think however that the soft power aspects of the EU doesn't necessarily (mean) it needs a foreign policy minister as much as perhaps the so-called hard power aspects (EU Member State diplomat, Australia and New Zealand).

The soft power recognition by the Commission officials was unsurprising given the mandate of the Commission being based almost entirely on soft power tactics, such as those noted in NPE — for example, the promotion of democracy.

Another important aspect of the way the EU operates is in democracy promotion. One example of this is the EU's prominent role in election observations, operated under the EU's 'Human Rights and Democratisation Policy' (Europa website, 14.6.2007). The EU has been involved in election observation missions in over 60 countries since 2000 (Europa website, retrieved 10.3.2009). The explicit mention of democracy was a highlighted by a Commission official, this time based in Brussels:

One of the things that we're fairly proud of here is something called 'election-observation' missions. In a sense, election-observation missions of the European Union, there is only so much you can do... there are probably 20 to 30 elections that we could go to every year (European Commission official, Brussels).

The EU's emphasis on democracy and human rights has been prominent in its dealings in the Pacific, and has been strongly supported by Australia and New Zealand. The EU election mission was present in Fiji in May 2006 (European Commission, 2006c) and since Fiji's *coup d'etat* at the end of 2006, the EU has been actively involved in trying to encourage Fiji back towards democracy, in particular, with its 'roadmap to democracy'.

As has been noted by Keukeleire, the EU has over-taken the United States as the world leader in environmental matters (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 255). In fact, the drive towards becoming an environmental actor has been around in Europe since the collapse of the Iron Curtain, as one respondent noted: "After the Cold War, the EU already had a lead on several issues like Environment policy" (European Commission official, Brussels). This concern has been maintained, and even deepened: "I would say it's [the EU] is concerned about things like climate change" (Member State

diplomat, Singapore). A European parliamentarian noted that the drive towards becoming an environmental actor has achieved wide support and consequently legitimacy:

I think in an opinion poll, 80 percent of the European population think that Europe should be doing more in environmental policy, and they should be doing more together in world affairs (David Martin, MEP).

In fact, the idea that the EU leads the world in environmental matters seemed to be at the forefront of the interviewees' responses in Brussels. One Commission Official noted that “the EU already has a lead on several issues like the Environment and the Kyoto protocol. The British presidency put priority of climate change”. Furthermore, the emphasis on the environment, in particular, climate change was cited as one of the “common elements with NZ, Australia and, Canada working on global challenges such as climate change and energy” (Commission official, Brussels). This is interesting in light of the fact that the MFAT website does not mention anything to do with environment on its page about the EU-NZ relationship (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, retrieved 8.05.2007), in contrast to the Commission’s website on external relations with New Zealand (European Commission, retrieved 27.05.2009). Chapter Six looks at whether the EU is viewed in an environmental light by New Zealand’s public and elites.

A further element of the EU being a normative power was also highlighted, albeit by only by two officials, one in the Commission, and the other in Singapore – the idea of the EU as a promoter of multilateralism. The first respondent was concerned with the WTO: “Europe is active in promoting free trade through the WTO” (Belgian Ambassador, Marc Calcoen, Singapore). The second pointed out that although both the Council and the Commission operate together multilaterally the Commission has a prominent role to play:

In Geneva we have the World Trade Organisation, (and) the Council is there as well, but the Commission is much more predominant in that kind of trade setting with Member States” (George Cunningham, ECD official, New Zealand).

The final and perhaps most controversial elements of NPE in Singapore (judging from the answers given by respondents) was the EU’s role in the promotion of human rights. This is unsurprising given the importance that the EU attaches to the human

rights when it is dealing with Asia: “In its relations with non-member countries, the EU is actively engaged in promoting the abolition of the death penalty, with different instruments at its disposal” (European Commission, retrieved 14.10.2008). According to Ambassador Calcoen, “Europe takes an active position in the defence of human rights”. Moreover, it was pointed out that the way this operates in Singapore is through the “human rights group that meets and investigates human rights issues in Singapore.” (Member State diplomat, Singapore) comprising the Member States and the ECD.

Another prominent role that the EU prides itself on is promoting the abolition of the death penalty. This is one topic on which the Union has been able to agree unanimously on and controversially, this is still practised in Singapore. The role of the diplomats in Singapore is to, in some instances, report back to Brussels on the current situation:

The group might sort of have a discussion or they might produce a report on the situation with regards to issue X, or the death penalty and that might be introduced into the debate in Brussels (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

There was a word of warning from one respondent about the EU being too forthright and demanding on this key part of its agenda, as “Singaporeans probably say and I would agree with them, [that the EU is constantly] banging on about human rights” (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

These answers reflect that EU diplomats abroad generally share the drive by EU policy makers to emphasise the importance of Europe in promoting normative values. The questions asked to elicit these answers were deliberately left open-ended. The result was that a range of answers emerged, signaling that not all of the EU’s diplomatic representation first thought of its normative values when asked what role the EU should/does play in the world.

In spite of the emphasis on the positive role the EU has to play in the world, there was also an element of self-interested motivations, something that was also noted in Chapter Two. For example, one respondent claimed that:

Our role is of course, first of all that we look to promote further and further advance our own integration in whatever way the countries think is feasible and desirable (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore).

Moreover, it seemed that the EU's economic and trade strengths are still of the utmost importance, for example;

“The most important is the economic dimension” (Member State Ambassador, Singapore).

“Europe is a very important commercial trading partner, it has lots of investment everywhere” “Europe is a major economic super power; it has been playing a role as an economic super power for several years now” (Polish Ambassador, Singapore).

The economic clout of the EU cannot be denied with its strength is closely related to its international presence was noted by a Spanish diplomat:

Europe, if you take it as a whole, is the biggest market in the world, and one of the most populated and if we work together I think we would be 400 million people, you know, bigger than the United States, bigger than Russia and United we are much more important than individually”.

One Commission official in Brussels saw the over-riding emphasis on trade as a ‘shining light’ for the EU in spite of the problems associated with the ‘expectations-capability gap’: In spite of these so-called self-interested motivations behind the EU becoming a global power, there was a resounding belief by respondents that the EU can be a force for good in the world.

#### **6.4 COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MEMBER STATE EMBASSIES AND THE ECD**

In important posts such as Washington and Moscow there is often the problem in that the larger Member States often prefer to operate separately rather than maintaining EU solidarity. Fraser Cameron believes that there is certainly considerable scope for Member States and ECDs to cooperate more effectively in third countries (2002, p. 15). The cooperation between the Member States and the Commission varies considerably from country to country and is often very dependent on local personalities, and in many capitals there may be no resident presidency representative

which complicates matters (*ibid*, p. 14), and puts pressure on the national representatives which are there.

There is an ambiguity in relation to the diplomatic status of the heads of ECDs. For example, Bruter (1999) pointed out that they are ambassadors by rank and title, but are asked to conceal the fact. However, this fear of up-setting the Member State diplomatic representatives may be now out-dated. Bale, too, has noticed that although Member State embassies seem to enjoy relatively cordial relationships with the ECDs, in certain countries the ECDs are still viewed relatively suspiciously (2002/1, p. 27). In the interviews collected for this study there did not appear to be any animosity amongst the representatives. On the contrary, the relationship between the ECDs and the Member States was viewed positively by all of those interviewed. For example, when asked if he got along well with the members of staff from the country embassies, the official from the European Commission Delegation, Singapore replied:

At the end of the day, I have always had the approach that you work for the EU and thus for its Member States also. So as long as you are not a secretive person and Member States can feel that you are able to keep things moving in their direction, and that you have the necessary skills and competence [for carrying out the necessary tasks], you remain legitimate in your job and justify the EU's legitimacy as well (ECD official, Singapore).

(Our) relationship with the Delegation is good. We see quite a bit of our counterparts there through the EU coordinated activities and various other events. The Head of Delegation goes along to the EU Heads of Mission meetings. They are pretty good about briefing Member States locally when important Commission visitors are in town (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

The ECD's themselves have limited resources. Contrary to public opinion, the Commission represents a small administration. The budget of the EU is relatively low, and predominantly dedicated to common agricultural policy. In 1998 for example, the entire force of the Commission consisted of 637 civil servants and 15 local employees per delegation on average. The amount of money they have for spending on public diplomacy is hard to gauge, but one estimate is that DG RELEX spent €7 million on communications in 2005 through its bilateral Delegations (Korski, 2008, n.p.) and they have about the same human resources as the embassies of medium-sized Member States (Bruter, 1999, p. 187).

## 6.5 CONCLUSION

Whereas the relationships developed within New Zealand, both with the local government and between the Member States, appear to be very positive and lack any real areas of tension, in Singapore there was an underlying feeling that the EU Member States prefer to avoid direct conflict regarding dealing with the relatively contentious area of human rights. The developmental and human rights focus was left primarily to the ECD to deal with. Consequently, the foci of the Member States based in Singapore and New Zealand seem to be primarily on economics and cultural relations.

This chapter has highlighted that even if they are not directly articulated, the implementers of EU policy believe in the transposing of NPE values. All of the values cited in Chapter Two were mentioned by respondents, with the exception of 'legality'. The legality of the EU's relationship with Singapore would be improved with the Lisbon Treaty, and its consequent improvement to EU mechanisms – it is difficult for the EU to be seen as legitimate, if there is no clear division about who has the right to speak. Even if NPE is generally supported in Singapore, there was an overwhelming belief that although the Member States currently cooperate in third countries, this needs to be improved, with the EU indeed requiring more sovereignty, legitimacy, a better institutional set-up, autonomy and coherence. There was a perception that the 'capability gap' does indeed still exist in order for the EU to be a credible international actor.

Given that an actor's identity needs to be both constructed and communicated, a lack of a common understanding about the Union could have potentially negative consequences. Of increasing importance in communicating in the realm of foreign policy and diplomatic work is public diplomacy, and the public diplomacy efforts of the EU towards non Member countries and candidate countries. The following chapter outlines the effectiveness of the way the EU currently communicates. In analysing interviews conducted with elites in New Zealand and Singapore, as well as the outcome of public opinion surveys, the chapter will also address the expectations on the EU.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN:

### EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE EU

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#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

For an international actor like the European Union, legitimation must be conferred both internally – in the form of a mandate from its own citizens – and externally – in the form of acceptance of its international role by its partners and beneficiaries around the world. Building on the previous chapter which highlighted how cohesive, effective and normative the EU is currently perceived to be from an *internal* perspective, this chapter now turns to perceptions of the Union from the point of view of two case studies of ‘non-Europe’ – Singapore and New Zealand. Drawing on the theoretical framework, the chapter seeks to provide an insight into how effective the EU is in communicating what it is and what it stands for to the rest of the world.

Owing to the different actors representing the EU at a diplomatic level, and to their often overlapping competences, there has often been criticism of the EU’s external communication which has argued that the various bodies of the EU are not always effective in conveying the interests of the Union abroad. This chapter reports on how the EU is perceived and how its role as a global actor is understood from the point of view of third countries. Using a variety of data sets, this chapter takes another step towards determining why, in the current system of external diplomatic communication, change has been deemed necessary. The chapter poses a number of questions. How is the EU perceived outside of its borders? What is inhibiting the identity of the European Union? And finally, who are the EU’s most visible actors?

Although there is no definitive way to analyse how the European Union is perceived on a global scale (Fiske de Gouvía, 2005, p. 3), this chapter provides a detailed picture by using three methods – telephone public opinion surveys, open-ended interviews, and the content analysis of daily newspaper coverage. The chapter is

divided into two parts. The first section demonstrates how the EU in general is perceived by both the Singapore and New Zealand publics and elites. Is it viewed as a great actor? If so, in which areas is it strong? Finally, it asks the practical question of who are the most prominent EU actors visible in the daily print media of both countries.

External perceptions of the EU are important for a number of reasons. Following on from Chapter Two's emphasis on legitimacy, for an entity to be considered legitimate it requires acceptance and recognition not only from those it wishes to represent, but also from the outside. An entity only becomes legitimate when it is approved of (Koppell, 2008, p. 181) and having legitimacy is also the basis of claims by governments that they should be listened to (Donnelly, 2005, p. 46).

External perceptions of the EU are "argued to be instrumental in understanding the images which potentially impact on the Union's external actions and consequently affect its internal rhetoric and self-visions of foreign policy" (Chaban, Kelly and Holland, 2009, p. 279). The way the EU is perceived abroad is important because it has the potential to impact the delivery of foreign policy (Fiske de Gouvía, 2005, p.1). Allen and Smith (1991a, pp. 97-98) have pointed out that in order for the EU to have a 'presence' then it requires legitimacy, which in turn has associations of actorness and the ability to exert influence and to shape the perceptions and expectations of others (Allen and Smith, 1990, pp. 19-37). Legitimacy is also closely linked to the EU's identity (Edwards, 2000, p. 69).

The following section outlines how the EU is perceived by the public in Singapore and New Zealand. Is it framed in the traditional, economic paradigm, harking back to the EU's origins as the European Coal and Steel Community? Or has it moved past this, as many EU officials and academics believe, towards being viewed either as a credible international actor or as a normative power? Again, it must be noted that the different survey years will have influenced the issues seen as important. In the future if resources permitted, it would be useful to use data from the same timeframe and also extend the project to cover additional countries.

## **7.2 HOW IS THE EU VIEWED IN NEW ZEALAND AND SINGAPORE?**

It is undeniable that the EU has a strong economic presence globally, which is unsurprising given that the primary reason for its creation was as an economic entity. Indeed, in one study it was noted that “the EU is seen as primarily an economic actor” in the Asia Pacific (Chaban, *et al*, 2006, p. 254). The EU has also made a number of attempts to extend beyond the scope of economics into political and developmental fields. How successful the EU has been in portraying what it is, is presented here, drawing on information gathered from a wider innovative project on the perceptions of the EU in the Asia-Pacific which aimed to redress the absence of data measuring the knowledge of how the EU is perceived in the region (for more information, see ‘[www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz).’).

As noted in Chapter Four, in order to determine how Singaporean and New Zealand people perceive the EU, a survey was conducted by the NCRE in 2006 in Singapore, and 2004 in New Zealand. The surveys themselves included 400 telephone interviews respondents in each country. One of the questions posed in this questionnaire was: “When thinking about the term ‘the European Union, what three thoughts come to your mind?” These answers have been extrapolated and presented here as they give an honest, unprejudiced answer about how the EU is perceived in the eyes of the public and provide a unique insight.

### ***7.2.1 Images of the EU in the Eyes of the Singaporean Public***

The responses were categorised according to the theoretical framework introduced in Chapter Two. The first was whether or not the EU was perceived as being powerful. In other words, were there expectations on the EU to be a strong international power (excluding economics)? Fioramonti and Lucarelli (2008, p. 202) have noted that the EU’s potential as a counter-balance to the US is viewed positively. The categorisation of the EU as a great power was often used by respondents when comparing it to great nation-states like the US, India and China. In Singapore, some of the responses which were included in this categorisation included ideas such as the EU as a counter-weight to the current world superpowers – specifically the United States and China – with a somewhat surprising 12 percent of the total answers noting the perception of the EU

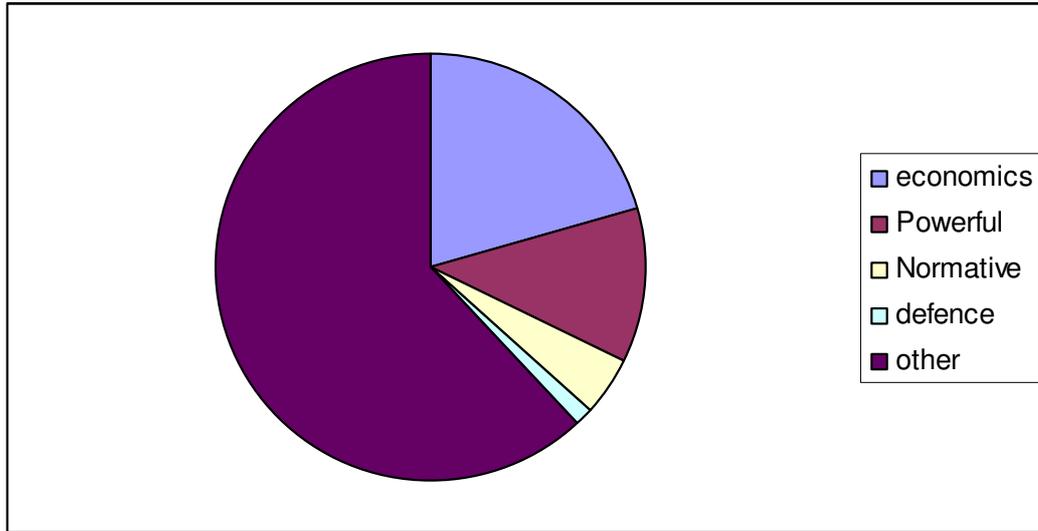
as being a powerful global force. This would indicate that rather than there being an ‘expectations-deficit’ against the EU, as claimed by Tsuruoka (2004), the Union is already viewed by some as a world power.

The former answers excluded any referral to the EU as an ‘economic power’. Because of the traditional vision of the EU from an economic paradigm, any answers containing economic inferences were likewise categorised separately. The idea of the EU as an economic entity was overwhelmingly the image repeated the most often. Included in these answers were references to the EU’s single currency – the *euro* – as well as trade and single market inferences. 20 percent of responses mentioned the image of the EU as an economic actor. In contrast, only a very small number of respondents mentioned the EU as a security and/or defence actor (1 percent), indicating near invisibility of the image of the EU as a hard power, in contrast to the normative portrayal of the EU as a soft power (see below). Overwhelmingly, the majority of images that emerged came under the ‘other’ category. These could include for example, the EU as a political power, as a travel destination, or the EU as part of the Western world.

Not only is legitimacy important for the EU’s identity and coherence, but it is also connected to its normative capabilities which in turn enhance conceptions of EU identity (Lucarelli, 2008, pp. 24- 25). Similar to the concept of legitimacy, the strength of NPE lies in convincing others to follow the normative example (Diez, 2005, p. 614), and places a heavy reliance on world opinion (Laïdi, 2008, p.5). Furthermore, multilateralism improves legitimacy because it means that support is gained from other international partners. When the EU tries to lead in multilateral (and therefore normative) negotiations, it needs followers. If the EU is considered to be legitimate, this would support its ‘soft power’ role; as an actor that is perceived to be legitimate relies less on hard power resources in order to get its ideas accepted.

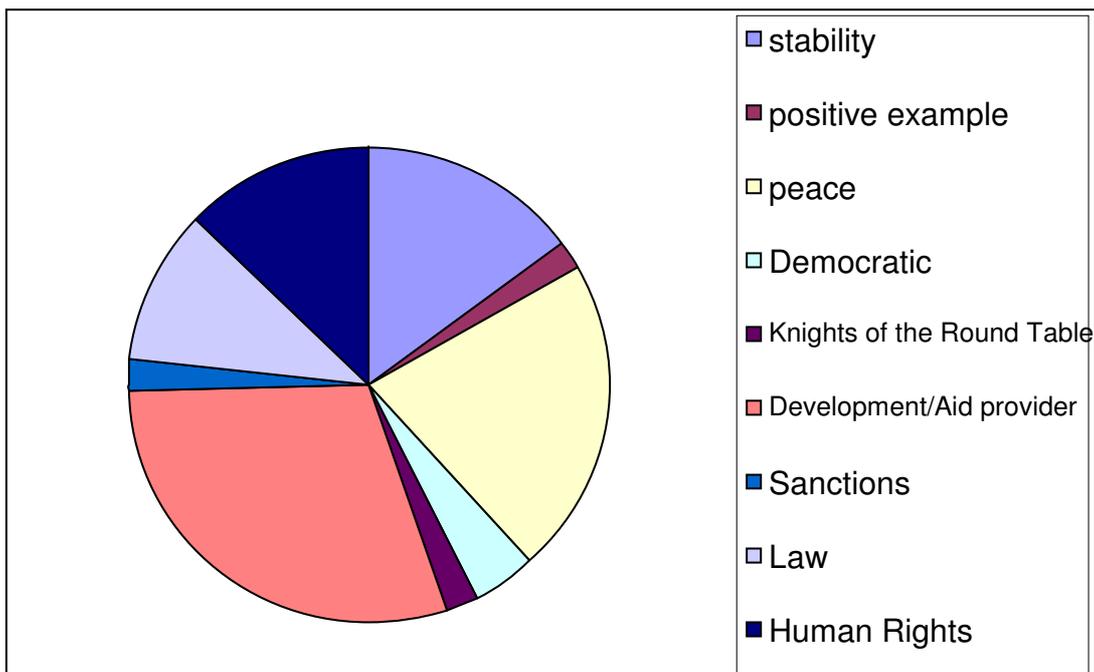
Importantly for this research the survey was designed to ascertain whether the EU’s self-belief as a normative/soft power had been communicated to publics outside of the Union. The total number of any answers that mentioned normative ideals was also recorded. In Singapore this accounted for a relatively low 5 percent of the overall answers (see Figure 7.1).

**Figure 7.1: The Images of the EU in Singaporean Public**



When normative EU ideals were mentioned by the Singaporean public respondents, they referred to EU ideals in general, which could be interpreted as both internal and external ideals. For example, 'peace' was mentioned, as was 'law' and also general 'stability' (see Figure 7.2).

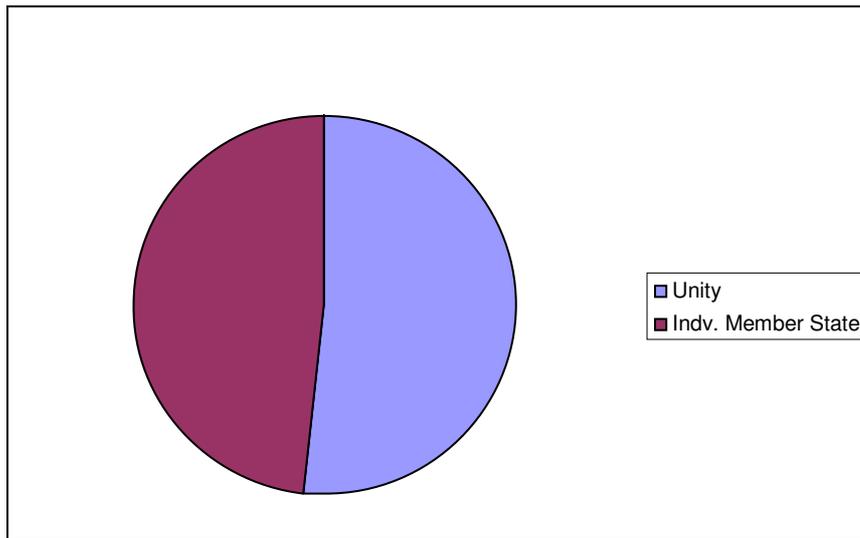
**Figure 7.2: Singapore Public Opinion: Is the EU Perceived as a Normative Actor?**



Judging from these findings, although the overall image of the EU as a normative actor was quite low when compared to the EU's economic activity/identity, it was still present and thus arguably, significant. Out of the normative categories presented in Chapter Two, the EU as an aid provider came to mind the most often for the Singaporean public (30 percent). This was followed by the EU's action as a promoter of peace (21 percent) and stability (15 percent). A reference to EU law and regulations (not in relation to economic values) was also acknowledged (11 percent). Surprisingly, human rights was relatively very low on the agenda (13 percent), despite it being at the forefront of the minds of the EU policy implementers in based in Singapore (see previous chapter). Clearly then, the communication of the EU as a promoter of human rights is not as successful as it could be in Singapore. Although there is a strong internal public support for the EU to promote human rights, Balfour has noted, human rights is "a cross pillar activity" (Balfour, 2008, p. 163). Therefore, this could be a reason for the confusion in communicating the EU's human rights focus to the rest of the world.

Using 'unity' (without any reference to political unity, or the Union in general) to describe the EU was also prominent, and this notion may be associated with the idea of the EU as a peaceful actor. However, it was not included in the above graph, as when unity was mentioned, it seemed to be mentioned only from an internal perspective, indicating that although the EU has been successful in promoting internal unity, it has not yet been successful in transposing this ideal around the world (see Figure 7.3).

**Figure 7.3: How Unified is the EU Perceived to be? Singaporean Public Opinion**



In Figure 7.3, ‘unity’ has been used as a way to ascertain whether the EU was seen as a single coherent actor, or whether it was simply thought of as a sum of its parts. In other words, when the Singaporean public think of the European Union, do they see a single, unified entity, or do they think of individual Member States? The graph demonstrates that the EU is thought of in both terms almost equally, with slightly more people mentioning the idea of ‘unity’, than referring to individual Member States, when asked to think of three images of Europe (52 percent versus 48 percent). This finding is significant, and makes up 12 percent and 13 percent respectively of the overall responses respectively.

The final finding among the Singaporean public shows the link between the EU with the regional grouping of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Although the EU actively engages with ASEAN and it has been noted that the EU is a positive role model in regional integration which some ASEAN officials wish to emulate, in total only eight responses across the entire sample mentioned ASEAN in some form. This is noteworthy, as one of the findings of Chapter Six was an emphasis by the EU respondents on the importance of their relationship with Asian countries via ASEAN. This relationship also stresses the promotion of human rights, something which was also noticeably absent in the public responses. Perhaps, therefore, this supports Rüländ’s viewpoint that Asia, and ASEAN in particular, view the EU’s value of human rights protection as a form of neo-colonisation (2001, p. 18).

## 7.2.2 Images of the EU in the Eyes of the New Zealand Public

**Figure 7.4: Images of the EU in the New Zealand Public**

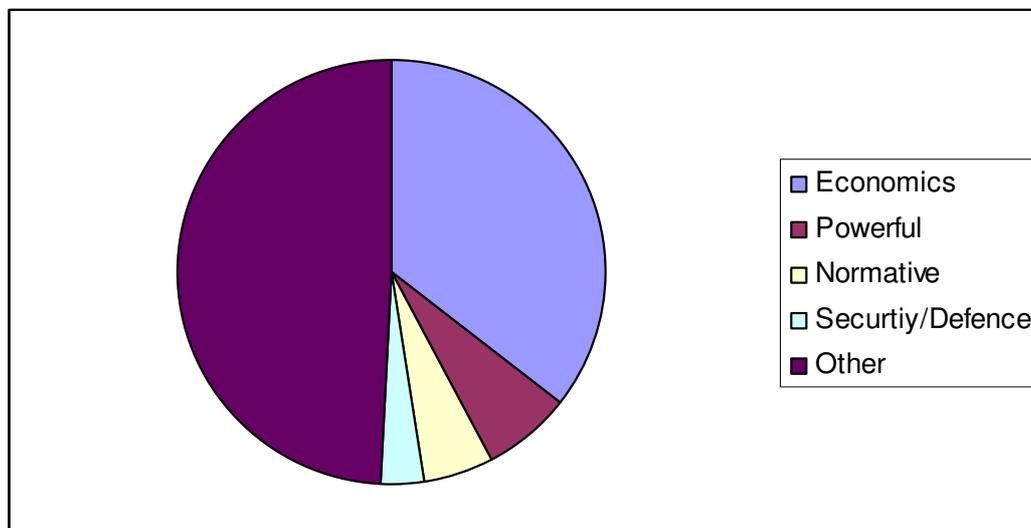
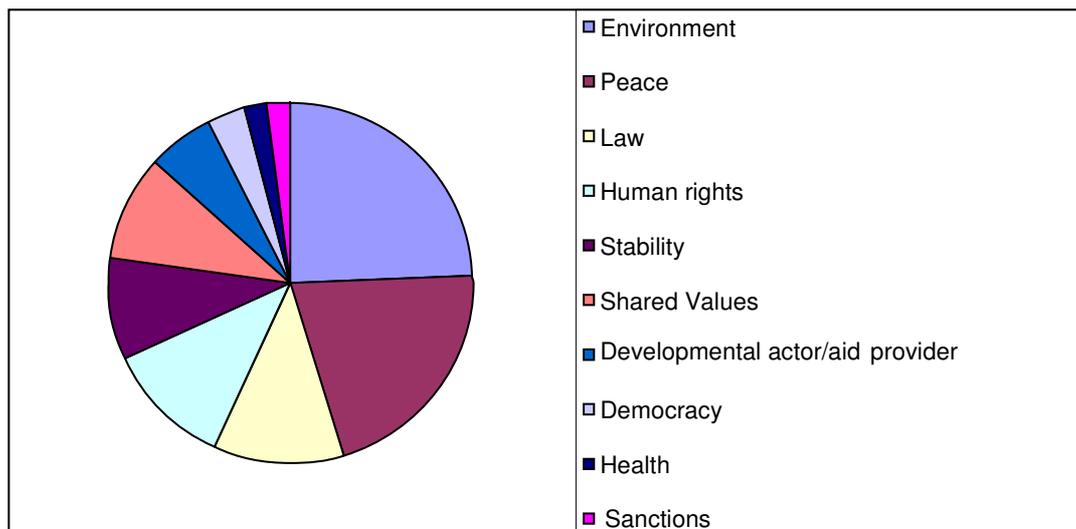


Figure 7.4 demonstrates the spontaneous images of the EU among the New Zealand public. When comparing the Singaporean public opinion responses with those from New Zealand, although the overall trend closely mirrored Singapore, there were a few noteworthy differences. For example, references to the EU's economic role was markedly higher than in Singapore – 35 percent versus 20 percent respectively – a somewhat surprising finding, given that Singapore is seen as the economic hub of Asia. Arguably this relates more strongly to the New Zealand-EU relationship which has always been predominately focused on trade, particularly trade in agricultural goods (Gibbons, 2008).

In contrast, views of the EU as a great, strong, or global power (excluding economics) were lower in New Zealand – 7 percent of responses versus 12 percent in Singapore. Arguably this indicates that expectations placed on the EU by the New Zealand public are considerably lower than those from the Singaporean public. Connected with this is the idea of the EU being responsible for security and defence, both for its citizens and abroad. Although the outcome for this perception was relatively low at 3 percent, it would indicate a marginal but perhaps growing awareness of the EU being active in this field, as in many cases it was associated directly with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, despite the reality of the EU's "junior" membership in NATO (Cerutti, 2008, p. 11).

An awareness of the EU as a normative actor by the New Zealand public was approximately the same as in Singapore – 5 percent of the total ‘spontaneous image’ answers. This gives the indication that efforts to promote the EU as such have been consistently, albeit weakly, received around the world (see Figure 7.5).

**Figure 7.5: New Zealand Public Opinion:  
Is the EU Perceived as a Normative Actor?**

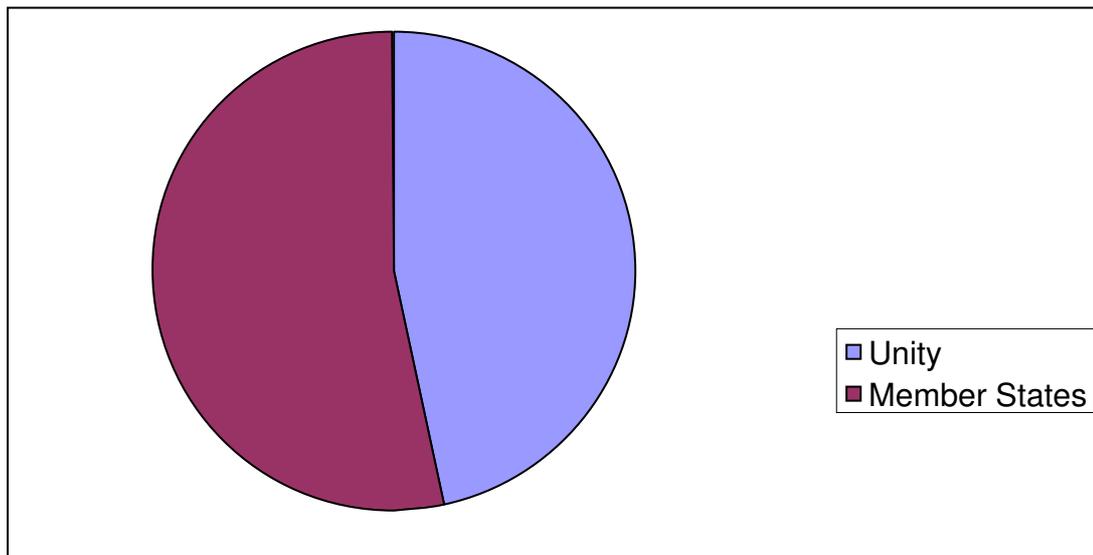


There was a difference in the type of norms the EU was associated with in the eyes of the New Zealand public when compared to Singapore. Whereas the focus in Singapore was primarily as an aid provider, in New Zealand the EU as a champion of environmental matters received the highest mention at 25 percent, followed by a perception that the EU is both a human rights actor, and involved in establishing legal regulations.

Something which was noticeably absent in the Singapore answers was the general perception that the citizens and countries of the EU share common values. In New Zealand, this accounted for 9 percent of the total answers which referenced the norms of the EU. The same number of respondents mentioned the EU promoting ‘stability’, in contrast to the Singaporean answers where stability was the second most mentioned norm. Perhaps the biggest difference in how the Singaporean and New Zealand public view the EU was in its role as a developmental aid provider. Although both countries consider themselves as developed, there was a much bigger awareness in Singapore of

the EU's developmental assistance role than in New Zealand – 30 percent versus 6 percent respectively. This is in contrast to the emphasis placed by the respondents in the previous chapter of the importance of the cooperative relationship between New Zealand and the EU in promoting development and stability in the nearby Pacific region. Likewise, democracy also featured low in New Zealand respondents' minds, with only a total of two answers mentioning democracy at all – the same number as in Singapore.

**Figure 7.6: How Unified is the EU Perceived to Be? New Zealand Public Opinion**

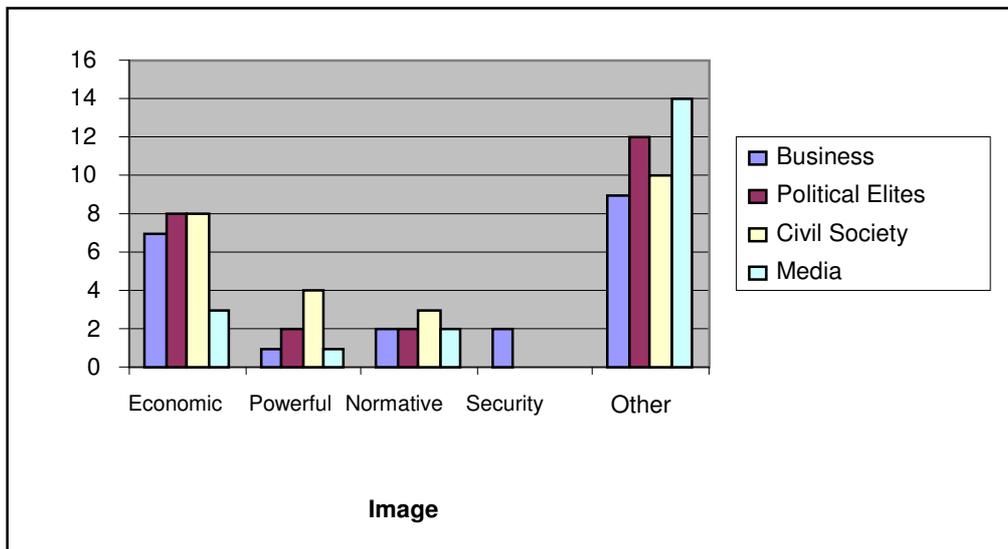


The final analysis presented here relates to how unified the EU is perceived in the minds of the New Zealand public. That is, when thinking of the EU, does the New Zealand public think of a unified, single entity, or of the individual Member States? The result was similar to the Singaporean findings, although with a slightly more individual Member State focus. This means that although Member States are thought of slightly more than the 'unity' of the EU, both are significant. Unsurprisingly considering New Zealand's strong historical ties to Britain, the mention of individual Member States was focused primarily on the United Kingdom.

### 7.2.3 Perceptions of Singaporean Elites on the European Union

Expanding on how the EU is perceived by the public in Singapore and New Zealand, this section (and Chapter Eight) incorporates the findings of face-to-face semi-structured interviews with elites in each country. Interviewing elites was viewed as important as they are each country's 'movers and shakers'. An identical questionnaire was used in both countries, which was critical for establishing a basis for comparison. The elites were asked the question: "When thinking about the term 'the European Union', what three thoughts come to your mind"? (see Figure 7.7). The results are shown according to the total number of responses given.

**Figure 7.7: Images of the EU in Singaporean Elites**

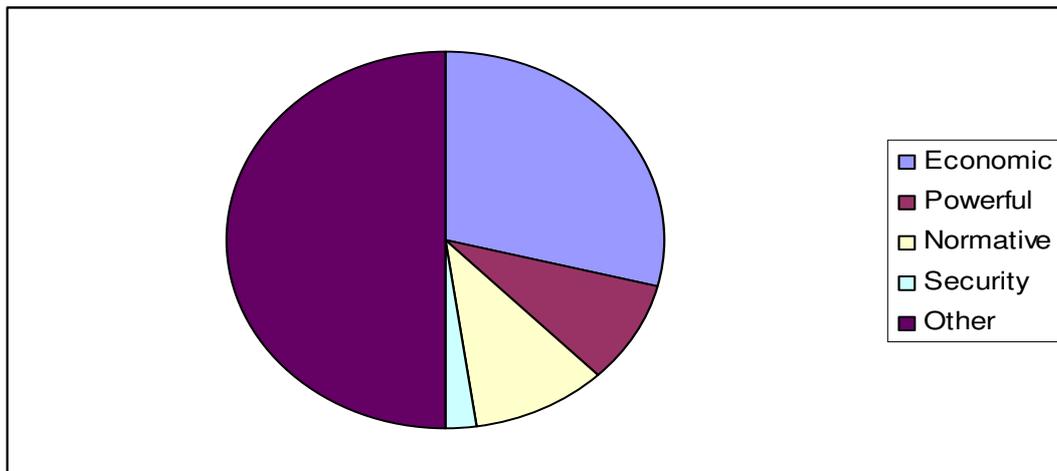


Once again, and as per the stereotyped image, the EU as an economic actor, or issues pertaining to economics, were at the forefront of the minds of the interviewed elites in Singapore (see Figure 7.7). Interestingly, the elites representing the civil society sector were more likely to view the EU as both powerful and normative, whereas the elites in the business community were the only cohort to think of the EU in security and defence terms.

A significant finding from this study is the 'other' categories which were not present in the literature findings. These answers covered general ideas associated with the EU such as culture, people and travel/tourism. This supports Krzeminski's (2004, p. 1)

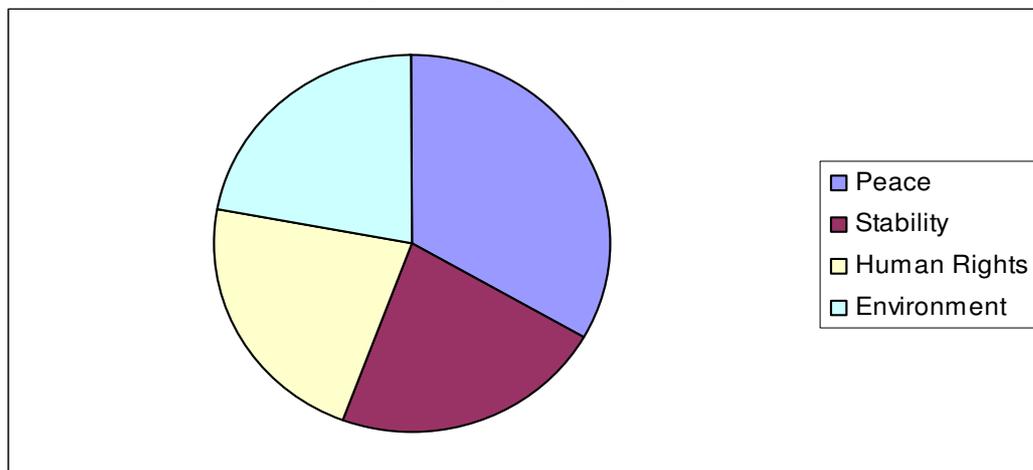
comment that when one thinks of Europe, one thinks of it in terms of culture and herein lies Europe's power. The high number of cultural identity images may be related to what van Ham describes as 'place branding' (2008). This means that the European Union is associated with a wider cultural identity which does not necessarily relate to the EU or its specific borders but rather a more inclusive notion of a 'cultural Europe'. There were also many negative images raised by the interviewed elites including conflict, excessive costs and protectionism.

**Figure 7.8: Images of the EU amongst Singaporean Elites: Combined Cohorts**



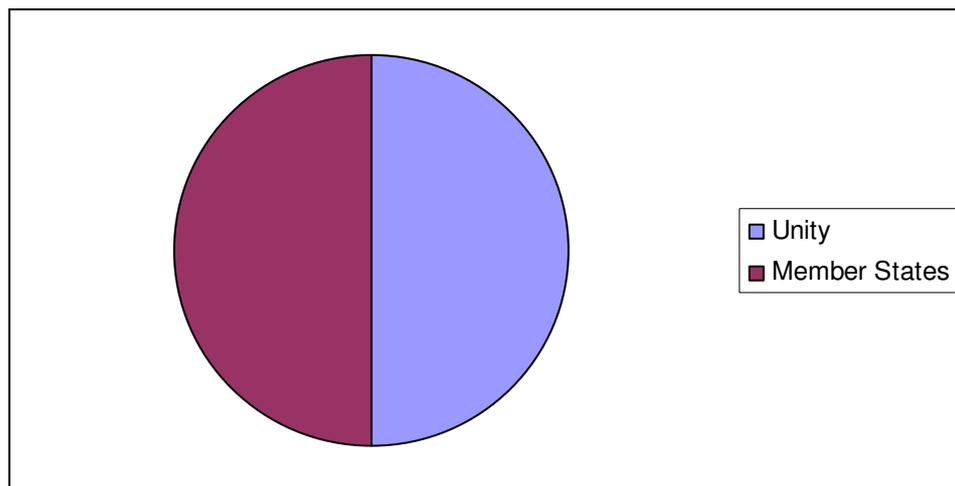
As Figure 7.8 shows, generally the EU is viewed more as a normative actor than as a powerful military figure and even slightly more of a normative actor rather than as a generically powerful entity. Arguably this shows that the normative values of the EU are generally better known and understood amongst the elites across all cohorts than amongst the general public (10 percent versus 5 percent).

**Figure 7.9: Normative Images amongst Singapore Elites**



The normative paradigms in which the EU was influential and which were mentioned by the elites in Singapore were divided almost equally between the four issues raised – peace, stability, human rights, and environment (see Figure 7.9). Interestingly, the latter category was absent from any of the answers amongst the general public in spite of the EU also purporting itself to be a champion of environmental matters. The European Union has stated on the Europa website that its “priorities are combating climate change, protecting biodiversity, reducing the impact of pollution on health and better use of natural resources” (retrieved 23.3.2009). D’Andrea (2008, pp. 83 - 84) has assessed the notion of whether the EU’s stance on environmental matters, in particular climate change can be linked to forming an internal EU identity, and strengthening its legitimacy. However, arguably a failure by the EU to communicate this goal to the wider public can be to its detriment.

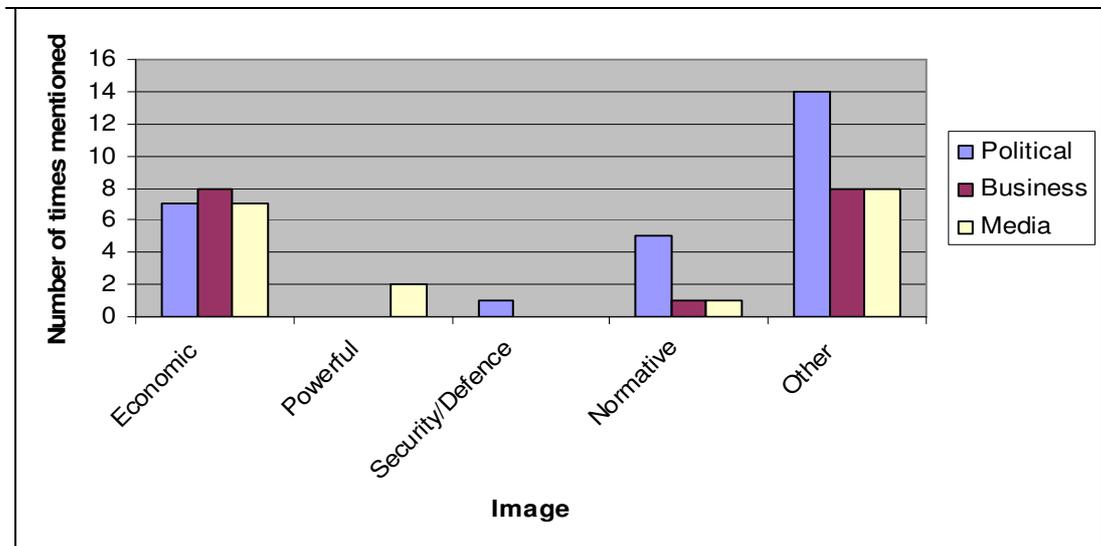
**Figure 7.10: The Perception of a Unified EU amongst Singaporean Elites**



Finally, as Figure 7.10 demonstrates, the perception that the EU is a unified, cohesive entity or is the sum of its Member States was divided equally. This finding is almost identical to the public opinion survey.

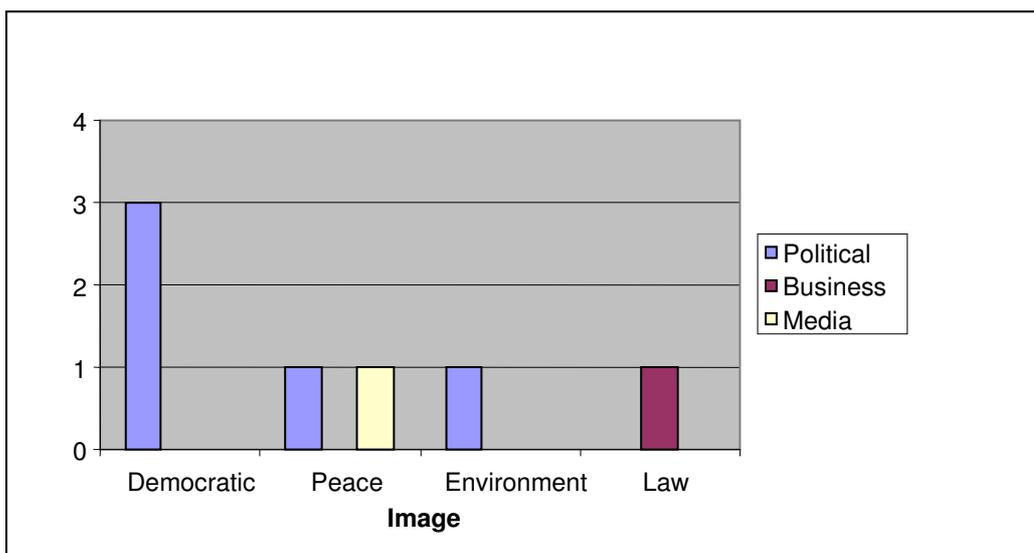
### 7.2.4 Perceptions of New Zealand Elites on the European Union

**Figure 7.11: Images of the EU amongst NZ elite**



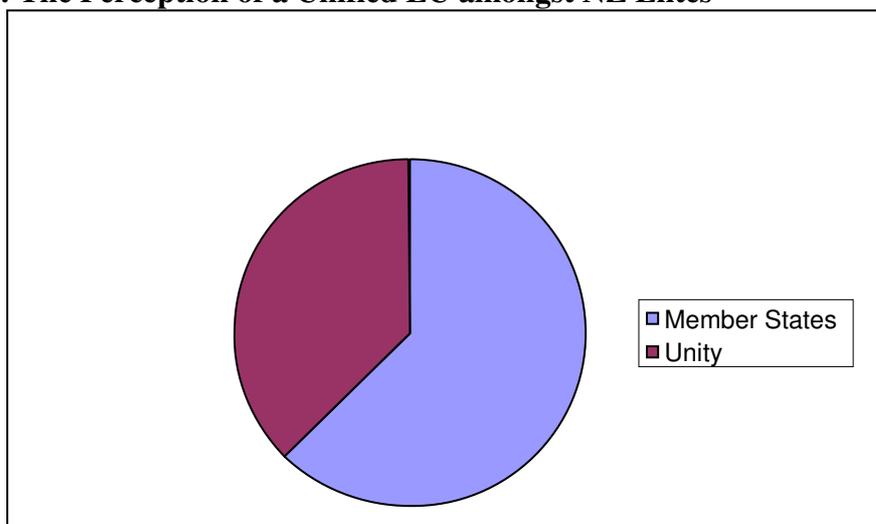
As with the other results presented in this chapter, aside from the references to ‘other’ areas of influence, the EU as an economic actor was the prominent amongst all three cohorts in New Zealand (see Figure 7.11). Interestingly, only the media elites were inspired by an image of the EU as a powerful actor. Likewise, only one New Zealand political official had a conception of the EU as a military actor. The EU as a normative actor was most prominent amongst the political actors.

**Figure 7.12: Normative Images of the EU amongst New Zealand elites**



The EU as a promoter of democratic principles was by far the most prominent image of EU normative principles in New Zealand elite interviews, but this was identified only amongst the political cohort. This was followed, although on a relatively small scale, by the EU as a promoter of peace and stability and as a protector of the environment. Only one business actor mentioned the EU as a legal entity, but it must be noted that in this instance it was probably more in relation to rules and regulations pertaining to accessing the EU markets.

**Figure 7.13: The Perception of a Unified EU amongst NZ Elites**



Finally, amongst the New Zealand elites (and included above under the ‘other’ category), the dichotomy between the EU seen as a unified force, or as a sum of its Member States was quite prominently slanted towards the latter. This was in opposition to the findings of the other groups analysed in this chapter, and would indicate that if the EU wants to be considered as a credible unified actor in the international arena, then this perception needs to be overcome. Whether the EEAS would be a way to overcome this problem, or whether it is an issue that needs to be addressed before it comes into effect remains to be seen. Relating to this ongoing debate, the next section explores how the EU is represented in the print media in Singapore and New Zealand, including in terms of which of its actors are the most visible.

Fioramonti and Lucarelli, have noted that political elites “frequently view the EU as a key player in a future ‘multipolar’ world, and, at times, as a champion of ‘multilateralism’” (Fioramonti *et al* 2008, p. 200). Because multilateralism is a key factor of NPE, terms referring to this were anticipated, but were glaringly absent from the images of the European Union. Similarly, Fioramonti (*ibid*, p. 203) has mentioned that the EU is seen an environmental actor. However, this was not the case in these two case studies.

### 7.3 MEDIA PORTRAYALS

Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to critically assess all of the historical, cultural and sociological factors which may lead to the understandings of the EU in the minds of the public and elites in third countries, in recent years, the importance of the media in shaping ideas has been highlighted. The press leverages a lot of power, due to its exposure and ability to filter news and make decisions about whether news is worthy or unworthy for publication (Herman and Chomsky, 2002). It also frames how news is understood and processed. Framing has been described as “selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and/or solution” (Entman, 2004, p. 5). Indeed, the media has a strong influence in creating images in our minds (McCombs, 2004, p. 34). It “may not be successful in telling its readers what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963, p. 13). Its influence is particularly important for informing the reader about geographically distant locations and entities that they would otherwise have no contact with, or knowledge of.

Repeated exposure over time to similar messages makes it easy for people to accept them as true. Based on these arguments, the portrayal of news relating to the EU is important, as it may be postulated that the degree to which the EU is visible in the local print news media is indicative of the EU’s profile and visibility and hence contributes both to expectations placed on it as well as how it is perceived. It has also been argued that the EU lacks global visibility and according to Manners and Whitman, the Union’s invisibility of the EU’s international presence is just as important as its presence (Manners and Whitman, 1998, p. 234).

Until now, it has generally been assumed that the EU Member States have been rather unsuccessful in coordinating their foreign policy positions, thereby forgoing their potential of presenting a visible and united front to important partner and aid countries and handicapping the Union's image and potential as a major actor on the world stage (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 5). There have been a number of noted instances where the Union has failed to speak with one voice (Zielonka, 1998; Hoffmann, 2000). In addition to the problem of the multitude of actors all vying to speak for Europe, another negative influence on the EU presence in the world, which increases its complexity for third parties, is the Union's 'evolving nature' (Fiske de Gouvia, *et al* 2005, p. 21).

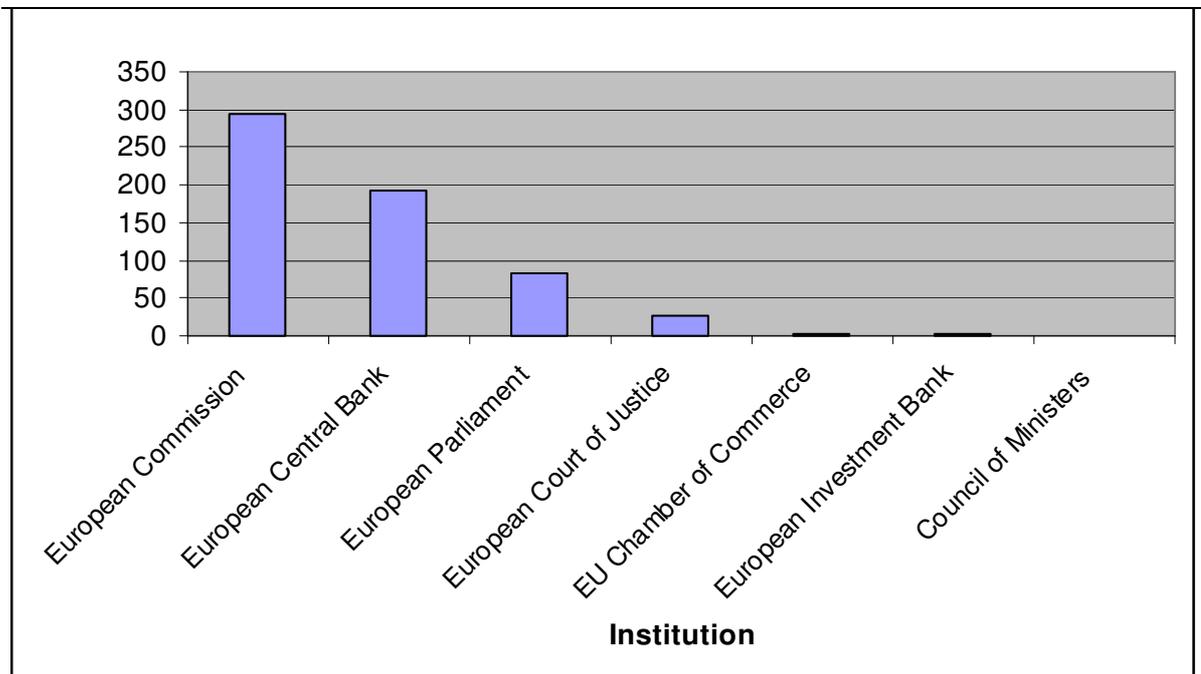
Former United States Secretary of State Madeline Albright once famously quipped, "[t]o understand Europe you have to be a genius". More recently, on her first visit to Europe as American Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton offended an audience at the European Parliament when she referred to EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana, as "High Representative Solano", and called the European Commission External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner "Benito" (Brunnstrom, 2009), indicating a rather serious level of confusion even for someone as presumably well-informed as the US Secretary of State. These blunders may arguably be seen not as a reflection of poor preparation by Clinton and her aides, but as proof of the EU's complex structure with its many levels and institutions. Arguably, if it is too complicated for Clinton, it is also quite possibly too complex for general public understanding. In a media study of the EU in New Zealand, for example, one commentator has noted "[t]here's not a great deal of understanding by the public of what the EU is" (Chaban, *et al*, 2006 p. 197).

In order to understand whose voice the citizens of Singapore and New Zealand hear when the EU 'speaks' this section introduces which actors of the EU are the most prominent in the media in Singapore and New Zealand. Primarily these various actors are – the European Union (as a whole), the 27 individual EU Member States, the EU Presidency, the Council of the European Union, and the European Commission. Firstly, it is important to understand whether the EU itself is present at all. The results shown below are also the results of the transnational study on EU external perceptions

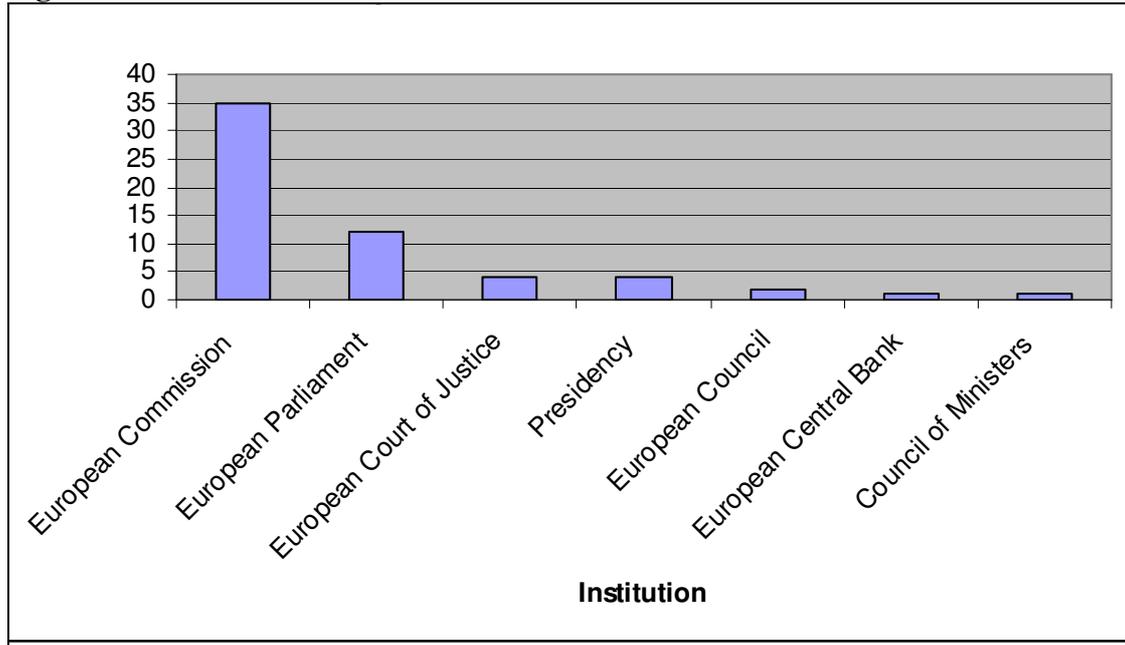
conducted by the National Centre for Research on Europe, University of Canterbury described above. A striking finding in the research project on media and public perceptions of the EU in general in the Asia-Pacific region was the general low level of media coverage and public awareness of the EU as a significant normative actor (for more information go to [www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.euperceptions.canterbury.ac.nz)).

Of interest here is the total number of articles which gave the EU a ‘face’ or mentioned a specific EU actor (aside from the reference to the EU itself, which was of course how the article made it into the data set). This was approximately 26 percent out of a total of 648 articles in New Zealand and 44 percent out of a possible 2516 articles in Singapore. This arguably denotes that the EU is more likely to have at least one representative mentioned in newspaper articles in Singapore and thus it is potentially personified more readily in Singapore. Who these faces are and what they represent was divided into three categories – EU institutions, EU officials and EU Member States.

**Figure 7.14: EU Institutions mentioned in the Singaporean Media**



**Figure 7.15: EU Institutions in the New Zealand Media**



Figures 7.14 and 7.15 demonstrate the prominence of the EU institutions in the Singaporean and New Zealand print media. In both countries, the institutions of the EU were present in the newspaper coverage, with some variance relating to the prominence of each institution. The European Commission, primarily in charge of trade and aid, was the most referenced EU institution in both countries, featuring significantly more times than the other institutions. A striking finding and important for NPE, is in the prominence of the European Parliament in both countries (ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively). According to Keukeleire (2008), despite the limited EP role in foreign policy, it maximises what strengths it does have, making it an important actor in promoting the EU's normative role. In addition, the EP's international visibility has noticeably increased over the past few years, as is arguably evidenced by this newspaper analysis.

A marked difference can be found in the way the European Central Bank was featured. In Singapore, it was the second most referenced EU institution, whereas in New Zealand it featured only once. This result can be interpreted as just as telling about Singapore and New Zealand as the European Union. Singapore views itself as the financial hub of Asia, with finance, and financial issues at the forefront of peoples' minds - both national elites and the public. New Zealand's relationship with the EU is more likely to have a connection with trade. However, the finding is also

add odds with the public opinion outlined above, where the New Zealand public opinion viewed the EU as more of an economic actor than in Singapore.

The next most noted institution was the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which ensures that the laws of the EU are adhered to by its Member States, including internal normative laws such as human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is also a significant finding that the Union Presidency, or the country holding the rotating Presidency, which heads the Council and is crucial to implementing ‘Second Pillar’ and thus CFSP competences, was entirely absent from the media profile in Singapore, and it was only mentioned four times in New Zealand.

Moreover, completely absent from both data sets was the Commission Delegation (ECD) in each country. As the potential basis for the proposed EEAS, it has been argued that the ECDs have the resources and expertise to take a significant role in its implementation. Elsewhere, the ECDs have been much more prominent, for example, in the Pacific (Kelly, *et al* 2008). This finding could be indicative of a communication deficiency of the Delegations in New Zealand and Singapore,<sup>90</sup> and is in contrast to Michael Bruter’s media analysis in Mexico, which came to the conclusion that the ECD there was often misrepresented as being responsible for the whole of the EU (Bruter, 1999, p. 186).<sup>91</sup>

### ***7.3.1 Prominent EU Actors in the Print Media***

There is however, some consolation for the ECDs in these two countries. Although the institution as a whole was absent, the media coverage did highlight the individuals who worked for them. In New Zealand, the ‘Delegation of the European Commission to New Zealand economics and trade adviser Tim Hurdle’ was mentioned once. In Singapore, Delegation officials from Asian countries other than the home country also made the news (Philippines, Thailand, and China – one mention each) alongside an unnamed “EC Delegation member” (twice), and the Singapore EC ambassador, Christoph Wiesener, mentioned twice. We can conclude from this that although the Delegation officials did receive several mentions, these tended to be fairly irregular

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<sup>90</sup> For more information, see Chapter Eight.

<sup>91</sup> For more information on the success of the ECDs see Chapter 8.

and sporadic references, and as such, these actors arguably remain almost as far off the radar as the ECDs themselves.

**Figure 7.16: Prominent EU Actors in the New Zealand Media**

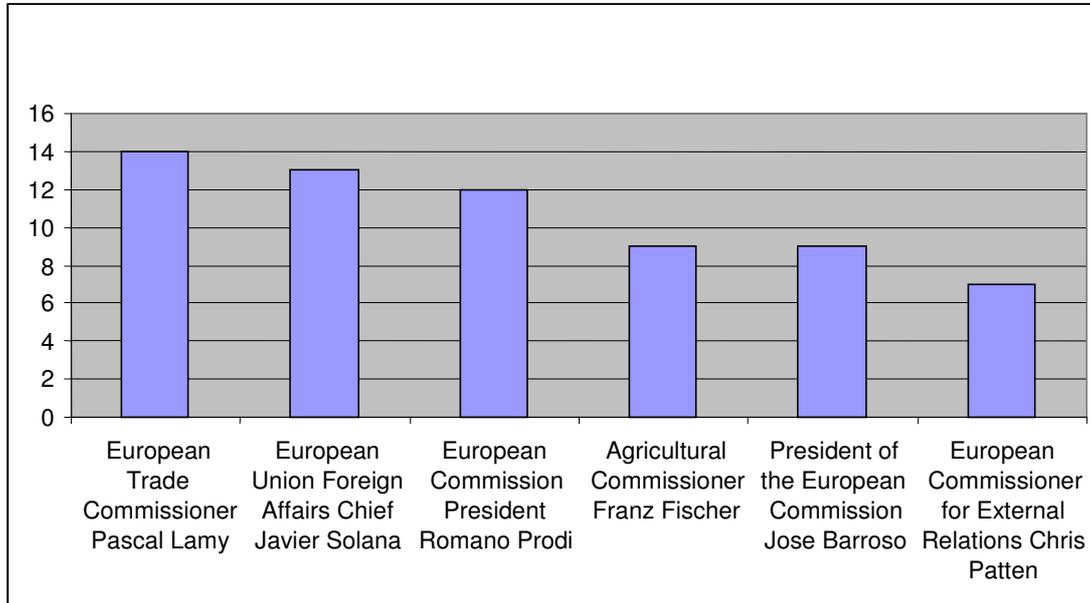
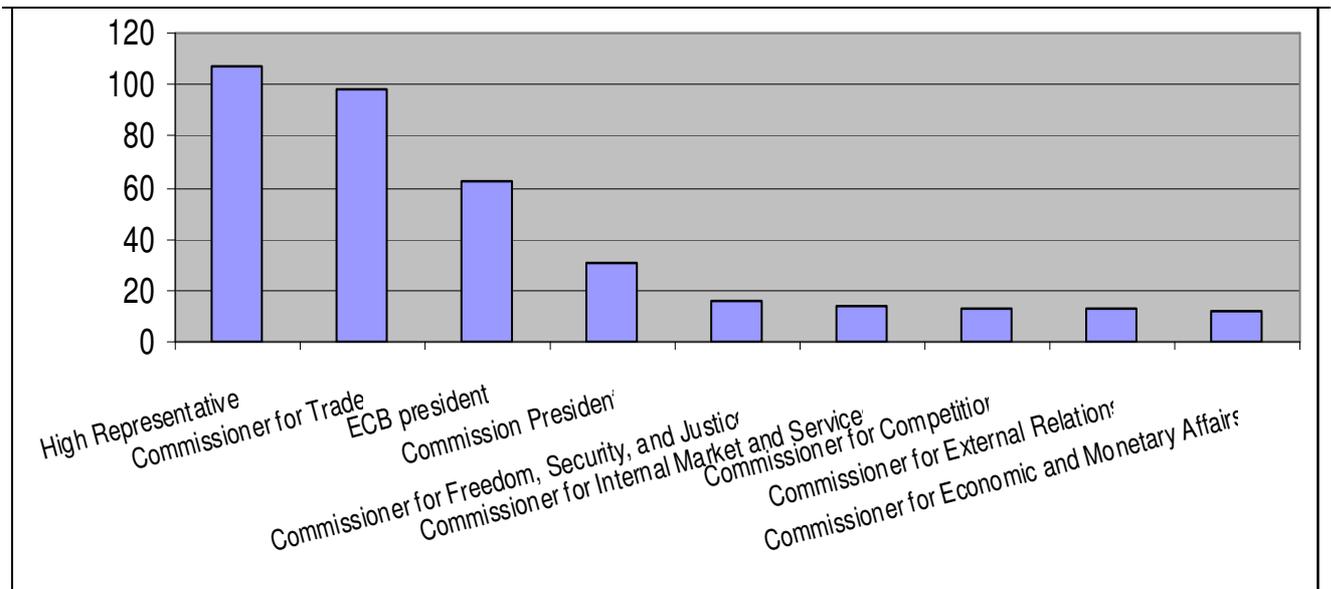


Figure 7.16 demonstrates just how confusing the various actors and faces of the European Union can be, given that many of the main actors changed roles at the same time in 2004. Hence in the New Zealand case, many of the positions are represented by two different people – the European Commission President, the Commissioner for External Relations and the Trade Commissioner (Peter Mandelson is not shown in the graph above, (see below)). However, if one is considering the prominence of the posts in general, rather than the individual, the prominence of the Commissioners is markedly more than the Javier Solana’s post as the so-called foreign minister of the EU, speaking on behalf of intergovernmental matters, with the Commission president mentioned a total of 21 times and the High Representative for CFSP mentioned 13 times.

There has been much speculation and confusion about the difference in roles played by the EU’s High Representative (often called the EU’s Foreign Policy Chief) and the Commissioner for External Relations. This was supported by the media findings in New Zealand, where one newspaper incorrectly referred to the High Representative Javier Solana as “the European Union’s foreign affairs Commissioner”. The

prominence of the EU officials in many ways reflected the institutions, with the exception that Solana was the most prominent actor even though the European Council was under-reported as an institution. Economic actors were also very prominent in Singapore (see Figure 7.17).

**Figure 7.17: Most Prominent EU Actors in Singapore**



With the exception of Javier Solana, the Commissioner for Freedom, Security and Justice, and External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the other top nine individual EU actors had roles directly related to economics and trade in the Singaporean media coverage. In particular, the Trade Commissioner, Peter Mandelsen rated second. Furthermore, a surprising finding was the low prominence of Ferrero-Waldner. As the Commissioner now holding the post formerly held by Chris Patten, she is often compared to Solana; however, this is not reflected in the prominence of articles which mention her in Singaporean newspapers. In contrast, her predecessor Patten was relatively visible in New Zealand. Another difference between the two countries was the level of visibility of the Agricultural Commissioner Franz Fischer in New Zealand. Fischer’s successor, Mariann Fischer-Boel was only mentioned once in Singapore. In New Zealand, Fischer-Boel was mentioned nine times, this is potentially due to the fact that she visited New Zealand that year.

In total, the number of individual actors present in the media was substantial. In the New Zealand print media for instance, there were 45 different ‘faces’. In Singapore, the total number of different EU officials mentioned in the media was 69. Sometimes these were vague references to people, often spokesmen and women. Other times they were identifiable faces like Javier Solana.

Moreover, in addition to a large number of Commissioners and Commission officials mentioned, another significant finding was the relatively high number of MEPs mentioned in both countries’ print media. In total, there were eight mentions of MEPs in Singapore and nine in New Zealand. As the youngest of the EU’s institutions, the EP has been traditionally ignored by officials from the other EU institutions.<sup>92</sup> It seems that perhaps the EP will need to be taken more seriously in the future, given the prominence that it is gaining in foreign news media in countries like New Zealand and Singapore.

Finally of note, do the other actors in the media tend to represent a more normative EU, or a harder power EU? The actors from both cohorts were relatively invisible. The Head of European Strategy Intelligence and Security Centre, was mentioned once in Singapore and the anti-terrorism co-ordinator mentioned four times in Singapore and once in New Zealand. Similarly, jobs pertaining to supporting normative values be they internal or external were slightly more prominent. Commissioners mentioned here were the EU Commissioner for Freedom, Security, and Justice, Franco Frattini, the EU Justice and Home Affairs as well as Fisheries and Environment. One significant difference was that the EU Development Commissioner, though mentioned four times in New Zealand, was completely ignored in Singapore. This could be interpreted as supporting the idea that New Zealand and the EU cooperate at a closer level on helping developing neighbours than Singapore does, but is in contradiction with the public and elite findings mentioned above, which mentioned development in Singapore, but not in New Zealand.

Giving a face to the EU has been demonstrated as an effective tool to making it more relevant and understandable. Going by the data presented above, it becomes clear that

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<sup>92</sup> See Chapter Nine.

the sheer number of EU actors represented in the news media can make it confusing for third parties. Consequently, the creation of the EEAS has the potential to improve this situation.

#### 7.4 CONCLUSION

Unsurprisingly, the EU was overwhelmingly viewed as an economic power, whether this was through trade or the euro (which, despite this perception, is not ubiquitous in the EU region). Although the European Union is a political and economic entity, the findings above demonstrate that there is a myriad of images and perceptions related to what ‘outsiders’ think of when thinking about the EU and which are unrelated to the political identity of the European Union, for example – culture, history and tradition.

In comparing these images with those presented in the previous chapter, a clear pattern emerges indicating that how EU officials understand the EU is quite different to how the public and elites in two external countries view it. In evaluating the EEAS discussion through these two conceptual lenses – from the inside and outside – a common theme begins to emerge about internal and external perceptions of the European Union, which includes some of the current shortcomings in the EU’s external relations. If the EU is trying to ‘brand’ itself as a normative power, as Chapter Six suggests it is, then it seems that in these case studies at least, it is failing to do so successfully. On the other hand, and rather positively for the EU, it is viewed as a relatively strong power and in many ways a positive role model of integration and unity.

Although there were variations in the emphasis and understanding of the EU’s values amongst the respondents, in Singapore the EU as a peaceful entity was overwhelmingly prominent. In New Zealand, the EU as an environmental actor was most prominent in the eyes of the public, in contrast with the opinion of the elites, who saw the EU as first and foremost a democratic entity.

Surprisingly, human rights was relatively very low on the agenda (13 percent), despite it being at the forefront of the minds of the EU policy implementers in based in Singapore (see previous chapter). Clearly then, the communication of the EU as a

promoter of human rights is not as successful as it could be in Singapore (see also Chapter Seven). Although there is a strong internal public support for the EU to promote human rights, Balfour has noted, human rights is “a cross pillar activity” (Balfour, 2008, p. 163). Therefore, this could be a reason for the confusion in communicating the EU’s human rights focus to the rest of the world.

It is acknowledged that the findings may be influenced by the relatively stable relationship both countries have with the EU. Therefore, a similar study in developing countries, which benefit from the EU’s development policies, would paint a clearer picture of the EU’s global, normative role. Nevertheless, the results of this study are significant given that the EU relies on the two countries to support its external (and thus normative) role and to give internal and external legitimacy to its actions in third countries.

How the EU is communicated and presented in the media is also important. In particular, this case study found that the EU is often portrayed as disjointed and confusing for third citizenry. Although positively for the EU in Singapore, a ‘face’ was given to it in many articles (in comparison to the New Zealand sample), the sheer number of representatives just adds to the confusion. Moreover, taking into consideration the important role the EU plays in the Asia-Pacific region, the overall coverage of the EU in the media indicates that it is not taken as seriously as it would like and indeed as it may deserve.

The EEAS has the potential to bring a further unity to how the EU is perceived and give the EU a single voice. One of the EU representatives which have a lot of potential in the role as communicator and representative of the EU is the respective ECDs. Perhaps the lack of identity for the ECD can be put down to their specific focus, which means that they operate differently from traditional embassies, and have a core focus on businesses and accessing the public rather than engaging with local government. How successful they have been in carrying out their mandate is addressed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

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## **CHAPTER EIGHT:**

### **THE SUCCESS OF THE COMMISSION DELEGATIONS: LESSONS FOR THE EEAS**

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#### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

At the heart of this thesis is a focus on the EU's diplomatic structure. The EU is already unique in the international arena and similarly, the way it operates abroad has transformed standard diplomatic practice. Although the EU has at its disposal a number of actors on the world stage, arguably its most important representative is to be found in the Commission, specifically, the Commission Delegations (ECDs). Although Chapter Seven demonstrated that the ECDs are not as prominent as they could be, part of this argument centres on the sheer size of this representative force and in the fact that Delegations are present in 136 countries around the world, as well as five international organisations (personal correspondence, European Commission). Because of the structures which shape the conduct of EU foreign policy, the ECDs are often the only permanent part of the troika in third countries. Although it is clear that the ECDs are by no means the only operators of EU foreign policy, they are given special attention in this dissertation largely because their personnel, resources and experience mean that they are likely to be the starting point of the European External Action Service. Continuing the discussion begun in the previous chapter, with the focus on external perceptions of the EU introduced, this chapter now shifts to an examination of the way the ECDs are perceived by their foreign counterparts, and consequently the expectations placed on them. This discussion is primarily made in the context of viewpoints of national elites in Singapore and New Zealand where a series of elite interviews were conducted in 2007 and 2004 respectively. The issues raised in this chapter are particularly pertinent as so little has been previously published about the role and actions of the ECDs (Holland, 1991b; Bruter, 1999; Bale, 2002/1, 2004; Chaban, Kelly and Bain 2009).

## 8.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The previous two chapters have served to demonstrate that the way the EU is perceived abroad does not necessarily correlate with how the Union views itself internally. This thesis argues that the way the EU communicates has the potential to affect how it is perceived abroad and consequently to impact on the delivery of its foreign policy. In the current globalising world, communication is increasingly important and Fiske de Gouveia has defined communication in the international sphere as a new kind of diplomacy, calling it ‘public diplomacy’, meaning those “efforts by a state to communicate to, and engage with, foreign publics” (Fiske de Gouveia, 2005, p. 6). Because of the need for entities and actors to rely on external support for their actions, ‘public diplomacy’ is a key component to gaining legitimacy, as it is a way of “cultivat[ing] beliefs” which are necessary for it to claim the “right to exist” (Wæraas, 2007, p. 281). Public diplomacy is a mechanism for the EU to communicate its values abroad while at the same time increasing both its internal and external legitimacy which can in part be connected to its identity and its role as a global soft power actor.

Communicating the EU – what it stands for, what its goals are and why it seeks to act in certain arenas – is important for its identity construction. Fiske de Gouveia and Plumridge have highlighted that better communication by the EU has the potential to improve the identity of the European Union. Indeed, it seems that:

To date, the way that European and the EU communicate with third-country publics has been atomised and disjointed. There is arguably not enough co-operation between EU member states’ own public diplomacy organisations – and the capacity of the EU institutions to engage in public diplomacy activities is limited by a lack of resources and political will (Fiske de Gouveia, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 22 [*sic*]).

It is for this reason that Fiske de Gouveia believed that it is important for EU policy makers to consider “how to better speak, and listen to third-country publics” (*ibid*, p. 1). The sheer multiplicity of EU actors, who each have their own foreign policy competences, agendas and approaches, and also their own way of communicating, inhibits the EU’s capacity to increase its weight in the world. Moreover, when it

comes to asserting itself globally, the different representatives of the EU are “almost as varied as the communication itself” (*ibid*, p. 7).

An example of this variance can be seen, for example, in the different ways that the various EU actors have undertaken their public diplomacy efforts. As the traditional representatives of EU foreign policy, Member States have, over time, transferred large areas of competence to the institutions of the EU, however, the fact that Member States have thus far refused to agree on a common stance on a number of key foreign policy issues prompted Bale to conclude that foreign policy in the European Union remains “a last bastion of nationhood” (Bale, 2004, p. 54). EU foreign policy is thus one area of competence that is fiercely protected by the Member States and it can be assumed then that it is a prerogative they will not easily relinquish. Despite also being the most well-equipped and experienced EU actors in the diplomatic and communication arena, Fiske de Gouveia has also noted that there is a clear indication that the Member States “would be un-willing to surrender or share their expertise and funding [for the wider common good of the EU]” (Fiske de Gouveia, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 11).

Located at the apex of Member State representation at the EU level, is the European Council. The nature of the European Council’s operations – in which its agenda is often conducted in secret, and its head, the presidency, changes so regularly – makes it largely unsuited to public diplomacy functions (*ibid*, p. 12). Chapter Six noted that the European Council was almost invisible in the Singapore and New Zealand media. However, it is important for EU identity formation, as according to Keukeleire, it is more important to give the idea of a united European approach, rather than concrete action (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 69). In this sense, the European Council can be seen as concerned with creating an EU identity based on solidarity.

An extension to the CFSP was made after the Amsterdam Treaty and created the role of ‘Mr CFSP’, a High Representative for EU Foreign Policy; seen by many as a way of bridging the ‘expectations-capability gap’ and also one step towards establishing a common European ‘voice’ on the world stage. Former Spanish Prime Minister Javier Solana was first appointed to the post and continues to hold it now 10 years on. Although Solana featured prominently in the media analysis discussed in the previous

chapter, in his 'Mr CFSP' capacity, he does not have the authority to speak on behalf of the EU as a whole.

The member countries of the EU each undertake the role of the six monthly rotation of the European Union Presidency. Although the enlargement to 27 Member States has meant that each member now holds this position less frequently, the Presidency is still important for Member States as it raises the profile of the Presidency holder (de Vreese, 2003, p. 33).<sup>93</sup> In this way, although the Presidency is an EU-level role, Member States often have self-serving motives for the work that they undertake whilst holding the position. More recently, the 2009 Czech Presidency created chaos when the Czech Prime Minister was forced to step down from office by his parliament. Nevertheless, as the country holding the Presidency, the Czech Republic still held a prestigious meeting with Barack Obama on the new US President's inaugural European visit – an event that would perhaps have been unlikely for the Czech Republic, had they not held the EU Presidency at that time.

In charge of the European Community competences is the Commission. Although the Commission has its own international identity, this is somewhat limited, as it does not have the mandate to represent the whole of the Union, except in areas of trade and development policy. The Commission is a vital communicator for the European Union, and its potential for conducting foreign policy and public diplomacy is huge. The Commission has a variety of Directorates General (DG) involved in foreign policy, including the Directorates- General for External Relations (DG RELEX), Trade, Enlargement, Development, Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN) and the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). In addition, the Commission itself is required to be 'fully associated' with the CFSP work.

The Commission already actively practises public diplomacy. Each directorate has an 'information and communication' unit, in addition to DG Communication. Furthermore, there has been evidence that the Commission considers itself as a 'brand', as it was reported in 2006 that the EU Commissioners for External Relations consulted a branding specialist (van Ham, 2008, p. 138).

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<sup>93</sup> Although this finding has been supported in some studies, in Singapore, the Presidency was entirely absent from the data and it was only mentioned four times in New Zealand.

Of all of the Commissions DGs responsible for speaking on behalf of Europe, DG RELEX is essential, primarily because the ECDs are administered and coordinated in Brussels largely by DG RELEX. Thus, the unit is effectively responsible for projecting the Union's identity abroad. To achieve this goal, the DG RELEX disposes of an annual information and communication budget in the amount of 7 million (Fiske de Gouveia, and Plumridge, 2005, p.18). In addition, it works closely with the other DGs which have international components.

Since DG Development is responsible for dispensing the Union's developmental aid globally, it is an ideal platform for public diplomacy actions, though unfortunately, the visibility of its efforts has been less than prominent thus far. It was because of the lack of wide-spread understanding about the EU's development role which prompted the DG to adopt an external 'Information and Communication Strategy 2005 – 2009' and launch an information campaign under the motto 'Europe Cares' in order to draw attention to its support for the Millennium Development Goals. The goal was to "address wide-spread ignorance about the EU's position as the world's most significant aid donor with activities promoting development objectives across the globe" (European Commission, retrieved 11.11.2008).

Similarly, DG ECHO also plays an important role in providing humanitarian aid and has suffered from similar inadequacies in its communication efforts to those of DG Development. Under-funding and under-staffing are cited as the primary reasons for these failures. For example, according to some sources, DG ECHO employs only two information officers for communication work covering the entire continent of Africa (Fiske de Gouveia and Plumridge, 2005). Although the focus of this thesis is not on the European Union as a development actor in general, this lack of public understanding about one of the key mandates of the Union – development – is significant.

The European Commission has undertaken a number of initiatives in order to actively promote what the European Union does. If managed correctly, these have the potential to demonstrate to the world the positive contribution that the EU hopes to make and also to highlight what exactly it is doing and to limit negativity. The

Commission is therefore an important communicator for the EU, and its potential for conducting foreign policy and public diplomacy is huge (Fiske de Gouvía, 2005 p. 10) and should not be underestimated. According to Hocking and Spence, however, the Commission has thus far failed to live up to its potential and has “failed to engage in the advocacy and public diplomacy commensurate with its abilities and potential” (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 5).

The Commission is an important promoter of the EU’s normative values. For example – “[t]he European Commission has adopted a number of Communications relating to human rights and democratisation in the last decade” (Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: The European Union’s role in Promoting Human Rights and Democratisation in Third Countries). The Commission’s purpose is to consult with the head of state in third countries on matters relating to human rights, democracy or humanitarian action (Duke, 2002, p. 855). In this way, the Commission plays a vital role in both the actor capability of the European Union as well as exporting EU normative values. Moreover, in a host state, the head of the ECD plays role in defending CFSP positions as well as co-ordinating demarches (*ibid*).

The ECDs have challenged the Westphalian system of states because while they do not represent a Member State in the traditional sense, they are still deemed to be traditional embassies by the Vienna Convention of 1961, with the head of Delegation often receiving the title ‘ambassador’. Indeed, due to the large number of ECDs worldwide and the resources that they command, the Commission is an important factor in European Union foreign policy and is likely to be a foundation for the proposed EEAS. The Commission thus has a huge potential inside its own ‘family’ to improve the EU’s capacity to speak with one voice in foreign policy (Allen, 1998). Its failure to do so has been consistently noted as having an adverse effect on the EU’s actor capability as well as its international identity.

The ECDs, then, are a key resource for the Commission’s public diplomacy efforts. According to Bruter (1999, p. 200), the Delegations have developed a ‘consumer-oriented’ diplomacy. Because of the unique way delegations are formed and run, they make consumer services more important than any other function. For example –

providing technical help and providing information for locals. While the Delegations are arguably the EU's main representation abroad, they are also often mistakenly understood to represent the whole of the EU, rather than just the Commission (*ibid*, p. 187).

An often overlooked EU institution in the foreign policy debate is EP. The EP, too, has Delegations focussed on different regions around the world (although they are based in the Parliament in Brussels) responsible for different areas of EP policy, and often conducts high-level visits to EU partner countries where the European Parliamentarians meet with their local parliamentary counterparts. In March 2006, 14 MEPs and 12 officials visited New Zealand, for example and this was followed in June 2008 by a second MEP visit to New Zealand.

The EP has a right to be consulted and informed about the CFSP and has also been able to influence the CFSP at the margins through its control of the budget. Its active Foreign Affairs committee has sought to maximise its influence through committee hearings and the preparation of policy documents. It has also developed links with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Despite the EP being seen by many as the guarantor of democracy and legitimacy (and thus important for the EU's normative identity) within a traditionally 'elite' Union, its mandate in European foreign policy is very limited and it is often dismissed as insignificant (Fiske de Gouveia, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 13). The EP itself is often discussed in the debate surrounding the apparent democratic deficit of the Union – a pressing issue for commentators and the public alike. The democratic deficit issue stems from the perception that Brussels is run solely by elitist bureaucrats who alone are responsible for EU action and direction. Therefore, by locating EP responsibilities somewhere within the decision making process of EU foreign policy, this direct representative body for the EU public could go some way to addressing the imbalance. This could be a very important step for the legitimacy of the EU, given that legitimacy is often claimed to stem from the belief of those citizens in the state that, it is legitimate. Thus, in the future developments of EU foreign policy, there is, arguably room for a stronger international role for the EP.

Collectively then, the EU has at its disposal a multitude of foreign policy tools, and can be described as having an identifiable and coherent international identity (Manners and Whitman, 1998, p. 246), although as the previous chapters have demonstrated, this identity is inconsistently understood. Specific areas of responsibility exist in EU foreign policy conduct, whereby “[t]he presidency of the Union carries the responsibility for CFSP and the troika is also at the disposal of the Union. Likewise, the Commission and Commissioners also have overt roles to play” (Manners and Whitman, 1998, p. 243). However, according a study by Chaban *et al*, “the diplomatic power of the EU was seen as impaired due to the fact that the EU was not fully regarded as a cohesive voice” (2006, p. 255). These many actors arguably work to make the EU’s global role actually lack coherence and coupled with this, there are limited resources available for the EU to conduct serious diplomacy activities (Fiske de Gouvía, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 22).

Lynch once noted that the EU’s external activities are “information-led and passive with the focus falling heavily on ‘what we say’ rather than ‘what they hear’” (Lynch, Dov, 2005 p.31). At the same time, the EU voice has been described as “[a]t best ... garbled; at worst, it is not heard at all” (*ibid*, p. 11). As often the only permanent member of the troika stationed in third countries, the work of the ECDs is imperative in communicating EU positions. The following section examines how effective the ECDs are in performing their role.

### ***8.2.1 The Commission Delegations***

Although national elites in the Asia-Pacific region have acknowledged that diplomacy was a “European invention” (Chaban, *et al* 2006, p. 255), ironically the EU itself has been called “the most radical peaceful challenge to the Westphalian system of states” (Fossum, 2002, p. 9). Batora has noted that this is because the EU is organised around an intergovernmental system which is at odds with the Westphalian diplomatic order of independent and autonomous states (Batora, 2005, p. 59). Consequently, because the officials of the ECDs operate diplomatically in the absence of a state, they are unique in international relations (Bruter, 1999). This uniqueness may be interpreted as further evidence that the EU is indeed *sui generis*, as conceptions of NPE suggest.

In spite of the evidence demonstrating the uniqueness of the ECDs, in many ways they are real embassies. For example, it has been gradually introduced that the heads of mission will be officially known as ‘Ambassadors’, as interpreted under the Treaty of Vienna Convention of 1961. Moreover, the website of the Commission Delegation to Papua New Guinea Delegation explained the work of Delegations as being;

[L]ike all embassies – the delegations monitor, analyse, interpret, report on developments in the host country in all areas relevant to EU interests and activities that range from policy and strategy formulation to decision making and implementation, with a view to factor local developments into the EU/EC’s activities in relation to the host country, and beyond if appropriate (European Commission, retrieved, 10.11.2008 [sic]).

Hence, it can be seen that from an internal perspective the Papua New Guinean Delegation compares itself to an embassy in the traditional sense. The various roles performed by the ECDs have the potential for closing the so-called ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ because if the ECDs are successful in carrying out their appointed tasks then they are arguably meeting expectations set for them. The Commission is solely responsible in the running of the ECDs and as such they are mandated to speak only on behalf of the Commission, and not for the whole of the European Union. This is not limited to DG RELEX, but to all of the Commission’s Directorates General. Figure 8.1 refers to the role of the ECDs as defined by the Commission. The various treaties as well as decisions taken by Member States determine where the Commission has competency. A recurring theme in discussions about the ECDs is an emphasis on their capabilities as well as its role in the promotion of the EU’s international identity. Romano Prodi (2003) has noted that the ECDs:

Put the EU’s common foreign and security policy into practice abroad – (and are) indispensable instruments in the EU’s expanding role on the international stage of our globalised world.

A Commission brochure describes the work of the ECDs as being “essential to the promotion of European Union interests and values around the world, and are in the front line in delivering EU external relations policy and action, from the common foreign and security policy through trade and development cooperation to scientific and technical relations” (European Communities, 2004, pp. 3-4). In this way, the Commission has acknowledged and emphasised the importance of both the identity

centred and agency centred roles of the ECDs; both key aspects of this dissertation's argument.

**Figure 8.1: The Role of the ECDs**

1. - Publicising, explaining and implementing EU policy
2. - Analysing the policies of the countries to which they are accredited
3. - Conducting negotiations according to the mandates given to them
4. - Exercising powers conferred on the European Community in third countries by promoting Europe's interests as embodied in the Community policies
5. - Playing a key role in development assistance

Source: European Commission, 2001b.

The first role which is noted by the Commission's website, (see Figure 8.1), is the ECDs' role in publicising, explaining and implementing EU policy. It is interesting to note that this is listed first on the agenda. The term 'publicising' can be linked directly to the concept and practice of public diplomacy. The practice of the ECDs' public diplomacy is not confined to promoting the ECDs alone, but they are charged with promoting the image of the EU in general (Bruter, 1999, p. 194). In third countries, the ECDs have the responsibility, along with the local embassy of the current Presidency, to "promote an effective, consistent and coherent performance of the European Union as a group in third countries" (European Commission Delegation to Papua New Guinea, retrieved, 10.11.2008). This image of the EU is designed to portray key facts, policies, statements and decisions taken by the EU and includes a pro-active role in matters pertaining to local information and communication about the EU (*ibid*).

So how do the ECDs communicate their mandate and the EU's image? The answer is through a variety of communication and information activities, from the publication of brochures and newsletters, through to the operation of information centres and celebrations for 'Europe Day'. One key point of difference between the ECDs and traditional embassies is that the focus of the former is not on traditional governmental networks – instead they focus their services towards non-institutional and non-governmental actors and engage local businesses, NGOs (for the purposes of regional

development), local media, academia and the general public in raising awareness of European policies and initiatives (Bruter 1999).

The ECDs are not the only EU representative present in third countries, which means that they have to conduct their business with a degree of caution, so as to avoid stepping on any diplomatic ‘toes’. Despite the fact that heads of mission have official been given the title of Ambassador, they are encouraged not to use this title, for fear of upsetting the Member State embassies residing alongside them (*ibid*, p. 190). Moreover, the ECDs have been noted to struggle against attacks by national embassies (Duke, 2002, p. 187) and without a state to represent, they often face problems related to support and credibility. However, the ECDs were not established to compete with the Member States of the European Union, but instead to complement them (European Commission, retrieved 08.08.2005): Article 20 of the Maastricht Treaty states that co-operation and coordination between Member States embassies and EU delegations is legally binding. It states that:

The diplomatic and consular missions of the Member States and the Commission Delegations in third countries and international conferences, and their representations to international organisations, shall co-operate in order to ensure that the common positions and joint actions adopted by the Council are complied with and implemented (Maastricht Treaty, Article 20).

The second point noted in Figure 8.1 refers to the need for the ECDs to provide regular political analysis. Like all embassies, the Delegations monitor, analyse, interpret, and report on developments in the host country in all areas relevant to EU interests and activities which range from policy and strategy formulation to decision making and implementation, with a view to factor local developments into the EU/EC activities in relation to the host country, and beyond if appropriate. Although they form part of the second pillar of the Treaty of Maastricht’s pillar system, the ECDs’ mandate also includes CFSP activities, conducting evaluations jointly with EU Member States embassies and contributing to the policy making process.

The third task of the ECDs relates to conducting negotiations according to the mandates given to them. The analysis below includes personal opinions about how successful the ECD officials are in these negotiations. These negotiations are often

crucial to the work done by the EU, but they are not always viewed favourably (Chaban, Kelly and Bain, 2009, p. 282)

According to the fourth ECD task mentioned in Figure 8.1, the ECDs are responsible for exercising the powers conferred on the European Community in third countries by promoting Europe's interests as embodied in the Community policies. This mainly relates to common trade policies, but extends to many other areas including the agricultural, fisheries, environmental, transport and health and safety policies. It also means involvement in areas such as Justice and Home Affairs, in which the European Community does not have exclusive powers (European Commission, retrieved 08.08.2005). Furthermore, any areas of mixed competence like this can lead to confusion both within the Union and the host country (Cameron, 2002, p. 14 -15).

The final task– playing a key role in development assistance – is a key aspect of the Commission's external tasks and as a consequence, some of its conduct falls to the ECDs. Along with the country holding the Presidency, ECDs take the lead in on-the-spot coordination of the implementation of all EU assistance, both multi-lateral and bi-lateral, which may as a consequence lead to an increase in EU coherence as well as visibility (European Commission, retrieved 08.08.2005). The ECDs development tasks have expanded in recent years in part because of the deconcentration policy. According to the country where they are stationed, assistance covers a variety of target areas – humanitarian assistance, support for democracy and human rights as well as independent media, mine clearance and reconstruction, institution and capacity building, to traditional development aid (*ibid*). It is difficult to critically analyse the effectiveness and visibility of this aspect in the two chosen case studies, given that Singapore and New Zealand are already developed countries, but this also brings to light the argument that EU development actions are also significant in those countries which cooperate with the EU on that issue.

The ECDs have an important role to play in the dissemination of the EU's normative values, as they are the only legitimate voice of the EU in areas such as trade policy and are a major part of development-related aid, humanitarian help, technical and scientific cooperation and economic development. Indeed, much of the limited

academic focus on the ECDs has been specifically on the espousal of the normative values and EU the promotion of EU identity abroad.

Whereas some positive assessment of the ECDs has emerged, their role has been far from uncontroversial.<sup>94</sup> Much of the confusion and criticism of the ECDs has come from the inability of the Commission to promote what it does effectively and is consequently directly related to their public diplomacy efforts. There is unmistakably confusion about their role. Bruter (1999, p. 183) has noted a dilemma in the way that the Delegations can assume the role of embassies without the support of a state, and with the all “flaws of external policy of EU”.

The confusion about exactly who and what the ECDs are is wide-spread. For example, in interviews conducted with elites in China, a question about the ECDs commonly elicited the answer that the respondent did not know that one existed (Chaban, Kelly and Bain, 2009, p. 283). Furthermore, the official websites of the ECDs use a range of confusing and official titles for their offices. This confusion and inconsistency may be found, for example, in two of the Commission’s biggest offices. In Washington DC the ECDs’ website is entitled ‘The Delegation for the European Union’, with no mention of the Commission. In contrast, in Russia it is called the ‘European Commission’s Delegation’ with no mention of the European Union. This lack of consistency prompts a question about the ability of the European Union, as a whole, to be more coherent if even the ECDs themselves find it hard to be uniform in their actions.

ECD staff have also been the particular focus of much criticism. For example, under questioning from the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee in 2004, the UK Foreign Secretary described the Commission’s Delegation staff as “all sorts of odd-bods from the European Union running all sorts of odd offices around the world.... it is not entirely clear what they are doing” (Hansard, 2004, as cited in Spence, 2004, p. 62). In addition, there are high expectations placed on those staffs, with an “extensive level and breadth of knowledge required” (Duke, 2002, p. 859), in spite of the rudimentary diplomatic training they are provided with (compared to nation states)

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<sup>94</sup> See also Chapter Five.

(Bruter, 1999, p. 191). A recent study has found that the ECDs are in fact not as effective at public diplomacy efforts as they could be (Chaban, Kelly and Bain, 2009) and this is explored in greater detail below using the results of data obtained from face to face interviews with political, civil society and business elites.

### 8.3 FINDINGS

#### *8.3.1 Singaporean Elite Perspectives on the Local ECD*

In an effort to determine third-party perspectives on how the ECDs could increase their effectiveness worldwide, this chapter considers the data from one of the questions posed to Singaporean and New Zealand elites during the interviews conducted for this thesis: “The EU has its Commission Delegation in [your capital city]. How could the activities of the Delegation be of use to you and your organisation?” The answers are significant in light of the discussions of the previous chapters, as well as the proposals brought to the fore in the failed Constitutional Treaty and Lisbon Treaty.

All of the respondents in the Singaporean civil society cohort had either not heard of the ECD, or saw no need to interact with them.<sup>95</sup> For example, one interviewee did not mention the ECD at all in answering the question, reverting back to the stereotype of the EU as an economic actor: “With the free trade agreement between the EU and Singapore, my organisation can reduce the cost of importing between the EU and Singapore”. Another pointed out that: “I don’t even know that they exist, I think that they are quite low profile”. A further two who fell into this group had no contact with the ECD, nor saw any need to do so in the future: “I have not had an opportunity to interact with the European Commission; my exposure was with ASEM [Asia Europe Meeting] and the member countries. To be honest, for the particular industry I am in, the EU is not so conspicuous” and “we focus largely on domestic things so at the moment I don’t see any use for that”.

In the political cohort in Singapore, the respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the role of the ECD. One, for example, pointed out the importance of them “on a government to government level” moreover he noted that “it’s good that the EU has

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<sup>95</sup> See Chapter Four for more information about the methodology.

its own ambassador here. That makes it so much easier for communication between the EU and Singapore”. Not only does the ECD work closely with governments, but also a government ministry, which was looked on favourably by one respondent:

The EU Delegation in Singapore works closely with the MFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the other agencies on a variety of issues. It also reaches out to the man on the street to promote awareness of the EU. In this connection, we appreciate the EU Delegation and the work it does here.

One of the suggestions for the ECD was that it could be central in promoting trade: “I think it should be more of a promotional role with EU as a trade centre”. Moreover, it was viewed as important for giving Singaporean companies a single point of access to the European market, which is often hard to navigate due to the EU’s “multiple entry points”. This point was considered important, “especially for local companies who wish to set up ventures in the EU”.

As well as promoting trade, there was an emphasis by respondents on “promot[ing] people-to-people contacts through cultural exchanges” as well as being a go-between for “the networking possibilities and a better understanding of the EU, as well as the possibilities to share our culture and practices to promote better understanding”. In some respects the ECD was already regarded as positively promoting and communicating the EU, for example: “The ‘EU in Schools’ programme is especially useful in the long term in raising the awareness of the EU among Singaporeans”. Conversely, for some Singaporean politicians, “the EU Commission has a very low profile and people barely know it exists” and was regarded as “not directly useful”.

Singaporean business elites were equally divided in their negative and positive responses. Among the positive, it was noted that “the Delegation (should) play the role of highlighting/updating relevant issues relating to EU countries”. Furthermore; “the Commission assists in providing information on EU regulations and standards, as these affect our companies’ exports and investments into the EU”. Others gave some positive suggestions. For example: “they could promote Singapore as an ideal place to conduct business” and “the Commission can also provide insights into economic developments of different members of the EU”. Finally, one banking executive noted that he would like to see an exchange programme between EU and Singapore small and medium enterprises. “I will be very happy to understand if the Commission can

work on...SME exchange programmes to promote trade and common understanding of the rules and regulations (as well as) promoting FTA in Singapore”.

The negative respondents from the Singaporean business community “didn’t know that there was such a Commission”, or did not know enough about the Commission to comment on its work. One of the interviewees from this group noted “that goes to show how little public visibility it has created for itself”. This same correspondent went on the note that “since the EU itself is a diverse grouping, the presence in Singapore will need to be well organised and address questions and queries”. This respondent pointed specifically the lack of public visibility of the ECD in Singapore, and therefore the lack of a real presence and influence. This inconspicuousness of the EU is supported by the media analysis presented in Chapter Six.

### ***8.3.2 New Zealand Elite Perspectives on the ECD***

Despite the fact that the Commission’s *chargé d'affairs* in Wellington had opened only recently before the interviews took place in 2004, the majority of the New Zealand political cohort had a positive view of it. One opposition party member noted the ECD’s success in staying in touch with good communication: “The communication from a parliamentary point of view is pretty good”. Likewise, a fellow colleague had nothing but praise for its staff’s efforts to both communicate with the relevant Ministers of Parliament, as well as be informed about New Zealand issues:

I think they are doing a very good job, they are pro-active, they stay in touch with a number of key politicians involved in the relationship with Europe, they are informed of NZ issues and concerns, I find they are smart, effective, and doing a good job.

In addition, information on technical issues was welcomed as one politician noted an appreciation of “popular material put out by them”. It was also suggested that they could send out “more information on the commonalities”. One respondent noted the high regard he placed on normative issues such as the environment: “Talking about Kyoto, exactly where Europe stands on it”. Hence, for some in this group, the image of the EU as an environmental actor was obviously getting through.

From a negative perspective of the ECD in New Zealand, there was the perception that “they need to be more active in visiting Members of Parliament”. This

interviewee noted that were it not for the efforts of one of the Member State embassies, then “it would have a very low profile”. Another supported the idea that staff of the Delegation were not active enough: “I don’t see much of the Delegation”. However, it must be acknowledged that the ECD at the time was relatively new, and the resources it had at the time, including personnel, were extremely limited. Perhaps unfairly then, one New Zealand respondent criticised the ECD by comparing it to the embassies of other countries which he felt were doing a better job:

[T]he American/US embassy for example, is quite good at...nurturing the relationship which in my mind is what a good embassy should be doing. But the British would more or less match that...some of the others like the Irish, they’re an embassy that’s quite high profile in New Zealand, and others like the EU are very very low quality presence in my view.

While this comparison might not be entirely fair, given also that the ECD in New Zealand is in fact not a full embassy, but rather is headed by a *charge d’affaires* and associated with the larger Australian/New Zealand Delegation based in Canberra, however, the fact that this political respondent did not get a sense that the representative in Wellington was active or visible is significant.<sup>96</sup>

New Zealand businesses tended to be more critical of the efforts of the ECD, which is surprising given Bruter’s (1999) claim that the Delegations are involved in ‘consumer-oriented’ relations, with an emphasis on providing technical assistance for entities that operate outside the traditional political sphere. One respondent representing the New Zealand agricultural sector was concerned that the ECD opted for a dictatorial stance towards New Zealand, rather than being open to discussion. Noting the usual process of a meeting this respondent said:

It all starts off very cordial and then you hear how important their particular issue is to them and therefore the rest of the world and how they understand the NZ position but it’s unacceptable in a European context and they finish off usually telling you how insignificant NZ is anyway and more or less that the veracity of your argument is lost because you’re a very insignificant very very small nation at the far end of the world you know..., its, I think, that you always feel like you’ve been preached to rather than discussed with when you deal with a European Delegation.

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<sup>96</sup> It is also interesting to note that Ireland does not actually have an embassy in New Zealand.

The feeling of being ‘preached to’ is a significant finding in relation to the third role mentioned in Figure 8.1. Conducting negotiations is one of the critical roles of the ECDs and it seems that the ECD officials, in New Zealand at least, were sometimes viewed unsatisfactorily. The feeling of being spoken at and down to was a recurring theme in the findings from many of the other countries in the EU Asia-Pacific perceptions project (Chaban, Kelly and Bain, 2009). Moreover, there was a feeling that the staff at the Delegation in Wellington found it difficult in “accepting that we, NZ farmers we are at a different place and time to our European counterparts”. This interviewee in fact, noted that New Zealand is more advanced than Europe in its agricultural policies: “We have the huge advantage of having already made the changes that they have ahead of them and they have built up significant”. In particular, regarding the painful abolishment of farm subsidies in the 1980’s:

I have a sense that what I would like to see out of the European Delegations that I meet is to try to understand better what it is that NZ went through when we went through out economic changes in the 80s...and how we’ve learned that adaptation is a good thing, not a bad thing... you know, protectionism accentuates the negative.

Similarly, for the manager of a large exporting company, EU trade barriers in general were a concern:

Perhaps they could work a bit more closely to make sure those barriers go down as opposed to go up, because on a technical issue, compliance costs with their requirements is huge for our whole sector.

This respondent went on to suggest more technical help in over-coming the sometimes crippling compliance costs that are involved with exporting into the European Union.

On the positive side of the spectrum were the respondents who noted the Delegations’ successes in communication and the provision of information. One New Zealand business elite claimed to have a “one-on-one relationship with the Delegation”. This interviewee encouraged more “one on one social” interaction as well as more “broad summary activity information” on issues relevant for New Zealand businesses and exporters. Another commentator from a leading export company conceded that it was too early to comment on the opening of the ECD, but “would be a willing participant to engage with people that were willing to come and talk”.

#### 8.4 HOW CAN THE EEAS LEARN FROM THE ECD EXAMPLE?

Chaban, Kelly and Bain have concluded that “that for the EU’s public diplomacy to truly launch itself, the Union should pay attention not only to what it says but also to how it says it, and how loud, clear and engaged it sounds” (2009, p 288). Arguably, the EEAS has the potential to improve how the EU communicates. Judging from the answers elicited above, which was in the form of direct feedback and comments from the policy and decision-makers who are in positions to influence the foreign policy flow in their respective countries, the EEAS can learn from the experiences of the ECDs in Singapore and New Zealand.

The identity of the EU and the expectations on the role of the Commission are very much dependent on the different social and cultural contexts where they are living. Singaporean respondents seemed to be very focused on economics and trade and business opportunities – perhaps unsurprisingly given the importance of Singapore as an international trade hub. This contrasted with New Zealand respondents who noted not only the role of the EU in promoting environmental matters, but also agricultural issues and access to EU markets for its primary agricultural products. There was also the general feeling that New Zealand elites are perhaps more open to opportunities for liaising with EU officials. This is perhaps a cultural phenomenon as the New Zealand *Charge d’affaires* has noted that New Zealanders tend to be very cordial in the way they conduct negotiations with their ECD counterparts (George Cunningham, personal correspondence). Nevertheless, in spite of the differences, a number of comments can be made about how they are viewed in general. The differences in needs and demands means that any future EU embassy would need to tailor-make their approach according to the country they are in and be culturally sensitive. What else can the proposed EEAS learn from the ECDs?

There are a number of ways in which the ECDs could improve on their public diplomacy efforts, points which could be taken into consideration by the EEAS. According to Chaban *et al*, these recommendations can be divided into two distinct areas — the Delegations as “a source of specific (and often technical) information for the local decision- and policy-makers” and “the Delegations as a mechanism for

nurturing relations between the EU and its Member States and the locality” (2009, p. 287).

The first dimension highlights the perceived need and relevance of the Delegations by the elites in providing information on either technical issues – for example on trade regulations – or on the EU generally. Furthermore, it has been noted that the information that is presently provided – be it via the internet or through regular ECD newsletters – was viewed as being important for raising the profile of the EU, as even if they were not read “their presence and delivery was seen to raise the Delegation’s visibility” (*ibid*). Other types of information which was valued came from trade reports containing an overview and assessment of trade developments between the EU and the home country and regular lectures or seminars held in conjunction with the major national business organisations (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, the National Business Round Tables, Trade and Enterprise, etc.). Thus, these latter two aspects highlighted the importance of trade that the stakeholders perceived as an important vehicle for the European Union.

But there also seemed to be evidence that the traditional way of viewing the European Union as solely an economic actor is also changing. In many respects, the ECDs are viewed as traditional political embassies as it was noted that they should continue to participate in all ‘ambassadorial’ activities such as hosting social events such as dinners, business lunches, and cocktail receptions were viewed as a conventional, but important part of the diplomatic environment. This external support of the ECDs as traditional embassies is an indication that they are increasingly gaining external credibility, which will in turn improve their stance in the minds of critics.

Respondents also requested news and information on a range of EU actions/regulations/standards in areas like technology and environment in which the Union was regarded as an authority. In this respect, the respondents felt that Delegations needed to be better attuned to local issues and greater location-specific information was requested, as well as more information on the commonalities between the partners in areas highlighted by NPE such as common strategies on tackling environmental/energy crises and a shared WTO stance. These rather specific suggestions are not surprising if one takes into consideration Bruter’s observation that

the ECDs have developed a ‘consumer-oriented’ diplomacy, largely as a result of the unique way they are formed and operated in which consumer services like providing technical assistance and information for locals are seen as more important than any other function (1999, p. 200). This has developed out of the need for the Delegations to create original diplomatic functions within their usual constraints. But the requests are a demonstration that there is growing perception of the EU as a ‘normative’ actor, whose norms and standards are followed, looked up to and to some extent, adhered to around the globe.

From a practical point of view it is clear that care needs to be taken in who is appointed as the ECD head, as the success of the Delegation is closely related to having proactive and visible Ambassadors and *Charge d’Affaires* as well as having a good rapport with local policy-makers. In this way, it would be important to streamline selection processes for a future EEAS.<sup>97</sup> Relating to both the Delegation staff and Task Three in Figure 8.1, it is also clear that the Delegations, and the EEAS which may follow, must be careful about taking a “dictatorial approaches” to communication whereby, particularly in developing countries, the Delegation talks ‘at’ rather than ‘with’ local representatives. This is in line with de Gouveia’s note that EU policy-makers to consider “how to better speak and listen to third-country publics” (Fiske de Gouvia, and Plumridge, 2005, p. 1).

Educational initiatives such as exchange programmes and education fairs were also appreciated by respondents, and were viewed as highly effective in fostering relations. Cultural and educational exchanges provide valuable experience in cultural, educational and vocational exchanges, but are currently limited in terms of their scope for EU interaction with third countries. The Commission does have some cultural diplomacy initiatives across the Atlantic and to the countries of Asia and the South Pacific, and all countries are eligible for participation in the prestigious Erasmus Mundus exchange programmes. At present, though, it is not only the Delegations which are responsible for such initiatives – the Education and Culture Directorate General is also charged with an important public diplomacy purview, namely EU

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<sup>97</sup> Chapter Nine looks at this issue in more detail.

cultural diplomacy, which can lead to confusion about the division of Commission labour.

A final point which the national elites in New Zealand and Singapore felt was currently lacking in the current system, and is therefore a further reason for the need of the EEAS, was the perceived need for a liaison-coordinator for the Member States' embassies. This recommendation is all the more pertinent because not all Member States are represented in New Zealand and Singapore and it was envisioned that the ECD could be an alternate liaison for local actors to engage with Europe. In other words, the national elites interviewed for this project envisioned the usefulness of a 'single point of contact' for the European Union.

Because of the perceived importance of these ECD tasks, it would be a shame if their positive work was ignored in the furore which may surround the beginning stages of the EEAS. In this respect, it is suggested that care be taken in the early stages to ensure a smooth transition, and to not lose the already positive steps and identity that the ECD and Commission officials have carefully created.

The institutions of the EU in general and the Commission Delegations in particular, have in many ways successfully utilised public diplomacy mechanisms. However, as the data provided in this chapter and the previous ones demonstrates, there is a lack of coordination, funding and political-will impinging on the EU's ability to be an international actor. Better coordination and communication between all of the EU's bodies would mean that the EU could begin to project a much stronger and clearer identity to the rest of the world. This would be beneficial not only to EU institutions, but also to Member States and would improve EU legitimacy. Establishing a more uniform EU diplomatic system has the potential to improve how the EU communicates and in turn lessen any expectations gaps as well as promoting EU norms. However, caution must be taken against building up the expectations placed on the EEAS too much.

The European Union has a number of issues to contend with if it is to assert its full potential as an international actor. Assuming the constructionist belief "that an identity can be created" (Manners and Whitman, 2003, p. 396), the following chapter

will address what the current proposals for change actually are in European Union foreign policy, in order to formulate how this is likely to improve the identity of the EU.

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## CHAPTER NINE:

### THE EEAS PROPOSALS: AN INTERNAL PERSPECTIVE

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#### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

As in other policy areas, incremental steps have led to substantial changes in the way the European Union plays out its role on the world stage. The EU first demonstrated its aspiration to present itself as having a credible international identity (Manners and Whitman, 1998 p. 236) in the form of the CFSP, in the Treaty on European Union of 1992. However, the Maastricht Treaty did not go far enough in creating greater foreign policy cohesion within the Union, and although expectations were high in the treaties which followed, these were not adequately addressed with the allocation of appropriate resources and functions.<sup>98</sup> In 2000, Karen Smith (p. 20) noted that EU foreign policy making could be improved by “reforming the EU’s external representation”. A number of subsequent steps have been made to this end, most significantly in the form of proposals to introduce a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR-FASP) and create his/her ‘ministry’, the European External Action Service (EEAS). The proposals have the potential to change the way the EU is represented in world politics, in particular by giving the EU’s partners a single point of contact and consequently improving the EU’s coherence, efficiency and the effectiveness of its communication. Thus far, however, despite their promise, the proposals have been rather vague in their descriptions.

The proposals for the introduction of the EEAS are entrenched in the treaty processes of the Union. As such, until now, the EEAS’ future has been tied to the Constitutional Treaty and the subsequent Lisbon Treaty (previously called the Reform Treaty).<sup>99</sup> The proposals themselves have been through a number of stages on the road to ratification

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<sup>98</sup> For example, the signing of the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, left high expectations but fell short of its goals – of a deepening of political union to match its economic and monetary union.

<sup>99</sup> Although there has been some speculation that it could proceed irrespective of the treaty developments. However, if this were to happen, the EU would need to be very careful about how it proceeds, as this could further exacerbate the ‘democratic deficit’.

(see Figure 9.1). Drawing on some of the discussions raised primarily by officials responsible for policy implementation in Brussels, the aim of this chapter is to introduce how the proposals have been framed in the treaties and their evolution through the various ratification processes, and also to address the assortment of issues at the European level, such as the re-emergence of the EEAS after the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty, the institutional struggles between the Council, the Commission and the EP, as well as exploring the likelihood of the proposals going ahead at all.

**Figure 9.1: Timeline of proposals to introduce the EEAS**

<b>2000</b>	German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer makes a speech in Berlin, calling for a debate on the finality of European integration.
<b>2000</b>	December, Intergovernmental Conference held in Nice, launched the 'Debate on the future of the European Union'
<b>2001</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> December, Laeken Declaration
<b>2002-2003</b>	Convention on the Future of Europe
<b>2004</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> October, Ratification of the Constitution for a Treaty of Europe by representatives of the 25 member states of the Union but subject to ratification by all member states, Rome
<b>2005</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> May, French national referendum rejects the proposals
	June 1 <sup>st</sup> , Dutch rejection of the constitution
	17 <sup>th</sup> of June, the European Council issued a declaration announcing a 12-month period of reflection
<b>2006</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> November, proposed date of the Constitutional Treaty coming into force
	June, Italian prime minister Romano Prodi said that he believed the treaty would be significantly revised, but that it should not take place until after the French presidential election, 2007
<b>2007</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> of October, conclusion of IGC drawing up the Reform Treaty.
	13 December, signing of the Lisbon Treaty by heads of government for Member States.
<b>2008</b>	February 20 <sup>th</sup> , European Parliament approves treaty with 525-115 majority.
	June 12 <sup>th</sup> , Irish rejection of the Lisbon Treaty.
	June 19-20, EU summit agrees to continue ratification in remaining countries and give the Irish time to come up with a solution.
<b>2009</b>	October 2 <sup>nd</sup> , Irish public approval of the Lisbon Treaty.

## 9.2 THE ORIGINS OF THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE

The proposals to establish the EEAS have been discussed in various stages. However, it is difficult to pin-point exactly when the idea first took seed. It has long been noted that the European Union has suffered from a number of institutional and practical setbacks which have led to its so-called 'expectations-capabilities gap'. This criticism – particularly by academics – has been made of the EU since the inception of its CFSP. The EEAS could potentially be one way to remedy this gap. According to one former Commission official; “it [the EEAS] has been talked about for quite a long time, mainly in academic policy circles”.

In 2000, the then German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer made a speech in Berlin calling for a debate on the end-point of European integration. In the speech, Fischer called for increased political integration, and highlighted the need for the EU to improve its “capacity to act” with a particular emphasis on how its structures could be changed to achieve this (Fischer, 12.05.2000). Perhaps it was this speech, combined with the German supranational tradition of supporting European integration since World War Two that has led many commentators to emphasise the importance of Germany in being a propelling factor in the process towards the EEAS. For example, two Council Officials noted that: “I think it came initially from the Germans” and “essentially it was a German initiative to bring in the external action service as an adjunct to the foreign. They fought quite hard to get the External Action Service brought in”. This view was supported by Commission interviewees: “They (Germany) were behind European integration from the beginning and they continue to be the driving force” (Luc Vandebon, Commission official, Brussels) and “Germany itself is one of the key proponents of the EEAS” (George Cunningham, Brussels). In light of these comments, it was perhaps not surprising that the German administration was responsible for keeping the key idea alive following the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty (Financial Times, 12.07.2005) with the German presidency kick-starting the debate during its Presidency tenure in the first half of 2007.

### ***9.2.1 The Laeken Declaration***

Regardless of who initiates the discussion about a fundamental change to a system, like the move to establish a common European diplomatic corps, in any integration project, not least one closely aligned to the notion of national sovereignty, it is important to have consensus from all associated countries. The year 2000 heralded a purposeful step for the European Union in its development towards becoming a truly international actor. In particular, two important political developments occurred that proved that the EU recognised that change was needed. The first of these, the 'European Governance' White Paper, noted that the Union required a more consistent attitude and policy when dealing with the wider world and noted that a single European voice was needed to meet aspirations of the EU to be a truly international actor (European Communities, 2001, p. 27). Additionally, the Nice Intergovernmental Conference in 2000 formally launched the 'Debate on the future of the European Union'. Importantly for the discussion of consensus among members, mentioned above, one of these developments emerged from the supranational Commission and the other from the intergovernmental Council.

Exactly one year on from Nice, its issues and goals were raised again at the Laeken Summit, which called for an explicit definition of the EU's role as a global actor. Judging by the documents that emerged from Laeken, the wish for the EU to become a new actor in the international arena (including improving its capabilities) was a driving force behind the EEAS proposals, coupled with the historical responsibility and desire to become a leading normative actor according to the European Council:

Does Europe not, now that it is finally unified, have a leading role to play in a new world order, that of a power able both to play a stabilizing role worldwide and to point the way ahead for many countries and peoples? Europe as the continent of humane values, the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the French Revolution and the fall of the Berlin Wall; the continent of liberty, solidarity and above all diversity, meaning respect for others' languages, cultures and traditions . . . Europe needs to shoulder its responsibilities in the governance of globalization (European Commission, 2001c, p. 21 [*sic*]).

Further support of these two driving factors can be found in the Laeken Declaration itself (p. 2) which noted that the EU was, "[i]n short, a power wanting to change the

course of world affairs in such a way as to benefit not just the rich countries but also the poorest”. From an internal perspective, two inter-connected aspects stand out about Laeken – the need to address the democratic legitimacy of the EU and the need for institutional change. In particular, the ministers present at Laeken highlighted the importance of the need for the EU to be more democratic, more transparent, and more efficient (*ibid*). In effect, they were recognising the democratic deficit of the Union and the need to bring “the European institutions...closer to the citizens” (*ibid*, p. 1).

In addition, there was recognition of the necessity to continue towards more political integration and evidence of a shift away from intergovernmental dominance, towards the supranational institutions of Europe (Deutsche Welle, 16.04.2003). This vision proved compelling for the Commission, the EP, as well as EU Member States, as demonstrated through the enduring nature of the proposals that followed.

Related to both the foreign policy of the Union and institutional change, Laeken acknowledged that a number of steps needed to be taken as there was a risk that, left to its own devices, the CFSP risked stagnation and a sustained domination by the larger Member States. These discussions demonstrated that the Union was intent on taking its place in the world and an improvement in its institutional capability was necessary for this to happen. The Laeken Declaration was also crucial as it set the agenda for the Convention on the Future of Europe, the inaugural session of which took place in Brussels on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 2002.

### ***9.2.2 The Convention for a Future of Europe***

Mirroring Laeken, the ‘Convention on the Future of Europe’ indicated the need to shift away from intergovernmental dominance and change the EU’s ‘centre of gravity’ in the conduct of its external relations. The result was that it was proposed to establish a ‘double-hatted’ foreign minister. This would mean a fusion between the roles of the High Representative for the CFSP (a position which has always been held by Javier Solana), with the Commissioner for External Relations (a position at the time held by Chris Patten and currently held by Benita Ferrero-Waldner). The resultant post would assume vice-presidential status in the Commission and would

have “twin legitimacy stemming from the agreement of the Member States and from the EP’s endorsement of the Commission” (European Commission, 2002, p.14).

The new European Union Foreign Minister would work within the framework of the CFSP, and would also be responsible for “handling external relations and for coordinating other aspects of the Union’s external action” (A Constitution for Europe). Hence, it seemed that the European Union Foreign Minister would have real ability to act on behalf of the European Union. It was established that in order to support the new minister, a ministry would be established, named the European External Action Service (EEAS). A declaration on the creation of a European External Action Service attached to the draft Constitution agreed at the June 2004 European Council stated that the EEAS would be:

[C]omposed of officials from relevant departments of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and of the Commission and staff seconded from national diplomatic services.

On the ground, it has been widely assumed that the EEAS would take control of the current role of the ECDs in third countries, renamed Union Delegations, but this is far from certain. The Convention was of the view that the necessary arrangements for the establishment of the joint service should be made within the first year after entry into force of the Constitutional Treaty with the Commission and the Member States prepared to do the necessary preparatory work for the new service. Creating a unified voice for the EU would mean huge institutional changes and had the potential to improve the efficiency and coherence of the Union in external relations and allow it to take a stronger role in the world as a normative leader.

### ***9.2.3 The Constitutional Treaty***

Although the Convention was able to come to a proposed solution for solving some of the issues facing the conduct of European foreign policy, a number of steps still needed to be addressed. Consequently, the Constitutional Treaty included the provisions to create a ‘Union Minister for Foreign Affairs’ and his or her ‘ministry’, the European External Action Service. The Constitutional Treaty was monumental for a number of reasons. Not only would it give the European Union a single legal personality under both domestic and international law (thus giving more support to

NPE), from a coherence, effectiveness and efficiency perspective, it would have replaced all the existing Treaties (with the exception of the Euratom Treaty), abolished the complicated three-pillar structure implemented at Maastricht and streamlined the Council's Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) system (retaining unanimity in a number of areas key foreign, security and defence policies). In an effort to increase the transparency of the EU, previous secretive Council proceedings would become open to the public. This step had the potential to improve the legitimacy of the Council and subsequently the EU as a whole. Furthermore, the Treaty would guarantee the better protection of fundamental rights, an important normative principle. In achieving all of this, the Constitutional Treaty would thus improve not only how the EU operates internally, but would also address some of the issues first noted by Hill in 1993. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2004, the Javier Solana was nominated to become the first Union Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, a number of unforeseen events unfolded which have hitherto hindered this post and his supporting ministry coming into force.

#### ***9.2.4 The Period of Reflection***

The ambitious plans for creating a more efficient, effective, coherent and democratic Europe were halted by the unexpected rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by the citizens of both France and the Netherlands on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May and June 1<sup>st</sup> respectively, sending shockwaves throughout Europe and around the world. The foreign policy initiatives, including the EEAS, have seldom been referred to as a reason for the rejection of the Treaty, but there have been various other reasons put forward as to why the public in these two founding Member States would deliver such a resounding blow to the integration project.

It has been noted that the EEAS has been used as a scapegoat for national anxieties over enlargement, immigration and economic insecurity. Others have blamed the rejection on the EU itself. For example, Goldgeier (2005, p. 1554) called it a “wake-up call”. According to the EP, “[t]he No votes appear to have been rather more an expression of dissent at the present state of the Union than a specific objection to the constitutional reforms, but, paradoxically, the result of the Noes is to maintain the status quo and block reform” (European Parliament, 2005b). One Ambassador

stationed in New Zealand thought that the democratic deficit was one of the reasons for the failure of the Constitution. According to this source:

This is one of the particular problems, I think, one of the reasons why the constitution failed. They didn't see how they were involved, what the advantages were (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Following the embarrassment of the rejections, a 'period of reflection' on the future of Europe was launched by the European Council in order to give some space to the proposals and to try to understand the feeling of disassociation by EU citizens. It also gave time to Europe's leaders to decide the fate of the Constitution. During this period, a number of countries continued with ratification process, with the result being that at the end of the Reflection Period, 18 Member States had ratified the treaty.<sup>100</sup>

The Commission's reaction to the no votes was to launch 'Plan D', which stood for "Democracy, Dialogue and Debate" (European Commission, 2005). 'Plan D' outlined the Commission's intention to assist debate about Europe at the national level (*ibid*, p. 4). The focus was internal and on how to continue institutional reform, with an emphasis on "listening better", "explaining better" and "going local" to engage citizens. These points are also crucial to the EU's public diplomacy efforts within Europe. The Commission's focus at this stage was on reforming the democratic process of the Union:

[T]o create a citizens' ownership of EU policies, to make them understandable and relevant, and to make EU Institutions accountable and reliable those they serve... and to make EU Institutions accountable and reliable to those they serve (European Commission, 2006a, p.3).

In a Eurobarometer poll that followed the launch of 'Plan D', it was discovered that many countries' citizens continued to support the EU taking on more "common initiatives in foreign policy" (*ibid*). This finding was positive for those who were considering the possibility that the EEAS could go ahead without the Constitutional Treaty. However, much public derision emerged over this plan, especially in the British media (see for example, Hannan, 2005), which is nothing new in itself, as "[m]aking fun of the [European] Community is a popular pastime for journalists and

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<sup>100</sup> Including three by public referendum.

idealists” (Mayer, 1983, p. 289). This notion was supported by one diplomat in Singapore who pointed out that “the media are quite anti-Brussels”.

Although the EEAS had been rejected almost by default, the idea was clearly compelling enough to be kept alive regardless of the treaty outcome. After the ‘period of reflection’, a Franco-German decision was made on how to move ahead with the EEAS. French President Jacques Chirac suggested to German Chancellor Angela Merkel that they should bring in parts of the existing draft, so as to make the document more digestible and the process less controversial. Merkel decided to wait until 2007 when Germany was President of the European Council. This decision seems to have increased the visibility of Germany as a key actor in the treaty-building process through the extensive media coverage that Merkel and the country received at the time (see Chapter Seven). The result was presented on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2007, in the form of the Reform Treaty, latterly known as the Lisbon Treaty. The decision to effectively keep the Constitutional Treaty, albeit with minor changes, despite the French and Dutch rejections, had the potential to be highly controversial. Some in the media criticised what they saw as a decision by the leaders of Europe to push ahead with the proposals in spite of what appeared to be fierce public opposition. The foreign policy mechanisms of the Lisbon Treaty shall now be outlined, along with how these compare with the failed Constitutional Treaty.

### **9.3 THE TREATY ESTABLISHING THE CONSTITUTION FOR EUROPE VERSUS THE LISBON TREATY**

#### ***9.3.1 Normative Principles and Bridging the ‘Expectations-Capabilities Gap’***

The Lisbon Treaty retained many of the original foreign policy mechanisms mentioned in the Constitutional Treaty, with only minor changes. For example, the identical sections in both Article 111-292 of the Constitutional Treaty and Article 21 [10a] of the Lisbon Treaty make reference to the way the EU’s foreign policy should be established and practiced:

The Union’s action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human

rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law Treaty of Lisbon, Article 10A).

It is interesting to note that this reference was included in the Lisbon Treaty, as the concepts mentioned above are almost a direct reflection of the theoretical concept of Europe as a normative power; – that is, that Europe as having an important role in the world as a benign force, intent on making the world a better place through the promotion of norms. Therefore, the inclusion above can be viewed as a deliberate move by European leaders to acknowledge the importance of these concepts and to include them in a binding treaty for the Union. Moreover, in order for the Union to meet the objectives set out above:

The Union shall ensure *consistency* between the different areas of its external action and between these and its other policies. The Council and the Commission, assisted by the *High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*, shall ensure that *consistency* and shall cooperate to that effect (Lisbon Treaty Article 21 [10a] 3 (emphasis added)).

Again, this section of the Lisbon Treaty is identical to the Constitutional Treaty, with the exception a crucial name change for the previously named double-hatted Union Minister for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Naming such a position a ‘Foreign Minister’ for Europe was deemed to be much too sensitive a term. It seems that the drafters of the Lisbon Treaty recognised that in creating what was essentially an EU foreign affairs minister, was seen as going to the core of what was perceived as a vital national interest by the citizens of the countries, for whom the foreign minister would be mandated to represent. This was one of the biggest changes, and for the public seemed to represent a move away from creating an EU foreign minister, thus removing a perceived threat to national sovereignty.

The use of the word *consistency* also points to the continued internal observation that the EU has a coherence problem when it is performing on the international stage. Therefore, by ensuring the consistency of its international relations, the Union would, in effect, be able to improve its international identity. Although at this stage it seems that the Lisbon Treaty was essentially a direct copy of the Constitutional Treaty, this

point was emphasised by a new inclusion: “The Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy shall ensure the unity, consistency, and effectiveness of action by the Union” (Article 26 [13] 2).

Regarding matters pertaining to the CFSP, in Lisbon as in the Constitutional Treaty the new HR-FASP would have the right, along with the Commission, to submit joint proposals to the Council for CFSP issues. A new addition in Lisbon was that:

The common foreign and security policy is subject to specific rules and procedures. It shall be defined and implemented by the European Council and the Council acting unanimously, except where the Treaties provide otherwise (Lisbon Treaty Article 24 [11] 1).

The specific reference to the importance of the Council in CFSP matters was another way of ensuring that these issues remained primarily in the control of the Member States, thereby to some extent halting the move towards giving increasing foreign policy power to the EP and the Commission. But despite this, the Commission and the EP continue to participate in other ways. In particular, the HR-FASP would be one of 27 Commissioners and would be selected by QMV of European Council and which would then be subject to a vote of approval by the EP, along with the President of the Commission.

### ***9.3.2 The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy***

As noted in Article I-28 of the Constitutional Treaty and Article 13a of the Lisbon Treaty, the Minister would conduct the CFSP and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), using all the instruments at his or her disposal and consequently seemingly addressing a number of issues that needed to be solved for EU foreign policy to be taken seriously. The HR-FASP would be both the Council's representative for CFSP and one of the Commission's Vice-Presidents. Effectively responsible for the conduct of the Union's CFSP and as such would have the right to *initiate* in both foreign policy and security and defence matters and *implement* that policy under a mandate from the Council of Ministers, and *ensure implementation* of European decisions adopted by the European Council and the Council of Ministers. Enabling this office was regarded as a way to “end the potentially (but not so far) difficult competition between the High Representative and the External Relations

Commissioner” (Hill, 2003, p. 1).

Many commentators have addressed the issue of how the person in question would be physically and mentally able to cope with such a huge task. Hill has expressed scepticism on the possibility of combining the two roles, and notes the importance of the EEAS in relation to the double-hatted role:

If the Minister of Foreign Affairs finds that s/he cannot construct a foreign service with which to work effectively, or that even progress in that respect simply produces heightened competition with national services then s/he will be reduced to the level of one of the EU’s Special Representatives, wondering alone in purgatory while the real action, for good or ill, takes place elsewhere (*ibid*, p. 2).

In other words, the proposals would need to be implemented with great sensitivity and care. Others have also warned of the possibility that even if they are implemented, they do not mean an automatic solution to EU foreign policy woes:

In any case, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy is unlikely to provide the magical solution to all the EU’s foreign policy woes...while the new function might facilitate policy making and the ability to employ the whole range of EU instruments, his or her capacity to act will still hinge on the mandate he or she receives from the Council, and on the ability of the Council to adopt decisions (Keukeleire *et al*, 2008, p. 81).

One Council official warned against placing too much pressure on the new role, stating that “it is not a panacea for all the problems” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels). Hill (2003), similarly, recommends lowering the expectations placed on the EEAS and its minister. One striking problem which commentators have picked up on centres around the lack of detail about how functions are to be divided between the European Council President and the Foreign Affairs Minister. According to Crowe (2005, p. 2), the new minister:

[R]uns the risk of schizophrenia in triple-hatted accountability to the council which he chairs and leads, to the Commission of which he will be the Vice-President responsible for external affairs; and to the President of the European Council who will represent the EU abroad.

Another concern related to the potential of this new position to compromise the collegial nature of the Commission. This was acknowledged by one interviewee:

Some of the questions which were raised in the Convention about

how can someone, bound by collegiality in the Commission, support the proposals coming up and at the same time chair a meeting of the Council in which he or she is supposed to facilitate finding agreement or compromise on issues (Council Secretariat official, Brussels).

There have been vigorous debates within the EP about the proposals, demonstrating that the parliament was by no means united on the issue. In the parliamentary debates of 11 May 2005 in Strasbourg, MEP Bastiaan Belder expressed concern about retaining the founding principle that EU institutions operate independently of each other.

The potential benefits of having a key person with an overview and ability to speak on behalf of the EU seems to outweigh any potential erosion of the Commission's collegial nature, as demonstrated by the consensus of the proposals. As a result of this concern, the Constitutional Treaty and the subsequent Lisbon Treaty, have included the provision that in the event of a motion of censure adopted against the Commission by the EP, the Minister would be treated differently, in that he or she must "resign from duties that he or she carries out in the Commission" (Lisbon Treaty Article 9 18 (8)). In this way, the foreign affairs minister would be able to continue undertaking his or her duties as a representative of the Council, effectively allowing for continuity and coherence for the job.

### ***9.3.3 The View from Brussels***

The need for the EU to have a stronger foreign policy profile on the global stage has been consistently supported by EU officials.<sup>101</sup> Because of this, in the interviews conducted in Brussels any objections to the role of the foreign minister were centred mainly on technicalities. In commenting before the Lisbon Treaty emerged, one MEP said:

I'm not keen on the title 'foreign minister', I think that is encroaching on the original concept of the nation state, the sovereign state...I'd rather they didn't call it foreign minister (Charles Tannock, MEP).

The proposed EU Foreign Minister's role has the potential to be immensely influential, especially since it combines the current Council and Commission

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<sup>101</sup> See for example, Chapter Six.

representation in external relations, although there has been some discussion about the importance of having the right personality to take on the role. Chaban, Kelly and Bain (2009) have demonstrated the significance of personality in such high profile positions, like the role of Heads of Commission Delegations abroad. The authors found that personalities who were able to be visible and proactive also seemed to be the ones described as having a good rapport with local policy-makers. Likewise, Van Gerven has noted that this is also important when considering who will become the HR-FASP:

Obviously, much will depend on the personality of the persons who are elected to be President of the Council and of the Commission, including how their relationship will develop (2004, p. 473).

Regarding who has been considered for the job of HR-FASP one respondent noted that:

I was told that (the German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer) had great hopes of becoming the first European foreign minister. It would have been a good choice, he was very popular in Germany (and) in Europe (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Indeed, many believe that personality is almost as important as the post itself. When discussing this role, one EU ambassador made the following comment:

We don't have charismatic leaders anymore and the situation is not that clear anymore, people have forgotten where they came from their own situation... (it is) a pity that Jean Monnet wasn't here, because he was a visionary (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Brian Crowe has also stated the importance of the EU having more effective leaders in Europe. Reflecting Adebahr and Giovanni's comment on the use of the European Union Special Representatives as an example of how the HR-FASP can work in practice (2007), Crowe (2004, p. 2) noted that the Balkan Special Representatives – Lord Carrington, Lord Owen and Carl Bildt, have been important for that conflict. In practice, much will presumably depend upon the individuals involved and their willingness to let the EU Foreign Minister act as the face and telephone number for EU external relations.

In 2009, *The Financial Times* named the former (and last) British governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten as a potential candidate. Whilst Patten noted that he would not

actively seek the position, he would seriously consider it, if asked. Other names which have been put forward as possible candidates include – Wolfgang Schäussel, the former Austrian chancellor, Olli Rehn, the EU enlargement commissioner, and Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, a former NATO secretary-general (Parker, 2009). In October 2009, Rehn has been noted as the favourite and least controversial candidate (Rettman, 2009). Regardless of who gets the task, they will no doubt have big shoes to fill, especially given that the current HR, Javier Solana, has announced his intention to soon retire (Mahony, 2009).

An important question that remains in this context is to whom the EU Foreign Minister should report. This is because of the array of institutions that would be involved with his/her office. The minister will be appointed by the European Council, on approval of the EP (as Vice-President in the Commission). It would seem that the Foreign Minister should be accountable to the executive (i.e. the President of the European Council), but whether this is enough accountability for what has the potential to be a very influential post remains to be seen.

#### ***9.3.4 The European External Action Service***

In order for the new minister to be effective in what seems to be a mammoth task, it was deemed that he/she would need a ministry to help them to carry out their role. For Belgian Ambassador to Singapore Marc Calcoen, the EEAS is important “because you can’t have a foreign minister who can’t do anything...you have to give him these instruments”. At this stage the Ministry has been rather arbitrarily named the European External Action Service would be able to fulfil this function.<sup>102</sup> In spite of the decision to change the foreign minister’s official title, in the Lisbon Treaty the name ‘European External Action Service’ was retained. From a treaty point of view, there was a vague mention of the EEAS in both the Constitutional and the Lisbon Treaty:

In fulfilling his mandate, the (HR-FASP) shall be assisted by a European External Action Service. This service shall work in cooperation with the diplomatic services of the Member States. The organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service

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<sup>102</sup> Grevi and Cameron (2005, p. 3) have posited that it should be called the ‘European Foreign Service’.

shall be established by a decision of the Council. The Council shall act on a proposal from the High Representative after consulting the European Parliament and after obtaining the consent of the Commission (Lisbon Treaty Article 27 [13a] 3 and Constitutional Treaty Article 111-296 3).

It is interesting to note that this is the sole mention of the EEAS in either treaty, and the inclusion remained unchanged with Lisbon. The deliberate refraining from including in either treaty any specific decisions and structure for the EEAS has left many perplexed, including, as we shall see, those currently working directly as European foreign policy representatives, from officials in the Council Secretariat, the Commission, the ECDs, the EP, and Member State diplomats.

The two treaties mention all of the EU institutions in relation to the EEAS, thereby potentially realising Laeken's goal of creating a more supranational and democratic EU. It has been assumed that the EEAS would be made up of representatives from the Council, the Commission, and seconded from Member State foreign services. Therefore, one of the biggest obstacles seems to be how exactly the EEAS would work. What percentage of its workers would come from each institution? This question is looked at in more detail below.

According to the 2005 Joint Progress Report to the European Council, the current ECDs, to be renamed Union Delegations will be an "integral part of the EEAS" and the daily operation of the new Union Delegations will in part be determined by the functional aspects of their staffing (Council of the European Council, 9 June 2005). In taking over the job of the ECD's, the Union Delegations would give the EU a 'presence' in at least 136 countries. Indeed, this has been the assumption made by a majority of the interviewees for this study. For example, one Delegation official to Australia and New Zealand pointed out that: "What is certain is that the existing network of the Commission Delegations would be used". Many of the interviews interspersed references to the EEAS with the term 'Delegation', with no clear differentiation between the two. For example, in one discussion an MEP noted: "the heads of these new Delegations, or the heads of this External Action Service".

The differentiation therefore could be compared to a state's foreign ministry and an embassy. There is a distinction between foreign ministries and diplomatic services, with the latter serving as the administrator of the former (Berridge, 2005, p. 5). For example, in Britain, staff are recruited to the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and then sent on missions to various embassies and High Commissions.<sup>103</sup> In this case, the EEAS would be the ministry based in Brussels, and the new Union Delegations the embassies based in third countries. However, there is still further confusion as “there is the question whether all staff at the Union Delegations should be part of the EEAS” (Edwards and Rijiks, 2008, p. 79). In fact, whether or not the Union Delegations will even be part of the EEAS is not certain:

The current European Commission delegations in third countries and international organizations are to be re-titled Union delegations and placed under the authority of the HR, but explicit provision is not made for them to become a part of the EEAS (Whitman, 2008 n.p. [*sic*]).

Nevertheless, it makes sense for the Commission Delegations to provide a base for the Union Delegations, given their immense experience in operating abroad and the resources they currently possess. Moreover, by doing so, a degree of efficiency in the new diplomatic service would be ensured. Indeed, this idea was consistently supported by all interviewees.

### ***9.3.5 The Irish Votes***

It seemed as if history repeated itself with the Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in 2008, whereby the Irish public delivered a surprising and resounding rejection of the Treaty – mirroring the French and Dutch public's vote 3 years earlier. Following Lisbon's rejection, another moratorium was announced, leaving the future of the Lisbon Treaty in serious doubt. An ECD official in Singapore pointed out the illogical constraints of the EU being dictated by one small EU country:

I don't think that the referenda is a good approach because now you have a few million Irish people, out of 500 million, so that 2 percent out of the EU can block what 98 percent have decided and I don't think that it is a legitimate approach. Referenda are more used by citizens to contest their own national government; it should not be allowed to block EU's regional integration.

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<sup>103</sup> If the country in question is part of the Commonwealth.

In light of the Irish ‘no’ vote on the Lisbon Treaty’s ratification, there was still scope for the Union to create an EEAS irrespective of a treaty framework. Without Lisbon, though, it was likely that the EEAS would be more intergovernmental by nature, and thus the usefulness of the ECDs’ experience and personnel may be challenged, which would severely inhibit the EEAS’ capacity to bring a more coherent voice to European public diplomacy.

It seems that all has not been lost with the rejection by the Irish public. Mirroring the developments that occurred for the Nice Treaty, it was decided that Ireland would once again go to the polls in 2009. Some attributed the change of heart in Ireland to the 2008 world economic crisis, which has greatly affected the Irish economy. In addition, 23 countries had already ratified the Treaty. Perhaps luckily for the future of the European Union, the second Irish vote resulted in a convincing 67 percent approval of the treaty. Subsequently, Poland proceeded with its own ratification process. This means that the EU is now only waiting on the Czech Republic where both houses of the Parliament have passed the Treaty, but still requires the approval of the President, Vaclav Klaus.

## **9.4 INSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLES**

### ***9.4.1 The Council and the Commission***

As yet, there has been no consensus on what form the EEAS should take. Some exceptions however, are that as with normal foreign ministry practice, “there should be regular rotation, no national quotas, equal status, nomination based on merit, and common selection procedures” (Lieb and Maurer 2007). What has been stipulated in both Treaties is who should be involved and this includes the Commission, the Council, Member States and the newly created HR-FASP (see Table 9.1). If the EEAS is to improve the external capability and communication of the EU, many issues need to be addressed. Key among these is to ensure that problems surrounding inefficiency and incoherence are improved. This would mean firmly organising institutional competences from the very beginning, in order to prevent problems arising at a later date.

**Table 9.2: The Proposed Employees of the EEAS**

Commission (especially ECDs)	Member State foreign policy resources	Council resources	HR-FASP	Local employees
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Source: Lisbon Treaty

Although many commentators have looked at some of the potential impacts and implications of the EEAS, the personal points of view of the deliverers of EU foreign policy have remained largely ignored. Addressing this dearth, the following section outlines the views of these very representatives. The section begins by looking at the controversial divisions between the likely role that the Council and the Commission will take and then moves to a prediction of the likely EP involvement in the proposals, before finishing with some predictions about what is likely to happen in the future.

Perhaps it is because of the vague nature of the Constitutional Treaty and Lisbon Treaty regarding the EEAS that most commentators have shied away from addressing the real issues of the Service. That is, all innovative ‘big ideas’ aside, how will the EEAS work in reality? At this stage, there are certainly no clear conclusions and instead a number of competing views abound. This was noted by an ECD official to Australia and New Zealand who noted that “an awful lot has been left open for the Member States and the Commission, the Council and the Parliament to discuss”.

One pressing issue requiring resolution lies in the competences of the Council and the Commission. This is crucial because how the EU is structured will have a direct impact on the nature of the EEAS and consequently how it delivers on its tasks, and thus its capacity to meet its expectations. Heuser (2005, p. 1) has noted that “[t]he EEAS has become the scene of a new struggle for power and influence between member states and EU institutions”. For one interviewed Council official, the matter was seen as pressing, with no easy, obvious answer; “How can we have a balance of staff between the two institutions” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels)?

Rather bleakly, according to one sceptic, the ‘institutional struggles’ surrounding the establishment of the EEAS are “seemingly insoluble” (Heuser, 2005, p. 1). Although the Laeken Declaration aimed at removing the intergovernmental structure of EU foreign policy, the amendments in the Lisbon Treaty have made this more difficult to achieve. Furthermore, the fact that both the Council and the Commission currently have their own roles to play in foreign policy makes the task ascribing who will be responsible for what in the EEAS even more difficult. According to Korski (2008b, n.p):

Debates about the EU's new foreign policy bureaucracy have turned into a turf-protecting, entitlement-securing battle between the Commission and the Council, as both seek to maintain their institutional responsibilities and staff prerogatives.

The interviewees for this dissertation supported the notion that there is a lack of consensus about the exact form of the EEAS. A Council official noted that “people thought it would tilt towards the Council, others thought that it would tilt towards the Commission” (Council Secretariat Official, Brussels).

The role of the Commission is problematic too – due to the sheer number of officials the Commission has working in the field of foreign policy, coupled with the fact that, at present, the Commission has a number of different directorates, all working in the broad field of foreign policy. In addition to DG Relex, there are the DGs for EuropeAid, Development, Trade and ECHO as well as the geographical desks and others that are more general like DGs JLS (justice, freedom, security) environment, energy and climate change. The list is not exhaustive however, especially if the public diplomacy of the Union is analysed, as this would then also include the Commission’s Directorate General for Education and Culture, whose mandate includes facilitating scholarships for persons from third countries, as well as DG Communication. This raises the question about which Directorate Generals will work directly within the framework of the EEAS. Duke has outlined that there are many options: “The EEAS could assume either a rather modest form or, along the lines just outlined, it may emerge as a major institutional player” (Duke, 2004b, p. 5).

One report posited that the EEAS should incorporate all posts from the external relations department of the European Commission, excluding trade and development

and humanitarian aid (EEPA, retrieved 06.08.2008). This idea has been supported by an MEP who noted that development cooperation and humanitarian aid should be given independence (European Parliament, 2005a).

Some interviewees felt that one disadvantage of the Commission was its relative lack of experience in matters of 'real foreign policy'; in other words, its lack of skills in first pillar matters. Although in this regard, one respondent was quite positive about the role that the Commission could play as although the Commission's experience is located in the second pillar of the EU, "at the same time the Commission also has a lot of insight into the first pillar aspects of external policy" (European Commission official, Brussels). This is because it is charged to be "fully associated" with CFSP.

According to one Commission Official in Brussels, the experience of the Commission in a myriad of foreign policy fields means that "Europe needs the Commission to bring it all together". The maximalist and minimalist debate, explained in Chapter Three, extends also to the Commission itself: "There were a lot of people in the Commission who believed that the DGs who should be transferred should have been minimal. I thought all of the foreign policy DGs should have been transferred" (former Commission official, Brussels).

Although this maximalist approach would avoid task duplication, a former colleague of this particular respondent thought that "trade and development should not be included, and not all geography desks" (Commission official, Brussels). Likewise, according to Brian Crowe, there was no need to have one single entity dealing with all aspects of external relations. Member States have often organised their foreign ministries so that trade and development are left in separate ministries, so this could be done likewise at an EU level (Euractiv, 17.03.2005). According to the EP, the EEAS should not mean that the Commission Directorates General should be stripped of "their external relations responsibilities" (Europe Information, 2005).

There is also debate about what DGs of the Council should be involved. Duke, for example, is certain that DG-E, under Robert Cooper, and the Policy Unit would be involved, but the fate of the other units, including the military staff and the Situation Centre remains unclear (Duke, 2004b, p. 5). Obviously the inclusion of security in the

system would be useful in improving the EU's capabilities. However, the EU would need to be careful about how it is incorporated if it wishes to retain its image as a soft power, a point which is unclear at this moment.

The debates about the institutions become ever more complex when the division of labour between the Commission and the Council is considered. It has been noted that the biggest obstacle to implementation is the transfer of powers from the Council towards the Commission because "that is a question to which there was no reply because the negotiations didn't go far enough" (Cesira Daniello, Council Secretariat, Brussels). One academic paper which considered the debate noted that the Council Secretariat is concerned about how it will be able to have a meaningful impact on the EEAS given its relatively small policy unit, whilst the Commission "fears some kind of intergovernmental contamination" (Lieb, and Maurer, 2007 p. 67). The possibility of this happening has been rejected by one of the interviewees who noted that "some of them (in the Council) saw this as an opportunity to take over external relations as a whole" (former Commission official, Brussels). According to former MEP and Finnish foreign minister Alexander Stubb, the biggest question surrounding the EEAS is who will control the EU's foreign policy – the Commission or the Council (European Parliament, 2005a)? Another key question, according to Stubb, concerned the perception that the Council are more advanced in their preparations than the Commission, and finally the MEP also expressed unease about the possibility of a separate institution emerging (*ibid*).

A senior official at the Council Secretariat pointed out that the vagueness of the proposals in the Treaties leaves room for concern about the imbalance of resources in foreign policy between the relatively moderately staffed Council and the large number of people working in the Commission's external relations. They noted that "the people who work in the Commission Delegations abroad, maybe the total comes to five or six thousand, maybe more. Here [at the Council, there are] 300 people working on foreign policy". This comment also indirectly refers to the advantage for the ECDs in being positioned in 136 locations world wide.

In reaction to the perceived threat by the Council that the Commission would take over EU foreign affairs in a more sustained and institutionalised manner than it already does, one of the representatives of the Commission responded by saying:

I think there are 1200 Commission officials working in the 130 Delegations. But I think a substantial part are dealing with Community competence issues, like trade (Luc Vandebon, Commission official, Brussels [*sic*]).

In fact, an ECD official in Singapore pointed out that the argument by the Council official could also work the other way:

If you put all Member States together, not only with people from the Council, but all of those working in their various Ministries of Foreign Affairs, then we would have a different position on the other side.

Another Commission respondent believed that third countries and their representatives do not ask themselves whether a particular aspect of EU policy derives from the first or second pillar, but rather what are the implications of a particular EU approach for bilateral relations. Thus:

As and when the new institutional arrangements under the Lisbon Treaty are introduced, the question of whether an official originates from the Council Secretariat, the Commission or a Member State will not be an issue affecting the conduct of external relations (Peter Dun, Commission official, Brussels).

This statement emphasises one of the major reasons for the establishment of the EEAS at all – to enable the EU to speak with one voice, and thus improve the way it communicates and implements policy. It also supports the view by Howorth and Le Gloannec (2007, p. 32) that “[i]t is not a question of inter-governmental *versus* supranational, but of the most practical way to make them work in harmony”.

The interviewed Member State ambassadors and diplomats were also asked what they thought about this so-called institutional struggle. The result was overwhelmingly that they did not feel qualified or mandated to speak about this matter. Although one did emphasise the importance of the Council’s control in the short term:

In the immediate term I would say the Council and Member States would have and should have control of a European government, because ... national governments will not allow that the control to go completely to Brussels (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Others were vaguer in their answers, either having no comment at all or choosing to leave these matters up to their colleagues back home, for example:

That's an internal debate that is between the institutions and that's something that will be ultimately decided in Brussels (Member State diplomat, Australia and New Zealand).

Judging from the answers given above as well as the relevant literature, it is clear that the division, sometimes edging on competition, between the Commission and the Council is not, and will not be, easily solved. Perhaps the creation of the double-hatted minister will make some in-roads into easing this conflict. The way the EEAS is organised in Brussels is only half of the problem. A pressing question for Member States and third countries is what will happen to their diplomatic representation abroad? This debate is addressed in detail in Chapter Ten.

#### ***9.4.2 Parliamentary Involvement***

The EP has consistently supported the EEAS proposals in the Constitutional Treaty and Lisbon Treaty. The Constitutional Treaty was overwhelmingly approved in the European Parliament with 500 votes in favour to 137 votes against, with 40 abstentions (European Parliament, 2008). Subsequently, in May 2005 the EP passed a resolution that the “EEAS should be as far as possible part of the Commission, in order to allay fears that the new service will follow the agenda of the Council of Ministers and marginalise the views of Ministers of the European Parliament (MEPs)” (European Report, 2005a).

The EP acknowledged that the “establishment of the EEAS will help to avoid overlapping, inefficiency, and wasteful use of resources in the area of the Union’s external action” (European Parliament, 2004, p. 5). According to MEP Andrew Duff, the establishment of the EEAS is important because “greater efficiency will not only project the interests of the Union more effectively across the globe, but will also percolate up to analysis and planning level in Brussels (European Parliament, 2005a). Arguably this could be interpreted as the EP’s reasoning behind supporting the proposals being focused on the need for the EU to improve areas related to its ‘expectations-capabilities gap’.

Although there have been debates about the construction of the EEAS in the EP, most of these debates have addressed only minor concerns. One MEP however, was quite forceful in his derision of the proposals:

[T]he whole issue of a common Community diplomacy is one about which I and my national party have serious reservations... All of this is designed to create a more coercive and binding common foreign and security policy, threatening full UK policy independence in the field of foreign policy (*ibid*).

The debate surrounding Commission and Council involvement in the new service has been strong. Less prominent have been the discussions surrounding the parliamentary involvement. As noted in Chapter Three, one of the arguments supporting the so-called ‘democratic deficit’ has centred on the lack of power that the EP has in relation to the unelected Commission and Council. Although the EP has become more empowered in recent years (Maurer *et al*, 2005), in areas of foreign policy budgetary powers are the only concrete way for the EP to exert influence (Thym, 2006, p. 109).

There is still a strong intergovernmental tendency in EU foreign policy. At this stage, the EP’s only involvement in the EEAS proposals will be to scrutinise the budget (European Parliament, 2005a). Barbé (2001, pp. 49, 54-55) has stated that the EU has ignored the ‘accountability’ aspect of the CFSP, whilst focusing on its deficiencies in the areas of coherence, visibility and continuity.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, there are a number of reasons why Member States purposely omit the EP from participating in a meaningful way in decision making. Firstly, foreign policy is, by its very nature, secretive and using the EP would make the process more time-consuming and inefficient. Secondly, they are worried that the EP’s emphasis on human rights and democracy would interfere with CFSP work (*ibid*), thereby this is an argument against the EU being driven by a primary drive to exert normative influence. Indeed, it has been noted that the “EP plays an important role in constructions of (NPE)” (Pace, 2007, p. 1049).

The officials from within the institutions in Brussels<sup>105</sup> were asked whether they thought the EP should be involved in the creation and running of the EEAS. For the parliamentarians, there seemed to be a very balanced view on the matter. One was

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<sup>104</sup> These latter principles have been analysed at length in this thesis.

<sup>105</sup> In Zealand, some institutional questions were asked without much reaction. The question was subsequently dropped for the Singapore leg.

quite happy to leave decisions in this field up to the Member States, stating: “At the end of the day, foreign policy has to be the ultimate prerogative of the Member States and they need to drive the agenda, we can be consulted”. In contrast, another noted that “at the moment it is the area where we are the weakest...and parliament is keen to get its hands on foreign policy” (David Martin, MEP). A further respondent noted the importance of the HR-FASP and the heads of the Union Delegations being accountable to the EP, claiming that “they should at least once in a while come to the parliament and be challenged” (Charles Tannock, MEP).

From the Council perspective, a consensus emerged which indicated that the EP would not be involved in the EEAS. This was noted most clearly by Brian Crowe who stated:

No, I don't think the parliament should be much involved in the EEAS, whose job is to be accountable only to the High Representative. It is the High Representative, not the EEAS, who answers variously to the Council, the Commission and, outside the CFSP, the EP (former head of the External and Political Military Affairs, Council Secretariat).

Another respondent agreed, noting that “this is the prerogative of the executive it is nothing to do with the parliament” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels). The interviewees from the Commission largely followed the same ideas as the Council on this matter, with one noting that:

Even in the new treaty has not been given any additional power. But at the moment it is certainly not adequately informed, I mean, Solana is supposed to consult them every 6 months or so, but again, that's more about information, rather than power (former Commission official, Brussels).

Even if EP involvement in the EEAS was not necessarily positively viewed, it was acknowledged by the respondents that “it's highly likely that they (the EP) will want a greater influence over external policy.” (Peter Dun, Commission official, Brussels). Another Commission official supported the view that the EU and the EEAS would benefit from an increased democratic accountability and legitimacy, stating that “the EU needs more democracy. At present, diplomats enjoy freedom from scrutiny and this needs to change”. Finally, a belief was expressed from within the Commission that it would take time for the EP to be considered a more serious contender in this

policy area but that it would eventually happen, with this respondent going as far as saying: “In 20 years parliament will be the most powerful institution (in the EU)”.

## 9.5 FUTURE PREDICTIONS

As the last ten years of EU constitution-building in the EU have shown, the proposals to introduce the HR-FASP and the EEAS will not go away in a hurry. Indeed, the various interviews, conducted throughout the ratification process have demonstrated an overall belief that the proposals will go ahead. Largely confirming this, an EP report has noted that: “Even under the law as it stands, it would be permissible to merge those bodies or convert them into joint Council-Commission representations” under provisions in the Maastricht and Nice Treaties (European Parliament, 2004, p. 3/9) (although this seems unlikely at this stage). Although Ireland and Poland have recently approved the treaty, the Czech Republic still needs to do so. The interviewees were asked the question: ‘Without the ratification of the constitution, what do you think will happen in the future for the EEAS? Do you see a time frame?’

It has been highlighted that although “it’s something that the Union needs” (Member State diplomat to Australia and New Zealand), the timeframe mentioned by the practitioners varied between: “The medium scale rather than the short term” (Member State diplomat to Australia and New Zealand), to: “It won’t be before 2010 or 12, the opposition is not strong” (Member State Ambassador to New Zealand). Another said it would be at least “five to ten years” (Member State Ambassador to New Zealand). Commenting at the end of 2005, in the New Zealand interviews, there was caution expressed based on the French and Dutch rejections, for example: “I think for a few years we think we have to wait a little bit. Because we have to study exactly why French people said no” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand). Another pointed out that:

This is one of the particular problems, I think, one of the reasons why the constitution failed. They didn’t see how they were involved, what the advantages were (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

In contrast, one Singaporean respondent was entirely confident about the proposals going ahead without total Member State ratification of Lisbon, stating clearly: “It will

definitely happen” (Daniel Blockert, Swedish diplomat, Singapore). Again, the emphasis on the treaty was highlighted by the following response: “If the Lisbon Treaty comes into force, it will go ahead...then it will have to be implemented rapidly” (Ambassador Marc Calcoen). Others were a little more cautious about making any predictions in light of the Irish Lisbon Treaty rejection, with one, for example, saying: “I am only as confident as the voters in Ireland are confident” (Polish Ambassador, Singapore).

Within the Brussels institutions, one Commission employee thought that: “I think it will go ahead” (Commission Official), and an MEP noted that it:

I think that its happening anyway, and we may not call Solana or his successor a foreign minister...The Commission and the Council secretariat are working much more closely together.

Within the Council there was more caution displayed:

It is difficult to make predictions. I think there will be a movement in any case even without a Constitutional Treaty towards strengthening existing structures and making them more political (Cesira Daniello, Council Secretariat).

Judging then from the differing answers displayed in the answers to the question of timeframes, there were no specific trends apparent, and it seems that no one is at present able to draw definite conclusions about what may happen to the EEAS proposals in the future. However, it is clear from the answers that there is shared understanding about the issues at stake and that the EEAS would have the potential to dramatically improve the EU’s foreign policy capability.

## **9.6 CONCLUSION**

Drawing on the debates and discussions presented in this chapter, a number of points become apparent. Clearly there is still much to be officially decided before any proposals towards establishing a European diplomatic corps can come into force and in particular the institutional arrangements must be clarified. Although there has been ongoing work on this question throughout 2009, as yet no official statements have been released to further clarify the situation. Although early stages of the proposals indicated a move away from intergovernmentalism, at this stage it seems highly likely that the Council and Member States will gain more control. Furthermore, the

Commission clearly believes that it should be given a strong role in the new service, but the Commission may need to be careful about what role it undertakes given the strong attachment Member States and their citizens hold to foreign policy.

As the name ‘Union Minister for Foreign Affairs’ was changed in the Lisbon Treaty, this may be viewed that the words *foreign* and *minister* was deemed to be too threatening for the EU public. Nevertheless, EU officials interviewed for this thesis clearly supported the need for a strong personality to undertake the mammoth task as head the EEAS. Although with the Irish approval of Lisbon, media discussions have resumed about possible candidates, at present, these have been over-shadowed by speculation over Tony Blair becoming the new EU President.

The Treaties themselves did make *explicit* reference to NPE as being a driving factor behind the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties, but this seemed to be less important than an emphasis on improving EU capability. Although the EP has in the past been a prominent actor in the promotion of NPE, none of the debates or documents surrounding the EEAS made any reference to these values. Instead, the EP has tended to focus more on EU international capability, including the current inefficiency of the Union’s external action. Improving the democratic legitimacy of the Union is obviously a pressing issue. Therefore, increasing the EP’s involvement in foreign policy would be a way to improve the EU’s status in the eyes of its citizens. This is more pertinent given the prominence that it seems to be gaining in foreign news media in countries like New Zealand and Singapore (see Chapter Seven). Although the EP has been growing in importance in recent years, there does not seem to be an overwhelming desire to give them any real control in these new foreign policy initiatives. This could prove to be a costly omission for the EU if it wishes to be seen internally as a legitimate entity. The potential of the proposals to impact on the EU’s legitimacy abroad will be discussed in the following chapter.

Although it is acknowledged that many of the comments made here are outdated, including discussions focused on a possible timeline for the proposals, at present, the EEAS proposals are still in limbo awaiting the final decision of the Czech President. Nevertheless, the discussion surrounding the future of the proposals with or without Member State ratification is telling. Like with many of the other findings in this

chapter and the following one, information, clarity and cohesion about the future of Europe is still lacking.

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## CHAPTER TEN:

### THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON EU REPRESENTATION ABROAD

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By situating the debate about the establishment of the European External Action Service within two complementary theories, a number of issues have been raised and analysed regarding how the EU currently conducts its foreign policy, how it is perceived both internally and externally, as well as what the proposals for change actually are. Of particular interest in this section are the *pragmatic* issues surrounding the construction of the EEAS and how it may change EU representation in third countries. Because of the complex and vague nature of the proposals, a variety of viewpoints have been taken into consideration. While this chapter focuses primarily on the practical realities of EU public diplomacy, it does so through the lens of theory.

#### 10.1 MEMBER STATE DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

The process of European integration concentrated at first almost entirely on an economic process, with the postscript of European Political Cooperation (EPC) of the 1970s and 1980s based only on a very loose set of rules and protocols. In later years, although the Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty made attempts at integrating the foreign policy of Member States, a number of constrictions remained that the Lisbon Treaty sought to improve upon. The foreign policy initiatives of Member States remain of vital national importance. Should the EEAS come into force as the new foreign representative arm of the EU, this would have the effect of “posing fundamental questions for the role of national foreign ministries, embassies and diplomatic staff” (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 10 – 11). How effective the new service will be is dependent on the support of the Member States. With the creation of Union Delegations, one Dutch MEP has argued that up to a quarter of national embassies would be dispensed with (*ibid*, p. 15). For Rayner, Member States should view the EEAS as an *opportunity* to consolidate their resources. According to Rayner:

The new status of EU ‘embassies’ should be treated as an opportunity by member states to redirect scarce national foreign ministry

resources to high priority national interests and transfer the common EU foreign policy progressively to new EU embassies such as has already happened in trade negotiations (2005, p. 24 [*sic*]).

It is becoming apparent that the costs of running the separate diplomatic services of 27 EU Member States around the world is out of proportion to their benefit, given that the Union as a whole, including Member State representatives, has four times the number of diplomatic staff than the USA but it does not match it in terms of visibility or influence. The current lack of an EU global diplomatic presence has been well documented and has been supported by the findings of this thesis.

In addition, worldwide, national foreign ministries have been reflecting on how they operate. On joining the EU, Member States face pressure to open and maintain more embassies, (in part due to the strain of holding the rotating Presidency). However, within the EU scarce resources are becoming increasingly a problem for Member States (Duke, 2002, p. 856). This means that for some, their support of the proposals may be a necessity given the potential of the EEAS to cut the costs of maintaining national representatives abroad. With the EEAS, Member States would be able to refocus valuable resources and the EU would increase its presence and improve its image around the world.

EU foreign policy practices in New Zealand are a prime example of this. A number of European Union embassies have been forced to cut costs and even close over the last decade. The Belgian embassy, for example, closed in 2002. Others, however, have opened as they have joined the European 'club'. Poland, a recent EU entrant, opened their NZ embassy in early 2000. These two points demonstrate that the EU embassies in New Zealand face the same pressures as others in the EU.

In contrast, the Spanish Foreign Service seems to be a unique case, as evidenced by their relationship with both New Zealand and Singapore. A full embassy was opened in Singapore in 2004, and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009, the Spanish King and Queen opened an embassy in Wellington. One suggestion for this recent emergence of the Spanish Foreign Service has been that Spain wishes to be taken seriously in the world (personal correspondence).

## 10.2 THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE EEAS ON MEMBER STATES

From an EU perspective, as 2009 draws to a close, the events leading to the Lisbon Treaty demonstrate a real and persistent desire by European leaders to improve the international capability of the Union, which has been sometimes linked to a desire to be a stronger normative force in the world. How will having a European External Action Service on the ground impact on Member State embassies? Will the new Union representatives be able to compliment Member States' work, or even take over the function of the traditional embassy? Given the obscurity of the current proposals, the results of interviews about these issues are enlightening and some conclusions about how the EEAS may function can be taken from them. Again, the vague nature of the actual proposals must be noted, as well as the year in which the comments were made. One ECD official pointed out that "it would need a couple of years of fine tuning on how it would really work in practice to have a common external service, and nobody can yet guess how it will work in practice".

An interesting finding to emerge from the interview responses was that both the Singapore and New Zealand-based EU Member State diplomats held similar views regarding the practical aspects of setting up the EEAS, thus demonstrating that it will possible to arrive at an 'EU view' of the proposals,<sup>106</sup> something that is essential if the EU is going to improve on the perception that it is united. At first glance, the EEAS was not foreseen to make a substantial impact in Singapore largely because of the relatively neutral status of the country in question, and the focus there on the financial sector. The Belgian Ambassador noted that, "I think that in a country like Singapore it won't change that much...I think that it is a mistake to say that for bilateral embassies it will have a huge impact". Such a view supports Bale's (2004, p. 53) comment that bilateral relations are still of vital importance to Member States.

The above statement raises a number of further questions, among these, what is considered vitally important for foreign ministries based in third countries? When the proposal of bringing in joint European Union embassies is first mentioned, the first question that tends to spring to mind is — will it replace the role of traditional

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<sup>106</sup> This could be attributed to the EU socialisation process, see below.

embassies? With this in mind, the respondents were asked the question: “What does your embassy do, that the EEAS *could not* do”?

In the New Zealand interviews, all of the countries interviewed were of the opinion that their own embassy would not be at risk of closing down, although the larger embassies were much more open to staff cuts than the more modestly-sized ones. This is not surprising given that some embassies had only one or two personnel. According to the interviews, bilateral international relationships are still viewed as important for the members of the European Union, in spite of the number of steps taken to increase multilateral cooperation, with one diplomat stating that, “everything that is bilateral of course [must remain with our embassy], which is a very large part of our work”, and another replied that, “of course you have the bilateral side, and this will still be the part of embassies so that is not going to change much”. This was echoed by a New Zealand based respondent who stated that “even if we get a real common European foreign policy, the national interests will not disappear”. The latter remark highlights the continuing tradition of the London Report which although established a formal mechanism and commonality for dealing with third countries, emphasised that traditional bilateral relationships would not be compromised (Rummel, 1988, p. 124).

Another commentator stressed that his country would need to retain an embassy in New Zealand for communication reasons because all individual nations need to have a diplomatic network in order to have a ‘voice’ (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). Thus, based on these responses, it can be seen that bilateral relations remain as important as ever and are likely to remain so, regardless of what changes are made to the European diplomatic structure. What do the respondents view as being important vital work for their embassies? The answers were insightful and constructive. In addition to the emphasis on bilateral relations and communication, three other aspects were highlighted and discussed — consular responsibility, trade and culture.

### ***10.2.1 Consular Affairs***

The potential ability of the EEAS and the Union Delegations to take over work in consular affairs seemed to be prominent in the minds of the respondents. EU citizens

currently receive some form of consulate assistance in third countries, in particular, via Article 20 of the Maastricht Treaty which states that:

[E]very citizen of the union shall ... be entitled to protection by the diplomatic or consular authorities of any member state, on the same conditions as nationals of that member state.

However, there are no legal rules on implementing this principle, as evidenced by the experience of several MEP's during the Mumbai bombings, who turned to other Member State embassies for assistance but were turned away (Runner, 2008). At present, confusion also reigns about the current role of ECDs in third countries. A survey showed that 17 percent of the respondents incorrectly believed that they could seek diplomatic protection from them (as cited in Frattini, 29.05.2007) when in fact their role is primarily in the areas of aid and trade.

The idea of providing consulate protection for the Member States of the Union has also been discussed outside of the context of the Lisbon Treaty. Franco Frattini, the European Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security made a speech to a public hearing on the rights of EU citizens to have effective consular protection in third countries. Importantly, he noted, "I personally attach significant importance to reinforcing the right to consular protection, which will in turn strengthen Union citizenship" (*ibid*).

Indeed, it seems that improving the diplomatic protection of EU citizens is an especially pressing issue for the Commission and was highlighted in a Green Paper on 'diplomatic and consular protection of Union citizens in third countries' (European Commission, 2006b). As Figure 10.1 demonstrates, there are many places in the world where an EU diplomatic presence either missing completely, or inadequate.

**Table 10.1 Third Countries with Inadequate EU Diplomatic Presence**

<b>Third countries in which no Member State is represented</b>	<b>Third countries in which one Member State is represented</b>	<b>Third countries in which two Member States are represented</b>
The Bahamas	Antigua and Barbuda	Chad
Bhutan	Barbados	Equatorial Guinea
Dominica	Belize	Madagascar
Kiribati	Central African Republic	Malawi
Lichtenstein	The Comoros	Mauritius
Marshall Islands	Djibouti	Santa Lucia
Micronesia	Gambia	The Seychelles
Nauru	Grenada	Sierra Leone
Republic of Palau	Guyana	Surinam
St Christopher and Nevis	Lesotho	Niger
Tuvalu	Liberia	
The Maldives	Monaco	
The Marshall Islands	Sao Tomé and Príncipe	
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Solomon Islands	
Somalia	East Timor	
Swaziland	Vanuatu	
Tonga		
Western Samoa		
Total: 19	17	12

(Source: Europa website, 05/12/2007)

Hocking and Spence (2005, p. 11) have asserted that because visa matters and legal proposals are increasingly the subject of Commission-led discussions, it makes sense for that institution to be the starting point for the delivery of visa policy and visas. An EU consular service could potentially take on the role of administering national visa services. Thereby simplifying and reducing the consular staffing needs of foreign ministries abroad. This means that Member States could request that Union Delegations assume consular roles in countries where they no longer have the resources to retain separate representatives (Rayner, 2005, p.25). However, as demonstrated in the comments below, this notion is not universally accepted and could prove to be divisive for Member States.

Even if the EEAS were to be constructed on a minimalist framework<sup>107</sup> it would still have the potential to cover consular affairs, such as visa and passport administration for all EU citizens (Hocking and Spence, 2005, p. 11). Hocking and Spence base this assumption on the practice of Schengen which makes national visa arrangements in the EU meaningless, and thus, the authors argue, paves the way for European consular and visa policies (*ibid*). Consistent with this, the interviewees repeatedly used the Schengen agreement<sup>108</sup> as a reference point when speaking about consular responsibilities, as an example of the successful transference of these powers within some European countries (despite Schengen being outside of the realm of the EU). One interviewee noted that “consular affairs, which is where there has been the most progress towards creating a unified EU approach, [is where] we have progressed the most” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). As some Member States already cooperate in consular matters because of Schengen, one respondent noted that “the field where I feel that we are closer and the cooperation has gone farther, is in consulate affairs. In consular affairs we have Schengen” (Member State Diplomat, Singapore). An Ambassador supported this view when he stated the following:

I think that consular is now already covered by ...the Schengen agreement, which has been a way of moving forward in terms of unifying the consular visas (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Based on this positive experience of Schengen, many respondents were also positive about the role the Union Delegations could play in the future. For example, a diplomat in Singapore pointed out that “in principle, because of the harmonisation of policy issues in Schengen we could think of setting up a consulate section for certain visas”.

Yet another respondent noted that:

We could have one singular consulate in any country on behalf of all the other Member States who are in the Schengen. This is one of the examples of how the foreign services could be integrated (Polish Ambassador, Singapore).

Within the European Council, one commentator noted that there is a real possibility of the EEAS offering consulate support by stating, “One aspect people are looking at, for

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<sup>107</sup> See Chapter Three.

<sup>108</sup> The Schengen agreement is an agreement among European countries, that allows for common policy on the temporary entry of persons. Not all EU Member States are part of it, and it includes some non-EU members.

example, is consulate protection, which in that case, could represent countries which do not have missions” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels). This was echoed in Singapore where the Danish Ambassador thought that the EEAS could represent countries not already present in a third country. “What I see”, the Ambassador noted, “is the value that we might get embassies where we don’t have them”. This idea would be particularly important for smaller and newer Member States who have limited resources for conducting diplomacy in comparison with the larger and more established states. But this in itself raises the question, as one academic has asked — “[w]ould it be the same service for all EU citizens, or acceptable to have some paying a higher price and getting a higher service?” (Rayner, 2005, p. 26). In other words, this question raises the possibility of a multi-way Europe, something which may impinge on an image of coherence and solidarity of the EU.

Despite the consensus among some officials in Singapore, New Zealand and Brussels, on the other side of the spectrum were those who viewed the importance of keeping consular activities as strictly a Member State prerogative. For instance, one Singapore-based diplomat argued that, “the Schengen system is far from united and perfect”. Another noted that “it is very difficult [to coordinate consular activities], just because of the way that consulate issues work — the level of expertise that is needed”.

Other respondents were unsure about the consular issue in general, and referred to the problems relating to the current competence of the Commission and its possible involvement in the new system. One interviewee argued that the problem lies in the fact that “the Commission has no competence in consular matters” (Commission Official, Brussels). What also needs to be taken into account is the complexity of the responsibilities involved in undertaking these competences, not to mention coping with the many languages of the Union in a potentially single ‘embassy’ (Rayner, 2005, p. 26). The complexity relates to the institutional challenges involved in establishing the EEAS. Even within the Council it was noted that “[Consular Issues are] complicated because there are different legal provisions for different countries” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels).

Combining consulate activities is not a simple process. The Member States have different, and sometimes conflicting, interests in third countries. At this stage,

however, Rayner has argued that consular work would distract the proposed Union Delegations from their core job of “developing and maintaining relations with third countries in the areas of trade, development aid, humanitarian assistance and the development of crisis response capabilities” (Rayner, 2005, p.27). Although it might be possible for the EEAS to take on consular issues, it is viewed by some that this could be “an unnecessary distraction from what the EU’s delegations should be focusing on” (*ibid*).

### ***10.2.2 Trade and Cultural Responsibilities***

Another matter which may prove to be of vital interest to the Member States is how national trade and commercial interests might be affected by the EEAS. Trade matters are complicated because, although the European Union is now represented at a global level at the World Trade Organisation and in other important international fora, bilateral trade is still a vital national interest. The interviewees overwhelmingly believed that *bilateral* trade arrangements would still be paramount to their national diplomatic role, this being despite the New Zealand public perceiving the European Union as a unified, single trade entity (Holland, and Chaban, 2005, p. 30) — a view that was supported by the findings discussed in Chapter Seven. Rayner (2005, p. 27) has supported the idea of the EEAS focusing on trade. Conversely, there is a broad consensus that the service should not have responsibility for trade policy (European Report, 2005b).

Although one New Zealand diplomat noted that, “trade is a common policy so it is mainly up to the European Delegation to discuss about trade”, overwhelmingly, the importance of national trade interests was stressed, as evidenced by the comments below:

“I think that we will always have national interests even if we have a common trade policy” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

“I think that the national diplomatic services would be in the best position to see to their own trade arrangements” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

“It is not the purpose of the EU either to tackle these things (economic and commercial promotion)” (Belgian Ambassador, Singapore).

The emphasis on national trade is understandable. From the interviews it was clear that diplomatic representation in Singapore and New Zealand had been established and remained for a number of reasons — historical ties, a large ex-patriot community, or importantly, financial reasons. It was also noted that Member States often compete with each other in these areas, as pointed out by two Ambassadors: who noted that “our private sector is also competing with the private sector of other European countries” (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore), and “we are competing for the same money” (Danish Ambassador, Singapore).

The promotion of European culture was the third issue viewed as being imperative to individual country interests. It was acknowledged by some respondents that there is such a thing as a European culture. For instance, “of course [an EEAS] can support the European way of life and European culture, because it has a similar culture” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). But others thought that “it can’t be the role of the European delegation to support all cultures and languages” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand). A further respondent noted that national embassies would need to continue to “have a friendship in the country where [they] are” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

Related to this was the importance to national foreign services in promoting people-to-people exchanges. As highlighted in Chapter Eight, exchange programmes are an important part of effective public diplomacy. Should the Union Delegations be established, it would be important for them to actively promote cultural exchanges with third countries such as Singapore and New Zealand. In doing so however, they would have to be careful not to clash or compete with similar programmes implemented by the national foreign ministries. One diplomat cautioned that the EEAS should careful not to “step over the limits or areas where the Member States can actually do it better themselves” (Swedish diplomat, Singapore).

Hence, it is clear that there is a division between the different ‘visions’ of what will happen should the EEAS go ahead — some officials believe that they could concede some ambassadorial tasks to the EEAS, while others stress the need to hold on to their offices. Although the EEAS offers Member States the opportunity to consolidate some of their resources whilst at the same time as potentially increasing the Union’s

influence in the world, it is clear that fine-tuning its role will be a far from simple process. In fact, foreign ministries will not necessarily respond positively to the change because of their own vested interest in maintaining diplomatic representation (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 14). This means that although at first glance the EEAS proposals seem to contradict Bale's (2004, p. 57) belief that there is little prospect of EU embassies opening in the near future, the reluctance of Member States to accept that their embassies may be at risk of closing actually supports Bale's prediction.

Although all three issues noted above have been the subject of much debate, there is nevertheless some belief and willingness by many of those interviewed that the EU as a whole should gain some or all competence in these fields. What stands out about these issues is that they are, already covered to an extent by another party or arrangement, be it the Commission in trade and (limited) cultural promotion or the special case of Schengen in consular issues. Therefore, it could be postulated that because authority in these areas is already subject to other arrangements, the Member States may find the changes easier to comprehend.

### **10.3 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE UNION DELEGATIONS?**

It is clear that there is still a need in both New Zealand and Singapore for bilateral embassies to remain. Given the responses discussed above, what does this mean for the future of the European External Action Service? Rayner has imagined a European diplomatic corps which concentrates on trade, development aid, humanitarian assistance, and the development of crisis response capabilities (2005, p. 27). If this is indeed the case, because New Zealand and Singapore's relationship with the EU only has need of relationships in the first of these areas, it would bring into question the need for the role for Union Delegations in countries such as these. In contrast, George Cunningham, the present head of the New Zealand ECD has commented that the trade competences will stay with the Commission rather than devolve to the EEAS. Moreover, "a typical EU Embassy is expected to have a trade section. The line of command relationship between the EU Ambassador and the trade section is one of the many issues to be sorted out".

Perhaps unsurprisingly, some of the respondents were unsure about what role the Union Delegations would take on. For instance, a diplomat in Singapore noted that “it is not very clear to me”. Although the interviewed practitioners were reluctant to comment on the potential tasks that the Union Delegations could foreseeably undertake in Singapore and New Zealand, two points stood out from the responses – that there would be a gradual shifting of competences to the EEAS and the work of the Union Delegations would be complimentary to the Member States.

There was a clear belief from one respondent that “from day one they will basically continue doing whatever they’re doing at the moment” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels). MEP David Martin also said that it “is clearly not going to happen overnight”. The history of European integration, where common declarations take time to be actioned and actualised in reality (Bruter, 1999, p. 184), would suggest that the EEAS proposals, too, will take time to be implemented. Perhaps this was why the belief was expressed by one respondent that, “I think that it will be very slow progress” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand) with “gradually more tasks [going] to the European embassies” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand). Although once the treaty is ratified, it was believed by many respondents that some Member States would find handing over competencies difficult, another felt that “once the treaty is in place ... there will be a transition phase where it will be difficult for some Member States to let some power go to the EU” (ECD official, Singapore).

Indeed, the lack of concrete ideas about what should happen suggests that should the proposals get ratified, suggests that implementation of the EEAS will be very gradual. Nevertheless, if the EEAS is to have any impact on improving the coherence and communication of the EU then it will need clear direction set out from its beginning. The idea that the EEAS would be strictly complementary to Member State efforts was emphasised time and again by respondents, as demonstrated below:

Initially, I think that it will be very much a complementary thing: not something that will substitute bilateral embassies (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

This was re-emphasised by another respondent who assured that, “of course we also think that it doesn’t mean that all state foreign ministries will disappear” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). This belief could be put down to the enduring nature

of some established diplomatic relationships. For example, it was noted that “the UK will not close down its High Commission in New Zealand overnight. Mind you, it will always remain there” (Council Secretariat official, Brussels).

In being complementary, it was also clear that the efficiency of the embassies in question could be improved upon. Even though there has been no consensus about its role, it was acknowledged by several respondents that:

Maybe it will give the occasion to decrease the number of people working in our ministries...we could do it in a more efficient way together (Member State Ambassador to New Zealand).

There are a number of areas where we could do more in common and save money because we could combine them and have the economy of scale” (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

These quotes demonstrate an awareness of the existing financial pressures facing member country foreign services. Therefore, as the respondents noted, some of this could be eased by the new EEAS. One interviewee had a suggestion which they felt could improve the current financial difficulty facing embassies as well as improving logistics. They suggested the possibility of having joint European services in New Zealand, as already exists between France, Britain and Germany in Alma Ata (joint consulates or cultural centres for example) one in Auckland and Wellington, instead of having them all based in Wellington. This respondent pointed out that:

We have nothing in Auckland and people have to come here [to Wellington]. It would be much cheaper than what we have today and more efficient (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

This suggestion correlates to the finding by Chaban, Kelly and Bain (2009, p. 288) that elites in the Asia Pacific advocated the practicality of widening the ECDs’ presence to other significant business/political centres rather than just the capital city.<sup>109</sup>

### ***10.3.1 Political Competences***

The EEAS proposals have been viewed by some as a testament to “a new political will which will to bring more continuity and to do away with the current confused

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<sup>109</sup> See Chapter Eight.

situation where the external affairs representation of the EU is multi-faced” (Euractiv, 17.03.2005). In EU politics, academic discussion has often divided the issues into two categories – high politics and low politics (Cram, 1997, p. 61; Smith, M E, 1996; Krotz, 2009). The former is related to issues involving national security and low political issues involve foreign economic policy or humanitarian aid. The interviewees tended to support the idea that the EEAS would take on a stronger role in high politics. The biggest task mentioned by the respondents that the Union Delegations would potentially take on was undeniably political competences for instance it was noted that “I would say that the biggest change would be a political one” (Member State Ambassador to New Zealand) and ““I suspect that the more political competences will go to the EEAS” (George Cunningham, Commission official, Brussels). Indeed, the Danish Ambassador to Singapore supported the idea that political issues could be transferred by noting that, “we are not here for the political reasons, we are here mostly due to the fact that this is of interest to our businesses” (Ambassador Vibeke Roving Lauritzen, Singapore). However, exactly what these political tasks would be was not elaborated upon by the respondents. Nevertheless, the transference of political activities would arguably have the ability to improve the EU’s coherence, capability and legitimacy.

### ***10.3.2 The Importance of Communication and the Sharing of Information***

Even if the EU does improve its coherence, efficiency and capabilities, the previous chapters have demonstrated not only a gap in the EU’s capabilities but also how it communicates. According to Duke (2004b, p. 6), “[t]he EEAS should be supported by timely and accurate information on which to base decisions affecting the vital interests of the EU and its Member States”. An emphasis on improving how the EU communicates both internally and externally was also highlighted by the respondents as demonstrated by the three quotes below:

“So there will have to be a very intensive exchange of information and contact” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

“Communication from Brussels will be very important so that member countries will see what European embassies are doing” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Maybe we don't do enough communication about Europe for New Zealanders. I think it would be the job of the European Delegation. To have communication about common positions of Europe, maybe [it could communicate] information about the topics where the European Union decides to have a common position" (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

However, there was a cautionary note by one Ambassador who thought that information sharing between the parties concerned "could make things complicated, and bring issues that may be very difficult to solve" (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

A final consideration from the point of view of the theoretical framework is security. The Constitutional Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty itself embeds ESDP into the framework of CFSP (Lisbon Treaty, Art 40 (1)), which means that it will be within the realm of the foreign minister but remaining under intergovernmental control. Specific reference to security in regards to the EEAS was absent in the interviews. This is perhaps not surprising and may be attributed to the fact that the current EU-New Zealand and EU-Singaporean relationships are based primarily on trade. However, there is certainly some indication, in New Zealand at least, that New Zealand and the EU cooperate on many issues, including matters of security.

One of the respondents pointed out that it "would be interesting would be to have a European security plan organised by the European Delegation" (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). In Singapore, there was wide-spread acknowledgement that the Member State embassies cooperate on an information-exchange level, which, taken in the broader context, may also be expanded to include security. This is arguably something which could potentially increase the EU's efficiency and strength. However, it could impinge on the semi-soft power image of the EU, and it may be difficult to get all Member States to agree on the degree to which it would be included.

### ***10.3.3 Staffing considerations***

Irrespective of which competences are transferred to the Union Delegations, appropriate resources for the EEAS will be crucial, as one respondent pointed out

that, “if we want to be serious about this external action service, we must be serious about the means and the resources we put in there” (ECD official, Singapore) and, arguably, the staff to carry out their tasks effectively.

Since staffing is crucial to the success of the EEAS, how did the respondents believe that their colleagues would view spending time working for the new service? One noted that time spent working for the EEAS would be viewed as “very positive, because it would mean a tremendous experience” (Member State diplomat, Australia and New Zealand). It was also viewed as a “very attractive option in terms of career advancement” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand) and it was envisaged that the work would be “more varied and would not be so confining and [would provide] a much more interesting perspective” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). In addition, another respondent thought that the opportunity would be more positively regarded by smaller Member States. They noted:

Particularly for a small country... perhaps for the bigger countries like Germany or France it might be slightly different...: different posting and very different type work as well (Australia and New Zealand diplomat).

Another positive aspect to the EEAS which was identified by the interviewees, was the opportunity to work with a variety of cultures, because, as one noted, “I think that you learn plenty of things like working with other nationalities” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). It was also emphasised that it would potentially have a bigger impact on the younger generation. For example it was pointed out that “I think that could be an attractive option...for younger people I think that it is a very attractive option because if it moves forward then it will become bigger and bigger” (Ambassador Marc Calcoen, Singapore). The comment by one respondent that, “I could imagine that the service in the kind of unified European foreign service will, in the long term, perhaps have a higher value than individual countries” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand), arguably bodes well for the future of the service if these sentiments are shared by other colleagues.

There was a however, an air of caution expressed by some respondents. One noted that, “of course you have plenty of people who won’t want to go there” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand), and another said, “personally I’m not sure if I want to

interrupt my career” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). Even though the interviewees were positive about the idea of being seconded to the EEAS, there was awareness that a number of considerations still needed to be addressed for the staff, including transferability between the Member States, institutions and the EEAS, recognition of time spent working there, and adequate training.

In terms of recruiting and training diplomats, Duke (2002, p. 863) has pointed out that among Member States there are significant differences in selection processes. There is also differing emphasises placed on the various Member State foreign ministries (Hocking and Spence 2005; Manners and Whitman, 2000). Keukeleire *et al* (2008, p. 124) noted that these differences are based on the “constitutional design” of each country. A further divide is found in the Member States who were behind the iron curtain for over fifty years, many of which are only just beginning to open their own embassies beyond the former divide. Regarding transferability, a number of questions were raised. For example, one respondent felt that:

I’m afraid that the problem might be recognition in this period of time, in spending time Brussels, or in a country for the European delegation. During your career will this be a promotion, or a good point on your C.V. or will it just be something normal (Member State diplomat, New Zealand)?

A Council official posed the question about possible institutional ramifications for the EU itself, indicating a concern of an entirely new independent institution being inadvertently established. They noted:

Do these staff coming to the External Action Service on secondment go back to their institution? Or once they’re there do they remain permanent which raises questions of recruitment in the future?...If they go to the external action service and remain there what you are setting up is fundamentally something completely separate from the institutions (Council Secretariat official, Brussels).

Training EU diplomats has been something that has been stressed over the last ten years. Duke (2002, p. 860) has also highlighted the need for a more systematic approach to training EU diplomats. Similarly, one New Zealand Ambassador highlighted the importance of this issue for the EEAS, noting that, “an aspect that I really want to emphasise is that they should have a programme there as extensive as possible” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

As well as an emphasis on establishing adequate training and career paths for the new recruits, there has also been a concern about what sort of staff the service would attract. Since, as noted by one respondent, “it would be done on a voluntary basis” (Member State diplomat, Australia and New Zealand). Another pointed out that “the big issue will be who wants to be stationed there — the best or worst staff?” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). Ambassador Marc Calcoen has directly highlighted the importance of putting good structures in place for the potential staff:

They will have to make sure that the way in which people can come and go is really well done, because otherwise you might end up not having good people, because there is not much rotation. So really the practical aspects I guess are really going to be important in ensuring its success.

Mirroring the emphasis on who should be appointed the HR-FASP, there was also a belief that strong leaders were needed to head the EEAS, as the success of the Union Delegations would depend “very much on the personality you have to lead these delegations” (ECD official, Singapore). However, amongst the interviewees, there was no indication given about which institution, or Member State, these leaders should come from. Presumably, the Commission has the advantage of experience in working for the European Union, as well as a number of speciality DGs. Conversely, the Council and Member States currently have far more rigorous training systems in place. For example, Bruter (1999, p. 191) has pointed out that the training of Commission personnel was underdeveloped in comparison to the training received by national diplomats. In addition, there seems to be an underlying desire to make the EEAS as intergovernmental as possible, especially in the early stages. Ultimately, the end result will no doubt be dependent on the outcome of the ‘institutional struggles’ described in Chapter Nine.

#### **10.4 THE FUTURE OF THE PRESIDENCY**

In addition to the potential impact on the Brussels-based institutions, the new system would mean that the rotating Presidency, currently held in six month periods by Member States, would have less of a role to play in external relations, something which could prove to have a significant impact on EU representation in third countries. If the rotating Presidency is replaced, the role of coordinating would potentially fall to the EEAS thus “posing fundamental questions for the role of

national foreign ministries, embassies and diplomatic staff” (Hocking, and Spence, 2005, p. 10 – 11). The rotating Presidency was seen by many within the Member States’ foreign ministries as being a burden on precious national resources, but it was nevertheless a way for the Member States to assert themselves not only within the Union itself, but it was also useful in raising the profile of individual Member States on a world stage (De Vreese, 2003, p. 33). As noted in Chapter Seven, although holding the Presidency is often viewed as a valuable way for Member States to raise their international profile, in Singapore the Presidency did not get a mention in the media outlets for the duration of monitoring and in New Zealand it was mentioned a mere four times. Hence, perhaps having a stable EU representative would be more a more effective way of communicating the EU.

Because not all member countries of the EU are diplomatically represented in New Zealand and Singapore, in practice, holding the Presidency usually means a longer tenure than the stated six months. In 2008 in Singapore, France held the Presidency for one year. Likewise, Sweden held it for all of 2009. According to one source, it is the job of the country holding the Presidency to, “try to exchange information as much as possible” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). Part of the success of the Presidency is dependent on the country which is taking on the job, and this “varies from Presidency to Presidency” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). Even if there is an embassy in a given country, often these are only moderately staffed and therefore extra pressure is placed on smaller embassies (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

According to the French Ambassador to New Zealand, His Excellency Michel Legras, the French Presidency in the second half of 2008 faced a number of unexpected and major issues that needed to be tackled during the six months including – the Irish rejection of the Lisbon Treaty, the war in Georgia and the global financial crisis. As these issues do not directly influence New Zealand’s relationship with France or the EU, the primary work undertaken by the embassy during this time was in dealing with technical questions, for example, on green policy – an area that the embassy does not necessarily have expertise in. Because of this, there was much emphasis placed on liaising back to both Paris and Brussels for the embassy (National Centre for Research on Europe, 27.2.2009).

Former foreign minister of New Zealand, Winston Peters has also commented on the task allocated to Presidency and noted that although there was a substantial importance attached to it — highlighted by the fact that when he travelled to Europe, he would meet with the Presidency holder — it is cumbersome because the “Presidency takes too long now with so many countries” and it is particularly problematic for the smaller countries.

One of the primary reasons for the Constitutional Treaty and the subsequent Lisbon Treaty, and the references to an EEAS therein, was to simplify the way the EU is organised internally. The need for this is heightened due to enlargement which has rendered some EU procedures too cumbersome, and it was for this reason that it was proposed to end the complicated pillar system implemented at Maastricht. Since making the rotating Presidency redundant will impact directly on diplomats in third countries and the interviewees had had experience in holding the Presidency in both Singapore and New Zealand and around the world, the respondents are in a well-informed position to comment on what impact they perceived the EEAS would have.

Reducing the strain of the Presidency was viewed as a benefit to individual countries with diplomatic representation in New Zealand. The reality of the Member States’ finances meant that resources for staffing embassies are limited and there are very few embassies that, within the framework of the Presidency, get extra staff. It was noted by one respondent that the Presidency “just means additional work” (Member State diplomat, New Zealand). This respondent would welcome the removal of the additional strain of the Presidency as “it puts quite an additional strain on the work of an embassy”.

In spite of the extra stress, the chance to hold the Presidency was also viewed positively by others as, “it gives you the additional opportunity to make contacts, to get information, to put forward standpoints and things like this” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

## 10.5 WHO STANDS TO BENEFIT?

The EEAS has, among other things, the potential to dramatically increase the scope and breadth of European Foreign representation. In commenting on EPC, Holland (1991a, p. 249) noted that for smaller Member States it “offers an opportunity to extended diplomatic influence and gain information that would normally be beyond the scope of their activities”. On the surface, the EEAS would have the potential to greatly increase the presence of smaller Member States who do not have a tradition of international diplomacy (Duke, 2004a, p. 32). It has been noted that it could potentially benefit smaller Member States without diplomatic representation and also “enhance the ability to identify common (European) interests between the Member States” (*ibid*, p. 32 – 33).

In Singapore, smaller Member States seemed very welcoming of the opportunity to hand over some competences in return for being part of something bigger (that is, the EU). For example, Ambassador Marc Calcoen described his country’s position in the world as being “a very small fish in a large ocean”. Another interviewee commented that, “my guess and my hope would be that it will be a big advantage for the smaller countries” (Swedish diplomat, Singapore). The reasoning behind this comment is based on the diplomat’s experience with the Commission’s trade policy role:

That has definitely been positive for smaller Member States, because the Commission, they try, they don’t always succeed, but they try to take a position that benefits the Union as a whole, or as much of the Union that they can (*ibid*).

In addition, another respondent also noted the relative small size of their country, which they felt often meant that they had neither the resources, nor the determination of some of the bigger states to be politically strong in Singapore. This diplomat pointed out that, “I think that we would be very pleased to see [these] embassies here” (Member State Ambassador, Singapore).

But it is not only small countries that need CFSP and ESDP to enhance their national impact (Spence in Hocking and Spence, 2002, p. 33). Integovernmentalist logic suggests that it is the biggest and economically strongest countries in the EU which exert the biggest influence in foreign policy matters. Indeed, it was pointed out that

“some of the larger Member States will have more input, so to some extent, this is inevitable” (Former Commission official, Brussels).

Another group which could potentially benefit are the Central and Eastern European countries, whose histories mean that they are generally underrepresented around the world — including in Singapore and New Zealand.<sup>110</sup> The Polish Ambassador to Singapore pointed out that:

We find our strength as a new-comer to the European Union, not only through the novelty of being part of the biggest and most successful structures in the history of that continent... (but also) membership with the European Union is highly recognised in Poland. We have close to 70 percent of citizens responding positively to Membership.

This comment on how positively the Polish population view the EU is in contrast to the current developments in the Polish government which has held up moves to ratify Lisbon (see for example, *The Economist*, 23.07.2009).

Accordingly, there are clearly not going to be certain ‘winners’ or ‘losers’ with the advent of the EEAS. Nor was that ever the idea. According to Crowe:

There are, and need to be advantages for all Member States. Otherwise, there is no point in it at all, indeed it simply won’t work. For larger Member States, the EEAS and an empowered High Representative put the weight of the whole EU behind policies behind which they successfully rally the EU. For example, the Danes or other smaller Member States, they have an input and an influence in international relations which, on their own, they would never have.

Furthermore, an ECD official in Singapore noted that:

What Member states tend to forget is that they will never have the same power in talking to big countries if they go on their own, except a couple of them because they are members of the security council, like Great Britain and France. All of the others have a clear interest in having only the EU speaking on their behalf because they have much greater power in talking from one bloc to the other than if they go as little Slovenia.

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<sup>110</sup> In addition, it has been observed that the ECDs do not currently have many EU12 staff, which means that the EEAS may open up this path for the new Member States in EU external representation.

The fact remains that the proposals have been approved a number of times by the Member State governments of the European Union, thus suggesting that they will want to control it. These approvals clearly demonstrate that the proposals to bring in the HR-FASP and EEAS are, for the most part, highly regarded by the actors involved, potentially pointing to a desire by the EU to improve its image, strengthen its voice and better coordinate its capabilities — improvements which this thesis clearly indicates are needed.

## **10.6 OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES**

Based on these divided opinions, as well as the number of different stakeholders involved, it is easy to imagine that reaching consensus in some or all of the areas outlined above may prove difficult. Practitioners were asked: ‘How can consensus be reached’? There was an emphasis on both the importance to retain national independence in areas of national importance — as one respondent noted, “I mean there are a number of issues that we want to do at the national level” (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore) and the importance of retaining unanimity because “it means if you don’t agree, it won’t be done” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand). Brian Crowe, formerly of the Council Secretariat, supported this latter view, stating that “nothing could be agreed without the agreement of all Member States”. A further interviewee in New Zealand did not see reaching consensus as being a problem because of the emphasis on unanimity. According to this respondent:

We could have conflict where we don’t share a unique point of view. This means that you won’t have unanimity in the first place so you won’t have a common European policy or a common decision (Member State diplomat to New Zealand).

The concept of intergovernmentalism remains important to these senior officials, with an emphasis placed on the positive steps undertaken with subsidiarity. Subsidiarity has been one way of the Union achieving more democratic legitimacy, as it has resulted in the promotion of “peace and stability” (Nowina-Konopka, 2003, p. 4). The policy of subsidiarity was highlighted by the diplomats as a way of avoiding the erosion of national sovereignty, for example one noted that “there are a number of things that do not need to be dealt with at the European level and those are the areas which will remain with the national responsibility” (Dutch Ambassador, Singapore)

and another that “there is lots of emphasis on subsidiarity which means what can be done on a national level should be done on a national level” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Despite the opposition by some Member States to give up control of their national foreign policy workload, another commentator believed that national governments would eventually hand their vested authority of foreign policy over to Brussels. They noted that even though “it will not be easy to give up this authority and leave it to Brussels, but it will come that way” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand). In spite of the positive potential cited by the interviewees (see Chapter Six) as well as the instruments in place to protect national sovereignty, some of the replies in Singapore were more cautious, with one interviewee noting, “it will be difficult, because each country has different interests” (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

As has been seen in the previous chapters, the European Union has suffered as a result of its inability to reach an effective and coherent strategy in times of global crises. This has been demonstrated time and again in situations like Iraq, Bosnia, Algeria, Middle East and more recently Georgia. Would the European External Action Service be able to make any in-roads into its apparent inability to speak with one voice? Regarding the Georgian crisis, French President Nicolas Sarkozy pointed out that:

It is notable that had the Lisbon Treaty, which is in the process of being ratified, already been in force, the European Union would have had the institutions it needs to cope with international crises... [including having] a High Representative endowed with a real European diplomatic service (cited in Mahony, 2008, n.p.).

Regarding the perceived failure of the EU to present a common front during the war in Iraq, an interviewee at the ECD in Canberra pointed out that, “to the public at large it didn’t look good, I mean, we didn’t present a common front and...one bad effect was that it tended to obscure other areas that the states do, in fact, agree on” (ECD official, Canberra). This respondent thought that the inability of the EU to agree on a common stance in regards to the Iraq war has perhaps unfairly given the EU decision-making process a biased, negative image. But is it possible to amalgamate core national preferences and differences in the future? According to the interviewees, not only does the EEAS signify a real desire to improve the foreign policy mechanisms of

the EU by making it more coherent, but the EEAS will also make it easier to agree to a single policy in times of crises.

Many of the interviewees referred to what has been called in the literature as the process of the evolution of 'Europeanisation', something that has been under way for some time and plays an important role in identity construction of the EU as well as shaping practices and perceptions (Manners and Whitman, 2000). Although the forging of identity and values takes time, the introduction of the EPC, which served to "forge common views, pool resources, and even influence the interests of EC member states" (Smith, M.E., 1996) could be viewed as the beginning of the formal process of socialisation for EU and Member State officials. This is because participating in regular meetings leads to "shared interests at the European level" (Duke, and Vanhoonacker, 2006, p. 176) which in turn may lead to a Europeanisation of foreign policy preferences.

This implies that national actors' perceptions and preferences adapt when in close contact with their counterparts from other Member States and institutional officials. Development policy is a good example of this occurring as prior to joining the EU in 2004, the accession countries did not have any type of development policy in place (Keukeleire, *et al*, 2008, p. 142). However, the process of Europeanisation is not one-sided, but rather is a reflexive process. National diplomats are charged with protecting both national and the European Union's interests. Whilst Smith believed that Member States adapt their own foreign policies to fit in with EU policy (Smith, M.E., 2004, p. 114), others believe that Member State governments also shape it (Borzel, 2002).

Although national diplomats are becoming increasingly socialised, "diplomats continue to have their national form of relations and continue to play their role as promotion of national interest in the European context" (Duke *et al*, 2006, p. 181) and supranational roles tend to supplement pre-existing allegiances rather than replace them (Trondal and Veggeland, 2003, p. 59). Graham Avery, former director at the Commission's DG RELEX, saw the EEAS as a positive chance for the "Europeanisation of national foreign policies" not the opposite, as some fear (Europe Information, 16.03.2005).

The Commission itself could be viewed as a pilot for how the EEAS could work in practice. A study has concluded that although Commissioners are charged with working for the European Union with complete disregard for personal and national preferences, it was difficult to shape its employees' preferences, with importance stressed on outside experiences, whether they may be a political party, country or prior work experience (Hooghe 2001).

Regarding the Council, Jeff Lewis (2003) has concluded that "socialisation in COREPER does not lead to the rise of a supranational identity of diplomats but rather a new understanding of national identities as they become nested into a Brussels context" (Lewis, as cited in Batora, 2005, p. 56). In other words, Lewis believes that COREPER serves to cement European identities.

An interviewed diplomat noted that history has shown that a future prospect of obtaining a united view of issues is positive:

If you look at the history of the European Union there have been so many contentious and difficult and dividing issues but ultimately consensus has been reached on virtually all of them, more or less and that is going back 50 years (Member State diplomat to Australia and New Zealand).

The concept of socialisation and Europeanisation was raised both directly and indirectly by the respondents in the course of this research when answering the question: 'How do you think consensus could be made on dividing issues?' In other words, given the complexity of the issues at stake, how can common decisions be made? In the New Zealand context one respondent mentioned that "there will be lots of discussions and lots of compromise" (Member State Ambassador to New Zealand). Another interviewee noted pragmatically that the "more countries we have, the more discussions there will be" (Member State Ambassador to New Zealand).

Open discussions and close contact has been viewed as being imperative to reaching a common understanding within the EU. With one MEP pointing out:

If you get 27 Member States working together through this in Brussels ... then people will start actually thinking along the same lines, and that will build a relationship where we can start building consensus about what the action should be (David Martin, MEP, Brussels).

The Polish Ambassador in Singapore believed that the ability to discuss divisions and differences was actually one of the EU's strengths:

But I would say that Europe's strengths come from its differences and the more we sit and talk and overcome these differences, the stronger we come out of the discussions ... As long as commonality and common goals are the end games, and as long as people understand that together we stand and divided we do not necessarily fall.

However, the growing number of members to the European Union means that:

It gets more difficult, obviously, as the Union expands now [that] we have 25 members, reaching consensus, even on minor issues, can be difficult, not impossible, but difficult (Member State diplomat to Australia and New Zealand [*sic*]).

It was also noted that reaching consensus depends very heavily on the issue at stake:

It is very hard to present a single view when you are basically fronting up 27 different views. And I think it is fine where we more or less all agree, like on things like human rights (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

In other words, NPE issues such as human rights are easily agreed on within Member States. This was also supported by an Ambassador to New Zealand who noted that "it's not so difficult to have a common position on human rights in China". The same respondent pointed out that even the subject of human rights can be subjective. They stated:

It will be more difficult if the closer neighbours are concerned. How do we deal with Russia? How do we deal with Chechnya, Turkey. These will be more complicated, more difficult. So it will really depend on the kind of problem we have (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

Although discussions and close contact with the other EU players was emphasised, ultimately, it was viewed that having the necessary institutions in place would not provide a panacea for the EU:

If it is an important policy issue where agreement is hard to get, then the foreign minister or European External Action Service is not going to solve that problem. That problem is only going to be solved by political pressure and by the admission by Member States that we are more powerful when we act together (Commission Official, Brussels).

These discussions show a certain solidarity that already exists for the implementers of EU foreign policy abroad – arguably something which is already spilling over into the EU’s interactions with third countries. In the case of New Zealand it was pointed out that:

European countries are so close today that the dialogue that we have with MFAT<sup>111</sup> on European topics we have exactly the same point of view. We need the same formations, we have the same questions that it makes sense to do it together. I’m sure that in MFAT when we lobby together it shows to the New Zealand foreign ministry the nature of solidarity of Europe (Member State diplomat, New Zealand).

## 10.7 EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVES

However, this cohesion can also work against the EU, as it has been stipulated that another reason why the EU is not as effective as it could be in the global environment is because it is “process oriented rather than goal oriented” (Smith, M, 2007, p. 454). This refers to an observation that the Member States of the EU waste time “co-ordinating [their] own statements and negotiating with each other [rather than spending time] on consulting its negotiating partners” (Chaban *et al* 2006, p. 252). Chapters Seven and Eight have highlighted the (in)effectiveness of the EU’s communication efforts with public and elites in third countries. In order to understand how the EEAS would remedy this deficit, interviewees were asked: ‘what effect would the EEAS have on third countries’?

The idea that it would be an advantage for Singapore and New Zealand to have a single point of access was consistently repeated amongst all the sets of interviews – in Brussels, Singapore, New Zealand and Canberra. In New Zealand, there was a belief expressed that:

It would be a tremendous advantage that you just have to deal with one institution... it would save them a lot of energy and be so much more efficient if they knew who to talk to (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand).

I think for any host country, it’s always better if feel that you’re dealing with an institution that has a coherent and co-ordinated

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<sup>111</sup> The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

approach. I think the idea is that the EEAS would deliver that (Member State diplomat, Australia and New Zealand).

Another interviewee felt that it would mean “one major partner for international politics — particularly in New Zealand which is very internationally minded” (Member State Ambassador, New Zealand). Others had not thought about the ramifications for third countries at all, indicating internal benefits were a more likely predominant driving factor.

In Singapore, the answers to this question varied. One Singaporean diplomat was concerned that the EU is not currently well understood and is undervalued, and that the EEAS would, to an extent, remedy this situation. They noted, “I think if you have the European diplomatic service and you are Singaporean, then you have to accept that integration is really happening”. It was also believed that a better understanding of the EU would benefit third countries. One respondent described that “there is this gap between perception and reality, which prevents them (third countries) from maybe taking full advantage of the opportunities offered to them by European integration” (Member State diplomat, Singapore). Exactly which opportunities this respondent was referring to was unclear. Ambassador Marc Calcoen in Singapore, thought that it would mean that the local government would take the EU more seriously, thus highlighting a belief that perhaps current expectations on the EU are low. According to His Excellency Calcoen:

You have to have your own house in order and your own position to be strong before it can be credible if it is credible then it will be more taken into account by the third countries as well.

In this way, the above respondent clearly sees potential for increasing the EU’s presence and legitimacy in Singapore. Another diplomat in Singapore noted that:

I don’t think that it would make much difference. I don’t think the Singaporeans are conscious of this issue and ... I don’t think that it troubles them greatly. I think they will continue their interactions with individual embassies, High Commissions.

In other words, this is not something which the Singaporean government has yet thought about and may potentially not have any impact at all on Singapore’s relationship with Member States. It was also pointed out that third countries may place prestige on having many embassies based on their shores:

I think that they like that there are many embassies here. So I don't know if the Singaporean government will be more pleased that we will have one European office here and not the rest of us (Member State diplomat, Singapore).

The message from the ECD was that it would be better for third countries if the EU is more coherent. According an ECD official:

It goes back to the Kissinger who was saying the difficulty with Europe is that you do not have only one phone number to call...I believe that one person to speak and not 27 plus the Commission is more efficient.

On the other hand, it was acknowledged that “the drawback is if the EU speaks more with one voice, it would be harder for outsiders to use the divisions inside the EU whenever they want” (ECD official, Singapore).

The European interviewees viewed the proposals as either being positive for third countries like Singapore and New Zealand because it would give them a single point of contact, or had not thought about the ramifications at all. How did respondents in third countries respond? Foreign Affairs officials in New Zealand were asked what they thought the ramifications could potentially be.

Phil Goff (2005), the then New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade believed the move towards an External Action Service to be extremely positive as it would give New Zealand a single point of political access to the EU as opposed to the current confused situation. Another official pointed out that “the current system means that there are three people to call rather than one, plus the other Member States. So in some ways we can benefit”. In addition, from a normative perspective, Labour party spokesman for the environment, Charles Chauvel (2009) noted that the introduction of the new foreign minister has great potential to improve the capacity of the EU as an environmental actor, which would ultimately be beneficial for New Zealand's own climate change policy.

On the other hand, one former diplomat was emphatic that it would not be a positive move for New Zealand, as it is currently New Zealand's advantage to have many different partners and opportunities in the different institutions of the EU. This is because if the New Zealand foreign service, or one of its subsidiaries, experience a lack of progress with one, there are opportunities to explore opportunities with the

others. This idea was supported by another commentator who, while seeing the advantages and disadvantages in the creation of the EEAS, mentioned that “if everything had to pass through the eye of one needle that would be terrible”. This diplomat elaborated on this idea by pointing out that:

If it means that you know who to call when you want to call Europe, then that is a good thing. But because our relationship with Europe is so rich, we certainly wouldn't want to be restricted.

Former New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs, Winston Peters noted that the new system would “not necessarily be better for New Zealand”, as it is our currently weak economic situation that causes the most disadvantages when dealing with Europe. In addition, it was also noted that the EEAS would in no way replace the emphasis New Zealand currently places on its bilateral relationships with member countries, since “the Member States [will] remain important”. This stress on bilateral relationships mirrors the ideas of the EU ambassadors and diplomats interviewed for this thesis.

## **10.8 CONCLUSION**

The establishment of the EEAS has the potential to improve the capability of the EU in the international arena. How this will be achieved will be influenced by a number of factors, as has been discussed above. In addition, the EEAS would carry a heavy burden as it has already been informally called an ‘EU foreign service’ — which places considerably high expectations on it. Judging by the interview responses presented here, a number of unanswered questions remain, some of which may be answered with an arrangement that could see a multi-tiered advancement of the European Union. However, for coherency purposes this would not be an ideal situation and could create more questions.

Does it matter what mandates are given to the EEAS and its Union Delegations? Would it impact on the so-called ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ and strengthen the normative power of the EU? At first glance the answer would be no, as many of these issues relating to the implementation of the EEAS are practical. However, incorporating an area of expertise such as consular into the service’s mandate would be a positive step for improving the legitimacy of the EU both internally and externally. Internally this would be the case because in the eyes of the EU citizens it

could be seen to be positively acting on behalf of them, perhaps even helping them in times of crisis abroad. It could also potentially indirectly improve the external legitimacy of the EU because it would be seen to be more coherent and a 'real' diplomatic player — in this way touching on the idea of EU capability and expectations.

It is clear that Member States still view their ambassadorial work and presence in third countries as being crucial. For this reason, some of interviewees thought that they would need to retain their consular, trade and cultural promotion activities. This is in spite of evidence that it is increasingly costly to retain strong representation abroad. In doing so, in contrast to the NPE value of multilateralism, the respondents emphasised the need to protect bilateral relationships. If the Member States continue to compete with each other, then this could project a divided image. On the other hand, it could be argued as further evidence that the EU's motto 'unity in diversity' is working successively and can continue to do so. Nevertheless, in spite of some of the conclusions and observations noted above, there is still a lack of consensus about the exact form and function of the EEAS and judging from past experience, it is crucial that the blurred lines of competences and division need to be demarcated before implementing the proposals.

Areas where the EEAS could potentially take over competences were in political matters and for improving communication. These areas would potentially greatly improve the EU's 'expectations-capabilities gap' through improving the EU's presence, actorness, coherence, legitimacy and institutional structures. In addition, political competences often transcend traditional economic focuses as they may promote values. For example, in Singapore, this could mean a stronger EU platform for the promotion of human rights.

A matter which has only been briefly touched upon in this chapter is the issue of security and defence. The lack of discussion by the interviewees about security matters could be seen as an indication that the issue is not at the top of the diplomatic agenda for officials based in Singapore and New Zealand. This idea would suggest that if the case study was extended to less politically stable countries, then security concerns might become more prominent in the eyes of the respondents. It may also be

indicative of an underlying belief that security issues are far from being incorporated into the new structure and hence there was no need to discuss them. Given the high sensitivity of security and defence, it would seem logical that at this stage the EEAS will not be given a mandate to cover these areas. However, for efficiency reasons, it may make sense for any future developments in EU defence and security to have separate attachments based at the Union Delegations but kept under the domain of the Council.

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## **CHAPTER ELEVEN:**

### **PRESENTING THE FINDINGS**

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#### **11.1 INTRODUCTION**

Existing literature on the European Union as an international actor, whether it focuses on EU policies, capability, or communication, is often internally centred, with the result being that the way the world views the EU is a relatively under-researched area. By researching the proposals for the European External Action Service, this thesis has not only studied the internal capacities and issues for the mechanisms of EU foreign policy, but also how the EU communicates with the rest of the world and how it is perceived as a result of that communication. In other words, how the EU is viewed and how it views itself.

While it is not the intention of this chapter to repeat the findings already presented, a number of conclusions and reflections can be made, including the need to emphasise important theoretical and empirical findings, as well as make suggestions for future research. Clearly the proposals to introduce the EEAS and the motivations behind it are rather complex. This means that no single theory is sufficient when explaining the phenomenon. Employing two distinct, but nevertheless complementary theories, the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ and Normative Power Europe, has enabled this thesis to provide a broader understanding of both how the EU perceives its place in the world and how it is perceived in third countries (in this case, Singapore and New Zealand) that are situated in two neighbouring regions (the Asia-Pacific). The subsequent conclusions offer a truly unique perspective on the EU, its external representation and the future proposals to introduce the EEAS. Although the recommendations are based on research focusing specifically on Singapore and New Zealand, they may also be extended to other countries and regions.

## 11.2 THEORETICAL FINDINGS: UNDERSTANDING THE EEAS

From its inception, many EU academics have tended to divide EU policy making between intergovernmentalist or supranationalist concepts. Indeed, as this thesis has demonstrated, it is impossible to study the EU without studying this phenomenon. However, the EU has moved beyond this traditional understanding and, as such, requires a more substantial theoretical base for understanding its motivations as an international actor. Hence, two specific theories have been drawn upon throughout this thesis – the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ and NPE. Although they have been introduced as two separate theories, one of the findings, however, is that many of the terms and concepts surrounding these two theories overlap.

The fact that the EU is *sui generis* has led to new conceptualisations about how to analyse the EU beyond traditional international relations theories. This finding is particularly true in the multi-layered, diplomatic way it is represented abroad. The concepts which have been introduced and analysed pertaining to the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ in this thesis refer to the EU’s presence and actorness, as well as its ownership of sovereignty, legitimacy, (in)coherence (the pillared structure), institutions and security and defence mechanisms. The thesis has also established that part of the EU’s capabilities lies not only in its (limited) military strength, but in its power as a normative actor.

How the EEAS is institutionally set-up will ultimately impact on the EU’s capability as an actor on the world stage. Returning to the four criteria of an international actor first outlined by Caporaso and Jupille (1998) – the need for an entity to have cohesion, authority, autonomy and recognition – the first point refers to the similarity or compatibility between EU institutions and Member States of the basic goals and the means to attain these goals. For Gonzalez and Hoffmann, Europe as a civilian power is tied up with what sort of power it wishes to be (1999, p. 38). Positively for the EU, the ideas to create the High Representative of Foreign and Security Policy and the EEAS have been very well received by the practitioners of EU foreign policy and, in spite of the different backgrounds of the EU interviewees, there were common ideas about what the EU is and where it needs to be heading in the future. Indeed,

there was an understanding that the EU needs more recognition of its role as a positive model in the promotion of peace and stability in addition to traditional conceptions of it as an economic power. The results of this thesis indicate a similarity and general cohesion between the EU actors interviewed. Moreover, the EEAS would be a way of helping the EU to achieve its goals. Indeed, EU economic and trade policy has shown that when the EU is more coordinated, it presents a stronger force to the rest of the world. Therefore, a well structured and coherent external policy could serve to strengthen the legitimacy and visibility of the EU's identity.

Regarding the second point, pertaining to the policy making powers that Member States have delegated to the EU, the consistent governmental and public support of the proposals to introduce the EEAS would indicate that it would indeed have the necessary authority to act on behalf of the EU. Authority may also be linked with legitimacy. For both the EU's actorness and NPE, external and internal legitimacy is important. Through combining the resources of the different institutions, the EEAS has the potential to gain real legitimacy and support, which is crucial if it wants to be taken seriously on the international stage. From an internal perspective, if EU citizens recognise the role of the EEAS and the Union Delegations, and the fact that they can turn to them in times of crisis, then this would further add to the EU's legitimacy. From an external perspective, the EEAS would make the EU more effective, efficient and coherent for elites and publics in third countries like Singapore and New Zealand. Furthermore, it would provide the EU with a credible, diplomatic instrument, something which is currently lacking in EU aspirations to become an international actor. Related to this is the third criterion, autonomy. Whilst the EEAS would require a degree of autonomy from Member States, it is not the intention that the EEAS would be a separate institution and it seems clear at this stage that Member State diplomats and those interviewed from the Council Secretariat wish to ensure that autonomy for the EEAS does not go too far.

Finally, and significantly for this thesis, outside recognition and acceptance by those outside of the EU is also important. How the EU communicates is crucial for EU expectations and its normative identity, as well as its legitimacy. The external representatives (i.e. Member State embassies and ECDs) and representations (i.e. the media) are therefore crucial, which is why primary data analysing how the EU is

represented in Singapore and New Zealand was introduced throughout the dissertation. A number of reasons have been put forward in the literature about why it is important for external conceptualisations of the EU to be taken into account. If the EU is going to be a greater international actor, then it requires an audience. EU goals and ambitions need to be evaluated and one way of doing this is through studying the impact on third citizenry. However, a wide gulf exists between what the EU representatives in Singapore and New Zealand, as well as officials working for EU institutions, perceive to be the capabilities and strengths of the EU, and how it is viewed by the citizens and elites of those countries. The findings of this thesis indicate that, at present, EU recognition outside of its borders could be improved upon. Indeed, an effective and coherent EEAS, enabled with the previous three criteria, could greatly improve the outside recognition of the EU. The proposals of the EEAS, and the results presented in this thesis, can be interpreted as supporting the concept that the EU is indeed invisible from an external perspective. This is particularly evident beyond the traditional economic paradigm — for example, in its moves towards gaining a military capability or in its promotion of normative values.

In addition, although at present some institutions and actors of the EU are both more empowered and visible (though the two do not necessarily correlate to each other) than others, none stand out as obvious or prominent representatives of the Union, thereby supporting the view that the EU's 'expectations-capabilities gap' is exacerbated by confusion about who represents the EU. Furthermore, in many respects, the obvious base for the EEAS, — ECDs — have had varying degrees of success in promoting the EU, nor do they have the necessary resources and mandate to do so. Therefore, it may be concluded that the EEAS will be effective in increasing the EU's visibility in third countries consequently leading to it having more influence.

According to Hill (1998), the EU needed to be careful about building up the expectations of third countries if it was incapable of meeting them. This thesis has demonstrated that expectations of the EU to be either a global or normative power are rather low in Singapore and New Zealand, seemingly supporting Tsuruoka's (2004) view that the EU currently faces an 'expectations-deficit'. However, this does not paint the full picture. An integral part of being deemed an international actor is having the necessary institutions in place. It has been demonstrated that the EU currently

lacks a number of these, including having an adequate set of diplomatic agents. The proposals to introduce the EEAS suggest that the EU currently lacks the necessary institutional arrangements and capabilities to be a credible international actor. This means that the voice of the EU is sometimes not heard, due to third countries' low expectations of it and an insufficient capability bestowed on it to act. In other words, the EU suffers from 'low expectations and capabilities'. Although how the EEAS will operate has not yet been finalised, the EEAS has the real potential to remedy this situation.

A move towards a more traditional foreign policy approach by the EU, implemented through the EEAS, could also conceivably mean another step away from the EU's traditional use of soft power towards a harder external role. Such a move would require a re-conceptualisation of NPE, something which has already been addressed in the literature. Judging from the primary data and literature presented in this thesis, the EU is committed towards continuing to encourage stability around the world. One way of doing this is through the promotion of its norms. This, coupled with its emphasis on multilateral negotiations, would suggest that military intervention would be a last resort. Indeed, the EEAS has the real ability to strengthen NPE, as traditional diplomacy relies on the use of dialogue and consensus rather than hard power. In doing so, it will be at greater liberty to promote the values which have proven to be successful for EU integration.

Not only does the thesis present implications for the theories introduced and analysed, but there are also further ramifications for EU foreign policy and the integration process in general. A vision of an integrated Europe has clearly been present since the beginning. The Treaty of Rome noted that its aim was to "to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe". Likewise, both the Maastricht Treaty (1992) included the statement: "a new stage in the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe". More recently, the Lisbon Treaty "[r]esolved to continue the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe". Not only would the EEAS provide a stronger legal platform (something which is emphasised by NPE) but, as a step toward further integration, it could also demonstrate the attractiveness and feasibility of the EU experiment.

Arguably, the goals behind the EEAS demonstrate that not only is EU foreign policy becoming more ambitious in its desire to exert influence in the world, but moving one step closer towards establishing a real common foreign policy — in the form of a diplomatic corps — is a significant move towards EU integration. Although the public rejection of the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties is an indication that Europe still needs to win the hearts and minds of its citizens, arguably, there is strong public support for increased security and defence forces to be given to the EU.

EU capability has improved dramatically over the last two decades, not only in crisis management and coherence, but also through its exportation of NPE. As the EU continues to grow in its role as a normative actor, so too does it need to be mindful of how it is perceived, as this greatly impacts on its capacity to influence. Even though the values espoused by NPE have been criticised as being EU-centric, it is undeniable that its norms have proven a successful template for both its current members as well as accession hopefuls. For example, the recent entrants of Central and Eastern Europe who held communist values for over 50 years, and the Turkish wish to join ‘the club’, which signifies that the traditionally Muslim country is willing to take these norms on board.

Further afield, this can be understood from the perspective that NPE, and the EU by direct association, provides an alternative figure in international relations. An EU with an improved recognition as a credible, normative actor would potentially provide a positive role model for the world to follow. In addition, although its involvement in third countries is not always welcome, it could be argued that it is better than leaving countries to cope on their own and EU trade and aid is undoubtedly welcomed by third countries. The EEAS proposals represent real potential to strengthen EU capability, coherence, continuity and cooperation, thus providing a stronger platform for NPE. In addition, the EU’s promotion of peace and stability through open political dialogue means a paradigm shift away from the traditional use of military power, something which to a large extent has proven ineffective in promoting peace and security world wide.

Whilst the two theories — the ‘expectations-capabilities gap’ and NPE — enabled a comprehensive analysis of the EU’s actor capability, there were also a number of

limitations. For example, the unique, EU focused approach makes it difficult to compare the EU to other entities in the world system. A comparison of the effectiveness of American, Chinese or UN approaches could have provided a useful way of evaluating the EU. In addition, the two theories are limited as they do not take into consideration other factors which influence how the EU is perceived, for example – culture and language and place branding.

### ***11.2.1 Beyond the Primary Theories***

Another finding of this thesis is the requirement to reconceptualise the role of the Commission, something which further supports the need to move beyond the intergovernmental–supranational debate. It has become clear that although the Commission has a lot to offer in terms of resources and expertise to the new service, its role is yet to be defined. It is the contention of this thesis that new understandings and conceptualisations of the Commission and its function are needed, and it is hoped that this thesis will provide a starting-point for this discussion, especially since the role of the Commission in the EEAS has yet to be finalised.

Beyond providing a unique theoretical understanding of the EU, this thesis has some important ramifications for international relations theories. It has been pointed out that although the diplomatic Westphalian system of states was a European construction, the institutional arrangements of the EU and its preference for multilateralism actually challenges this. In addition, the proposals and data included in this thesis indicate a clear desire of the EU to be more influential in the world, which, combined with its economic power, would mean that third countries would take the EU more seriously than they currently do. Less obvious is the wider implications of the proposals on conduct of diplomacy.

The impact of the EEAS on the system of diplomatic practice needs to also be taken seriously by governments around the world. Not only will they need to know how to deal with the new-look Europe, but also if the EEAS propels the EU to become a stronger normative force, which includes its desire to promote multilateralism and regionalism, then this may influence how diplomacy is conducted on an international scale.

Although this thesis has undertaken to understand the EU's role as an international actor, using terms and understandings specifically related to the EU, future studies could use a number of theories pertaining to international relations more generally — for example, realism, liberalism or even constructivism. Although these concepts have been touched upon throughout the course of this study, it is postulated that the intricate and unique nature of the EU means that it requires a tailor-made understanding. Indeed, realism supports the centrality of the nation-state (Morgenthau, 1967). Whilst this centrality remains in some areas of EU foreign policy, it is no longer adequate in understanding the EU in its entirety. In addition, whilst it is acknowledged that the research could have undertaken a more sociological or anthropological focus — for example using structural functionalism, or using terms and understandings of identity — whilst these disciplines were also present throughout the thesis, they were ultimately rejected on the basis that these theories are primarily focused on studies of human societies and did not allow a fully comprehensive understanding of EU political actorness.

### **11.3 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: A LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

From an empirical point of view, the results of this thesis include nine recommendations for future decisions about the EEAS. As will become clear, many of these suggestions are focused on the importance of the way the EU communicates, as well as its institutional arrangements.

The history of EU policy making suggests that the role ascribed to the EEAS, and the way it is formed, is likely occur in a gradual manner. Therefore, given the attachment held by Member State governments to foreign policy, in the initial stages, it is likely to be more intergovernmental by nature. But it must be cautioned that any lingering institutional problems need to be resolved early, in order to prevent any further incoherence of EU external representation.

If the EEAS ambassadorial representation in third countries was to be phased in over time, then it is highly conceivable that the relatively stable countries of Singapore and New Zealand would be low on the priority list. This idea is also supported by the fact

that the ECDs in these countries have opened relatively late in the history of the Commission. This also depends on what tasks are given to the EEAS, for example, if the focus is primarily on development aid, then there would be no direct need to have a Union Delegation in New Zealand. One of the findings of this thesis is that in addition to introducing the HR-FASP and the EEAS, the EU needs to be clearer with third countries about what it is and what it can 'add' to international relations, if it is to become a truly international actor.

At present, in Singapore, the ECD and Member States have not been very effective in the promotion of human rights and regionalism, something which is noticeable because these were concepts which, although at the forefront of the minds of the Member State and ECD interviewees, were largely absent in the minds of the Singaporean public and elites. Likewise, in New Zealand, the EU could do more to highlight the active role that it takes in the nearby Pacific, something which the EEAS could assist in facilitating. In this vein, the EEAS could perhaps also be more active in the promotion of cooperation with partners like New Zealand in dealing with the troubled Pacific region, be that through crisis management or in the promotion of peace and stability.

Some of the roles which have been highlighted that the Union Delegations could possibly take over include consular affairs, political affairs, trade and culture promotion. Consular activities have been consistently emphasised but, in doing so, this could conceivably open new problems for creating a sort of two-way Europe. That is, Member States who wish to use the facilities in this way would need to either base personnel in all offices, or else pay a set amount to use them. This is something that needs to be ascertained ahead of implementation.

It would be in all the Member States' best interests, regardless of size, to actively promote the EEAS, but there may also be some competition between the Member States to gaining more control than others. This has already been noted in other areas of EU integration as well as in the theory of intergovernmentalism. Although it is in the interests of the EU to make the most of Member States' expertise, in order to promote further cohesion the EU will need to be careful that positions and competencies are carefully balanced between Member States and EU institutions.

Indeed, for the EEAS to be really effective, it will “rely on a shared understanding and a clear vision of what the EU objectives on the international scene should be” (The Egmont Institute, 7.5.2009).

Whilst the ECDs will not necessarily form part of the new system, Chapter Eight has demonstrated that they have a lot of skills and experience to offer the new organisation. Firmly incorporating the ECDs could also advance the EU goal to become more supranational. Although more EP involvement would be preferable in bridging the ‘democratic deficit’, as with normal arrangements in Member States where foreign ministries act independently, this is not always achievable.

The problem with adding a security and defence dimension to the EEAS is problematic because although doing so would improve the capability of the EU, it would also impede its image as a soft power. At present, it is difficult to conceive of a fully functioning EU army, given the sensitivities of the Member States involved, each with a different history and allegiances. Because the EEAS could conceivably be present in at least 136 locations around the world, it would be sensible to have an arrangement where the Union Delegations could accommodate EU personnel responsible for security and defence competencies (but working for the Council) in regions and countries where such mechanisms are necessary.

Something that was not discussed in the interviews was the capacity of the Lisbon Treaty to effectively implement the EEAS proposals. Indeed, the vagueness of the treaty has left much room for debate about the exact form it might take. It is clear that even without the Lisbon Treaty the EU could conceivably implement the proposals. However, if future disagreement is to be avoided, then further treaty provisions will need to be considered before the EEAS is launched. Given the consistent support of the treaty, an additional treaty to outline the EEAS’s competences would not necessarily be required, but it could possibly move ahead through the procedural level. This should mean further consultation with the EP.

It seems that the EU has neglected to take into consideration the possible repercussions of the proposals for third countries. Therefore, given the confusing history and nature of the EU, it would be sensible for the EEAS and the Union

Delegations to actively inform both, the elites and the public in the countries where they will be based of the exact mandate that it has been given, in order to avoid any further confusion. This could be in the form of a world wide publicity programme, using local media to gain attention. Related to this, it would also be wise to therefore consider extending the mandate as wide as possible. It will also need to ensure that it does not step on the toes of EU embassies that have already established links in the home country. In fact, it would be highly beneficial to utilise any of these existing links. In order to achieve its goals, the EU will need to be careful about who it appoints to head the Union Delegations, as proactive leaders have been recognised as important to the success of the EU and the ECDs in the past. Moreover, the Union Delegations will require the necessary resources and usual public diplomacy tools, such as scholarships.

If all of the above aspects are taken into account, coupled with the positive reactions from the Member State and ECD respondents to being seconded to the EEAS, there is a strong possibility that the EEAS will be able to successfully move the EU into a new position as a more credible international actor, at the same time providing an effective platform from which to promote and export the EU's core values world wide.

#### **11.4 FUTURE RESEARCH: IMPROVEMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The remaining section outlines aspects which may have proven useful for both the current study, as well as areas where future consideration is needed. Although there were advantages to collecting the primary data over a five year timeframe, in the future it may be helpful to conduct the interview process and data collection within the same annual timeframe, in order to strengthen comparisons. In addition, the study at hand specifically chose two countries with similar partnership relationships with the EU. Although the findings about the potential impact that the EEAS may have focused on these two countries, they may be extended to other countries and regions around the globe. However, given that it is conceivable that the EEAS's mandate would not encompass New Zealand and Singapore, it would be useful to extend this study to include other countries, either from other regions, or perhaps with differing importance attached to them. For example, an American case study could be useful, as would studies of EU neighbouring countries such as Russia or Ukraine. Likewise,

given the relatively secure political climate in both New Zealand and Singapore, as well as their status as developed countries, this study could also be expanded to include those countries which benefit directly from EU development policy, for example, in African Caribbean and Pacific countries. This would be particularly pertinent given the importance of the Commission and the ECDs in developing countries. Furthermore, countries or regions plagued by political unrest would also make interesting and varied case studies.

As the thesis has progressed it has become apparent that the proposals for the EEAS are a moving target. In other words, the proposals introducing the EEAS are only beginning and future research and consideration is needed. Since Ireland's approval of the Lisbon Treaty, it seems that new developments are happening at a fast rate. Most noticeably, Poland has suggested that the EEAS should encompass foreign, security and defence policy and some types of consular work, but its mandate should exclude trade and development (Rettman, 2009). These suggestions suggest that the heart of the proposals remain to be ironed out and agreed upon. Whilst it is acknowledged that developments on streamlining how the EEAS will look and function have been undertaken in Brussels this year, no immediate answers are forthcoming.

Based on the findings of this study, it seems highly likely that the EEAS will become a reality. Before then, there are a number of practical considerations which remain to be analysed. It is suggested that a five year research strategy could be undertaken in order to allow a thorough understanding of not only what the EEAS will look like, but also how *effective* it will be in carrying out its role.

The first question concerns the division of labour amongst the EU institutions and Member States and how the Member States and diplomats can be realistically integrated into the new system. This question moves beyond just EU competences and it is necessary to consider Member State prerogatives for outlining the career trajectories of their diplomats. In addition, what competences will the EEAS take on? Is improving joint security and defence mechanisms an important aspect of EU foreign policy and, if so, will this form part of the EEAS mandate? Will trade and development be part of the focus? A further question in this regard is how to ensure that cohesion and coherence is achieved whilst Member States and EU institutions

retain their individuality. In other words, the EEAS will need to try to achieve the elusive quality of ‘unity in diversity’.

A second thread of further research could look at the allocation of resources for the EEAS and the Union Delegations. Such funding questions will directly impact on the effectiveness of the proposals as well as the competences themselves. This is particularly pertinent given that this thesis has raised the question of whether non-represented Member States could pay more money to have diplomatic representation by the EEAS. Indeed, as history has shown in the case of the Commission, it is significant that the EEAS is given adequate resources if it is to fully live up to expectations that may be placed on it. In addition, at present, the EP is gaining more strength in EU foreign policy through its right of veto over the EU’s foreign policy budget which consequently means that the EU’s ‘democratic deficit’ could be improved.

Finally, a more in-depth analysis of the competences of the EEAS will be necessary, including the impact of this on Member States and third countries. Given the internal and external emphasis on trade for the EU, trade relations between the EU and third countries need to be further considered. In particular, a future study could be undertaken which looks at the correlation between the opening and closing of EU Member State embassies in third countries and trade volume. This would enable a more thorough understanding for both Member States and third countries of the positive economic effects of embassies and ensure that the possible closure of some embassies will not have adverse ramifications.

Once answers are presented to these questions and the EEAS is implemented, be it through a gradual process, or a total takeover of the ECDs, its role will need to be evaluated. The methodology undertaken for this study could be a useful starting point. This would include using the ‘National Centre for Research on Europe perceptions template’ at two yearly intervals which would include analysing perceptions of the EU for third citizenry, as well as the presence of the EEAS and EU in the local media. This would mean evaluating which actors are present in media portrayals of the EU, and in what sort of context they are mentioned (i.e. normative, economic or political). Interviews and surveys with public and elites would also be conducted in order to

understand what sort of actor the EU is understood to be. Furthermore, specific questions about the role of the Union Delegations could be included in questionnaires for political, economic and civil society elites. Furthermore, as this study has done, interviews could be conducted with the practitioners of EU foreign policy to ascertain how effectively the proposals have been implemented and in order to make recommendations for future developments. This would be useful for ensuring that the EEAS may be as effective as it can be in achieving its mandate, whilst cooperating with other EU representatives who remain in third countries.

This thesis has demonstrated that a gap exists between how the EU sees itself, how it wishes to be seen in third countries, and the way it is perceived by those countries. If the EU is a benign, positive actor which wishes to promote peace and stability world wide, then it is imperative that this is adequately articulated. Although the EU plays different roles in different countries and regions throughout the world, the potential of the EU to become a real global power is indisputable. This is due to its sheer number of resources, its economic strength, its desirability and its current (but hindered) diplomatic presence. Indeed, it seems that the EEAS has the real potential to improve both the capability of the EU as an international actor, as well as to improve the way that it communicates its goals abroad. However, a number of hindrances remain, which will need to be carefully resolved before the EU will be capable of having any real impact.

Ultimately, there are three findings for this thesis. Firstly, how the EU sees itself and its role in the world does not necessarily correlate with outsiders perceptions of it. Secondly, part of the confusion and ineffectiveness of the EU to be recognised could be directly related to its confusing multi-representation in third countries. Finally, the EEAS has the ability to greatly improve the way the EU operates and communicates, thus potentially narrowing the 'expectations-capabilities gap' as well as improving the capability of the EU to be a normative power. However, the vagueness of the EEAS proposals means that steps must be taken to ensure that the EEAS is supported by the other EU actors who will be affected by the new system, as well as ensuring that the proposals are effective in carrying out the goals that it has set out to achieve. This is important if the EU aims to be taken more seriously as an international actor and is to be a force for good in the world. However, caution must be taken against

building up the expectations placed on the EEAS too much – history demonstrates that it would be foolish to market the EEAS as a panacea for all of the EU's problems.

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## APPENDIX I

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### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EU DIPLOMATS SECONDED TO NEW ZEALAND AND SINGAPORE (OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2005 & SEPTEMBER 2008)

1. In your opinion, is it important for the European Union to have a Union Minister for Foreign Affairs and consequently his ministry, the European External Action Service?
2. What does your mission currently do that an EU embassy could not do?
3. Do you see any possible risks for your country and/or office should the EEAS go ahead at a later stage?  
**Back-up question:** If a combined European diplomatic corps was created, how do you see consensus being made on dividing issues among EU member state?
4. Do you see any possible advantages for the X embassy should the EEAS go ahead?  
What would be your suggestions for establishing the EEAS?
5. Without the ratification of the constitution, what do you think will happen in the future for the EEAS?
  - b. Do you see a time frame?
6. There have been institutional struggles relating to who will have the most control over the EEAS. The struggle is primarily between the Commission and the Council. Do you have any comments on this?
7. In what way do you think that 3<sup>rd</sup> countries like Australia/New Zealand who would host the EEAS could benefit from the new system?

#### *Questions for the ECDs*

8. Do you think the delegation is well equipped for the transformation?
9. To your knowledge, had any changes been made prior to the TCT rejection?

#### *Questions for Member States*

10. Do you believe that your office works to promote the image of Europe?
11. There has been a suggestion that staff may be seconded from the national diplomatic services of member states, how do you think your colleagues would react to such a placement?
12. Are there any other issues that you would like to raise?

#### *Supplementary Question for Singapore* (asked first)

In your opinion, what is Europe's role in the world?

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## APPENDIX II

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### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BRUSSELS INTERVIEWEES (MARCH AND APRIL, 2007)

1. What is your experience working for the European Union?
2. In your opinion, is it important for the European Union to have a Union Minister for Foreign Affairs and consequently his ministry, the European External Action Service?
3. Do you think the EU is currently a great power?
4. Do you know how the proposals of the EEAS got on the agenda?
5. How do you think consensus could be made on dividing issues among EU member states?
6. Will Member State sovereignty be compromised?
7. Are there any aspects of foreign policy work that your institution will need to retain?
8. The Commission has a greater number of workers in foreign policy than the Council. Do you see this as a problem?
9. Should the parliament be involved? How?
10. Do you think that the EEAS would be more beneficial for larger or smaller Member States?
11. Without the ratification of the constitution, what do you think will happen in the future for the EEAS? Do you see a time frame?
12. In what way do you think that 3<sup>rd</sup> countries like Australia/New Zealand/Pacific who would host the EEAS could benefit from the new system? Disadvantage?
13. Any advice for New Zealand?
14. Are there any other issues that you would like to raise?

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## APPENDIX III

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### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE NEW ZEALAND MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE (NOVEMBER 2007)

13. What is your MFAT experience? What countries have you been placed in?
14. What Member State countries do NZ have strong political/ economic or cultural links with?
15. Do you know what New Zealand's strategy in dealing with the EU currently is?
  - b. How can this relationship be improved?
16. In what way do you think 3<sup>rd</sup> countries New Zealand who would host the EEAS could benefit from the new system/
  - b. how can we make it work to our advantage?
17. Do you see any possible risks for NZ should the EEAS go ahead at a later stage?
18. Some of my preliminary conclusions have been that the EEAS might represent EU countries that are not already in NZ, for example, new Eastern bloc countries, that traditionally NZ don't have strong ties with. Do you agree with this? Could this be an advantage?

#### *European Union General Questions*

19. Are there any aspects of embassy work that Member States will need to retain?

**Back-up Q b.** this is just a general question to draw on your diplomatic training and experience if a combined European diplomatic corps was created, how do you think consensus could be made on dividing issues among EU member states?
20. Do you see any possible advantages for the EU and Member States should the EEAS go ahead?
21. Disadvantages?
22. Without the ratification of the constitution, what do you think will happen in the future for the EEAS?
  - b. Do you see a time frame?
23. In your experience, did you see evidence of EU ms countries working together / promoting the image of Europe?
24. Are there any other issues that you would like to raise?

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## APPENDIX IV

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### List of Interviewees Pertaining to the EEAS<sup>112</sup>

#### *New Zealand*

Interview with Member State diplomat responsible for Australia and New Zealand October 2005, Canberra, Australia.

Interview with European Commission Delegation official responsible for Australia and New Zealand, October 2005, Canberra, Australia.

Interview with Member State Ambassador to New Zealand, December 2005, Wellington, New Zealand.

Interview with Member State diplomat to New Zealand, December 2005, Wellington, New Zealand.

Interview with Member State diplomat to New Zealand, December 2005, Wellington, New Zealand.

Interview with Member State Ambassador to New Zealand, December 2005, Wellington, New Zealand.

Interview with Member State Ambassador to New Zealand, December 2005, Wellington, New Zealand.

Interview with Member State Ambassador to New Zealand, February 2006, (via email).

Interview with former New Zealand diplomat to the EU, June 2007, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Interview with European Commission Delegation *Charge de Affairs* to New Zealand, George Cunningham, October 2007, Wellington, New Zealand.

Interview with two officials from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, October 2007, Wellington, New Zealand.

Discussion with former New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs, Winston Peters, January 2009, Karaka, New Zealand.

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<sup>112</sup> Some names have been omitted at the request of the interviewee.

## ***Singapore***

Interview with Swedish diplomat, October 14 2008, Singapore.

Interview with the Polish Ambassador Bogusław Marcin Majewski, October 15 2008, Singapore.

Interview with Member State diplomat, October 16 2008, Singapore.

Interview with Member State diplomat, October 16 2008, Singapore.

Interview with Spanish diplomat, October 16 2008, Singapore.

Interview with Marc Calcoen, the Belgian ambassador to Singapore October 17 2008, Singapore.

Interview with the Danish Ambassador to Singapore, Vibeke Rovsing Lauritzen, October 17 2008, Singapore.

Interview with the Dutch Ambassador to Singapore, October 20 2008, via telephone.

Interview with ECD official, October 23 2008, via telephone.

## **European Interviews**

### ***Ministers of the European Parliament***

Charles Tannock, March 30 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

David Martin, March 19 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Michael Cramer, German Green Party Minister for the European Parliament, March 29 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Conservative Member of the European Parliament, March 26 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

### ***Officials from the European Commission***

Peter Dun, European Commission official - External Relations Directorate General, March 30 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

European Commission official, March 30 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Karel Kovanda, European Commission, March 27 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Former European Commission official, March 20, 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

European Commission official, March 28 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Former European Commission official, March 23, 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Luc Vandebon, European Commission official, March 28, 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

George Cunningham, European Commission official, March 28, 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

***Officials from the Council Secretariat***

Cesira Daniello DG E Coordination, Council Secretariat, March 22 Brussels, Belgium.

Senior official, Council Secretariat, March 22 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Official from the Council Secretariat, March 27 2007, Brussels, Belgium.

Brian Crowe, former head Director General for External Relations, European Council, April 20 2007, London, England.

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