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Strategic Users of Culture: German Decisions for Military Action

OLIVIER SCHMITT

Diplomats, desk officers in policy planning staffs and many scholars of international relations devote their careers to attempting to understand and explain states' actions. Policy-makers build an experience of foreign policy assessment based on a daily interaction with their foreign counterparts and develop expectations of likely behaviour thanks to their knowledge of technical issues, while academics are engaged in theorizing about the international system and foreign policy analysis. However, both scholars and policy-makers alike are confused when a state does not behave according to their expectations, and seemingly contradicts previous policies. This paper looks at cases in which political leaders adopt what can be perceived as *a priori* inconsistent behaviour and how they frame and justify their decisions.

In 2006, under pressure from the European Union and France and against the opinion of the majority of its population, Germany participated in a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) operation and sent troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for four months in order to monitor elections. In 2007, however, Germany refused to participate in another ESDP mission in Chad and the Central African Republic to the great surprise (and fury) of some of its key European partners.¹ Why did Germany adopt seemingly contradictory policies, and how did German political leaders justify their decisions?

The core argument of this paper is that, when faced with conflicting pressures from the international environment and their own national constituencies, political leaders consciously use facets of their own strategic culture to legitimate a decision, made for contingent reasons, to participate (or not) in a military operation. The premise of this argument is that strategic culture is a referent for policy-makers, but under certain conditions they may decide to violate their strategic culture; they are not trapped by it.² Room for such violation is greater when facets of the local strategic culture are in conflict with pressures from the international environment. It has been shown by several authors that national decision-makers can use the appeal of international cooperation to overcome domestic opposition to their preferred policies.³ In fact, this paper complements this strand of research by showing that leaders cannot justify their preferred policies by appealing to international cooperation alone. They also need to deploy a specific discursive strategy and justify this approach by anchoring it in a specific facet of their own strategic culture. From a theoretical standpoint, this article reinforces our understanding of strategic culture by showing its multi-faceted nature and its possible strategic use by policy-makers. This research also enriches our understanding of German and EU security policies by providing detailed case studies on the decision-making process of recent military interventions.

The article proceeds as follows. First, I briefly review the literature on strategic culture and highlight the need for a greater emphasis on agency in the analysis. Next, I explain the research design and provide some background information on Germany before conducting the analysis of the two case studies. I conclude by summarizing the findings and showing their continuing relevance.

The Different Ontological Status of the Concept of Strategic Culture

Various historical descriptions of the evolution of the concept of strategic culture have already been attempted. The classical historiography of the concept usually describes successive waves of strategic culture research. For example, Alastair Johnson sees the first wave as initiated by Snyder's study on the Soviet strategic culture.⁴ He identifies Colin Gray and David Jones as the main proponents of this generation. It was later followed by a second wave on the use of strategic culture as a tool of political hegemony. Finally, the third wave, emerging in the 1990s, sees strategic culture as an intervening variable to explain the observed variations from the predictions of Waltzian neo-realism on state behaviours.⁵ This classification has been challenged by authors including Michael Desch, who identifies three waves of cultural analysis in strategic studies: World War II, the Cold War and the post-Cold War period.⁶ A recent survey by Uz Zaman also refers to three generations of cultural strategists.⁷ However, this historiography is usually limited to the political science/international relations English-speaking literature and overemphasizes the novelty of the concept as an intellectual tool to think about security affairs.⁸ The classic distinction is drawn between scholars, such as Colin Gray, thinking that culture must be understood as a context, and those who believe that non-material factors must be taken into consideration to explain outcomes while adopting a positivist research design aimed at identifying causalities.⁹ Some studies of national foreign policies explicitly adopt such a research design to explain state behaviour and acknowledge that strategic culture can serve as an independent variable.¹⁰ Hence, the concept of strategic culture is a contentious one, which justifies that analysis, rather than being focused on an artificial and partly mythologized historical evolution, should instead concentrate on the epistemological and ontological distinctions between different conceptions of strategic culture.

John Glenn's approach is useful in this regard.¹¹ Adopting a Rawlsian distinction, he acknowledges that strategic culture is a 'concept' recovering different 'conceptions'. He adopts a definition of strategic culture that could be shared by all the different conceptions: 'a set of shared beliefs and assumptions derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which influence the appropriate ends and means chosen for achieving security objectives'.¹² Strategic culture creates norms of appropriate behaviours for agents to follow. It is particularly interesting to note that culture is a 'set of norms', as this definition avoids conceiving strategic culture as a uniformed and monolithic bloc. A given strategic culture is composed of different facets, which might be mutually reinforcing but are independent parts of the same set. As such, these different facets can also be conflicting. For

example, the French strategic culture is an odd mix of promoting human rights and democracy and a preference to engage most international issues in a multilateral framework while also being obsessed by its 'rank' and independence, having comparatively little reluctance to use military force to defend its own interests.¹³

Glenn produces a classification of the different conceptions of strategic culture based on an analysis of their ontological and epistemological assumptions. This taxonomy may have its flaws (Glenn himself acknowledges that the work of some scholars could be classified in two conceptions), but it is a useful heuristic tool to examine the ontological status of each approach and their main problems.

The first conception is the epiphenomenal strategic culture. It refers to the approach shared by scholars following Snyder's work on Soviet military culture and treats strategic culture as an intervening variable explaining variations from the predictions of neo-realist models. It is a limited understanding of culture, which poses epistemological problems as culture is treated as a residual variable, used when no other explanation is left. This approach fails to account for culture's independent causal role in shaping strategic behaviour.

The second conception, which aims at correcting the shortcomings of the first, is the conventional constructivists' one. For them, action and beliefs are shaped by culture and 'ideas operate "all the way down" to actually shape actors and action in world politics'.¹⁴ Conventional constructivists argue that culture is created through socialization, interactions, perceptions and experiences and is a process rather than a given. This approach has produced detailed and alternative accounts to the dominant neo-realist literature, but is ill equipped to explain inconsistency in foreign policy behaviour. Explaining changes in foreign policy requires explaining changes in the cultural environment, but constructivist scholars usually agree that such changes occur infrequently and take some time. But what if the change occurs frequently or quickly? This can be explained by looking at decision-makers, an aspect overlooked by conventional constructivists, who generally argue that culture restrains the possibility of choices for agents. Thus the role of the agency is under-theorized in conventional constructivist approaches.

Postmodernists are mostly concerned with the way discourses and representations reproduce structures of domination and are manipulated by actors to advance their own agendas. The emphasis is placed on the use of discursive strategies to shape mentalities and representations. In contradiction to conventional constructivists, postmodernists emphasize the contingency of the creation of a discourse and look at the agency responsible for its production. However, postmodernists usually conceive the agent as a 'useful idiot', building discourses reproducing social structures without knowing it.¹⁵

Finally, the interpretative conception of strategic culture calls for an immersion into the culture under study in order to properly understand the actor's motivations, rationales and views of the world. Culture cannot be treated as a variable among others. It is everywhere in the analysis. This is the position of, for instance, Colin Gray, as we have seen before.

These last two approaches seem to conceive the agent as trapped by culture, although Ann Swidler has shown that 'culture influences action ... by shaping a

repertoire of “tool kit” of habits, skills, and styles from which people construct strategies of action’.¹⁶ Swidler questions the usual understanding of culture as shaping action by providing ideas and values towards which actions should be directed. Instead, she emphasizes that, in what she calls ‘settled periods’, culture provides resources from which people can draw lines of actions, bringing agency back into the analysis. Moreover, the emphasis on contingency and the need for immersion into specific social contexts advocated by these last two conceptions of strategic culture bears the risk of dragging them into degenerative research programmes by being incapable of producing falsifiable generalizations.

The brief survey of the ontological assumptions made by the four conceptions reveals some flaws, notably the lack of understanding of the agency’s role in its relation to strategic culture, and the risk of being unable to generalize falsifiable conclusions from detailed and contingent analysis.

Hence, a conception of the agency and of strategic culture should be able to:

- be more than a residual category to explain variations from neo-realism;
- explain quick variations in foreign policy outcomes;
- give agency a proper role;
- lay the groundwork for cumulative knowledge.

It is then an ontological conception of strategic culture close to those of conventional constructivism (culture is a referent and operates ‘all the way down’), but I give the agent a greater ontological status than is usually granted. The main question then becomes: under what conditions can the agent consciously instrumentalize his own strategic culture? The case studies offer the beginning of an answer.

Bringing agency back into the analysis of strategic culture has two noticeable advantages. Firstly, it can take into consideration cultural inconsistency in foreign policy and security outcomes as is shown in the case studies, while allowing for an understanding of culture in line with conventional constructivist arguments. Secondly, looking at the conditions under which agents use strategic culture to achieve contingent objectives leaves room for variations across states and comparisons of methodologies, thus permitting cumulative knowledge.

Case Studies and Method

To investigate these claims, this paper looks at the German decision-making process in the ESDP missions EUFOR RD Congo (2006) and EUFOR-Chad/CAR (2007). While German decision-makers agreed on participating in the 2006 mission, they refused to do so in 2007 although the two missions were quite similar. This apparent contradiction is worth investigating as it reveals the rhetorical strategies employed by policy-makers to justify their decisions.

The choice of the case studies is guided by the time proximity between the two missions, which would not leave room for a deep change in German strategic culture. A contradictory decision is made under the same cultural environment,

hence using the same cultural resources. On the opposite, emphasizing the contingency of the decision reveals a more pragmatic and, arguably, more accurate approach to foreign policy analysis.¹⁷ Finally, it also brings European Union security issues inside the broader field of security studies and does not leave them to EU specialists only.

To investigate the claim of the role of contingent decisions, I analyse in depth the decision-making process that led to participation in the mission in Congo, and the refusal to participate in the mission in Chad. Based on press reports and interviews with policy-makers, the objective is to identify the key decision-makers, and delineate to what extent they were able to prevail upon other options.

To investigate the second claim of this article, namely that, in order to justify their choices, policy-makers decide to prioritize one set of norms over another, I use the method of discourse analysis. Regarding the research question, and the claim I propose to investigate, it is important to understand how actors represent and phrase their decisions. I mostly rely on predicate analysis to examine the texts (written or verbal) that shape the discourse. Predicate analysis involves studying the verbs, adverbs and adjectives that are attached to nouns.¹⁸ I also rely on subject positioning, which refers to the creation of a hierarchy and of the specific nature of relationships (for example, similarity, opposition or identity) through the discourse.

The selection of texts is guided by the advice that 'if a discourse is operative in a given community, it is expected to materialize in those texts whenever the debate is sufficiently important'.¹⁹ Hence, I analyse press conferences, testimonials of key individuals to parliament, as well as interviews given in several newspapers. I also had limited access to confidential French and German diplomatic documents, and completed this text selection with interviews of policy-makers.

Interviews were semi-structured and conducted with German and French officials and scholars over three years. The sample of interviewees included over 40 military officers, diplomats, members of parliament and researchers, all involved in the decision-making process. The principle was to allow policy-makers to expose their own version of the decision-making process, and to ask their opinion on alternative explanations. This usually had the effect that interviewees either amended their own versions (taking into consideration other explanations) or bluntly disagreed. While the former case was the most frequent, on a few occasions accounts were divergent on minor details. The ultimate goal was to develop as complete a picture as possible of the decision-making process.

Most of the interviewees requested confidentiality and I only indicate their affiliation in the endnotes, without mentioning names. This choice may be problematic, as the reader cannot have access to the primary material I used to support my claims, but this is always the problem when a scholarly work deals with defence and security issues, and the chosen method requires the reader to greatly trust the author. All the sentences quoted in this thesis were pronounced in my presence, and written down (not recorded, as most of the interviewees were uncomfortable with this method). They were selected as being the best example of a widespread feeling among the interviewees. Due to space limitations, I often present one quote only

but, as a matter of principle, no quote has been used if other interviewees did not share the same feeling and expressed it in a relatively similar way.

In the analysis, I pay particular attention to the rhetoric used in order to justify the mission. Subject positioning was relevant in order to establish the main referent subject that would legitimate the mission (Europe in the case of RD Congo) or justify non-participation (Germany in the case of EUFOR-Chad).

To demonstrate the strategic use of strategic culture, I focus on the use of rhetoric to build the argument, showing that the same line of argumentation was used in cases with different outcomes, first to justify and then to deny the participation to the mission.

Before turning to the analysis of the case studies, I briefly describe the German political structure (which helps us to understand the decision-making process) and the German strategic culture.

The German Context

Internal Decision-making Process

In Germany there are three key officials in the formulation of foreign and defence policies.²⁰ The first is the Chancellor, who is constitutionally tasked with defining political priorities. Although a prominent personage, the Chancellor cannot interfere in the organization of a ministry. As most German governments are coalitions (with the traditional attribution of the foreign affairs portfolio to the smaller coalition partner), the Chancellor cannot intervene in the everyday life of a minister.

The other important officials are the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence, the latter also serving as head of the army. The coalition nature of the German government imposes the necessity of consensus between the partners. At the time of the case studies, the two main German parties, the Christlich Demokratische Union (CDU, centre-right) and the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland (SPD, centre-left), were coalition partners. The Chancellery and the Ministry of Defence belong to the CDU and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the SPD, therefore both parties knew that they could not afford a major clash if they wanted to survive in the government. So, some consensus was found in the field of foreign policy.²¹

Another important actor is the German parliament, the Bundestag, which must approve any troop deployment (ESDP included). The government issues a mandate proposal that is accepted or rejected by the MPs. The vote is definitive, which requires the government to work closely with parliament during the preliminary phases in order to secure the vote and issue a mandate that will not be rejected.

German Strategic Culture

According to research by Hellmann, the *Social Science Citation Index* references 1,449 results for 'German foreign policy', with only 'American foreign policy' scoring higher.²² This interest is explained by the huge attention devoted to Germany by scholars willing to prove the superiority of their theoretical models in the 1990s. Opposing the arguments of neo-realists, who were predicting that

Germany would be more assertive and would seek to acquire nuclear power after the end of the Cold War, constructivist scholars tried to show that the Nazi experience, as well as the deep German integration in NATO and other multilateral structures such as the United Nations, deeply transformed the German strategic culture, which would have become power-adverse and anti-militarist.²³ The specific features of this culture are well documented and consist of the following:

- Aversion to unilateralism
- Promotion of stability
- Restraint in military matters, reinforced by widespread anti-military sentiments
- Dedication to the pursuit of responsible and predictable security policy
- Full integration of the Bundeswehr into society
- Cooperation and consensus-building on security issues.²⁴

According to Longhurst, these features are persistent over time and can be observed today. Hence, policy-makers must take into consideration Germany's specific strategic culture when making a decision regarding military intervention, a highly sensitive topic for the German public and political personnel alike. Despite the new spirit of German interventionism, I would side with Longhurst, Giegerich and Mirow to argue that elements of the German culture of restraint still have an influence.²⁵

Regarding the purpose of the military, Germany is in the process of transforming its armed forces in order for them to be more projectable. However, it is unclear if more force projection will be possible in the future. A German officer mentioned that:

We [the Germans] are in the process of normalizing our relations with the use of force. We went already quite far in comparison with where we were just 15 years earlier. However, it may happen that the process will be reversible. It is far from assured that, if major casualties occur in theatre, we will not go back to our traditional posture that involves a high reluctance to force projection and the use of military force in general.²⁶

Regarding the means, it seems obvious that, considering Germany's reluctance to use force, the use of civilian means will be preferred over the use of military means. This consideration may enter into consideration when deciding whether or not to participate in an ESDP military mission.

The attitude of the German public is also important. The majority of the German population has a positive image of the Bundeswehr, as the army was designed in order to avoid any gap between the military and the population. This policy took the form of the institution of military service and an emphasis on civil responsibility in the military.²⁷ However, support for military missions abroad is traditionally low and tends to decrease in cases of high media coverage.²⁸

Since the end of World War II, Germany has been engaged in the construction of the European Union, a theological objective and 'redemption' for the Nazi period.²⁹ Other authors have shown that Germany has become increasingly sceptical of further integration.³⁰ However, I argue that while Germany became gradually reluctant to the technicalities and practicalities of EU integration, the symbolic appeal of a peaceful

and more integrated Europe never faded in the political discourse. The positive image of multilateralism is not limited to the benefits of EU integration, and also encompasses organizations such as NATO and the UN.

Hence, German strategic culture is characterized by reluctance towards the use of military force and a preference for the benefits of multilateral cooperation (including the European Union, NATO or the UN). These ‘facets’ of the same culture are often mutually reinforcing, but can also be instrumentalized to legitimate unpopular decisions, as will be shown below.

Participating in the Congo Mission

After years of civil war and inter-state conflict, a concerted effort by the international community and local actors led to a transition in the African Great Lakes region, beginning in the late 1990s. The establishment of the Mission des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC) in 1999 was intended to facilitate this transition process. An important step was the scheduling of democratic elections in 2006. Operation EUFOR RD Congo was established on the basis of the Council Joint Action 2006/319/CFSP of 27 April 2006, and was designed to support the MONUC in its stabilizing role during the election process, as well as to protect civilians. The EUFOR mission was deployed for four months, from 30 July to 30 November.³¹

Internal Political Situation

The German coalition government was elected on 18 September 2005, with voters primarily supporting the two main parties (CDU, centre-right, 35.2% and SPD, centre-left, 34.2%). Neither of the two main parties was able to secure a coalition government with their traditional allies (the liberals of the Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP) for the CDU and the Green party for the SPD), therefore leaders decided to pursue a grand coalition formula allying the two main parties in the same government. The election being quite recent, the newly elected government enjoyed the positive image associated with the coming to power of new leaders. The situation was so secure for the government that in January 2006 a political commentator even used the title ‘Alle lieben Angela’ [Everybody Loves Angela].³²

Decision-making Process

On 27 December 2005, Assistant Secretary General and head of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guehenno, issued a letter to the EU Council inviting it to consider the deployment of military force to assist the MONUC during the election process in the DRC. According to interviews, this request took the Germans by surprise, and they immediately considered it a French plot to force the EU to conduct a new military operation. The most important element was the nationality of Guehenno, a former French diplomat, which led the Germans to suspect that he had obeyed instructions from Paris.

Agreement among European states to accept the request from the UN was quite easily secured, but the force generation process was problematic. To conduct an operation, the EU can either rely on NATO planning capabilities (the *Berlin plus*

agreements), or rely on national headquarters, the capacity planning of the EU itself being until now still limited. In the EU, five member states are accredited to have the capacity to lead an EU operation: France, the UK, Germany, Italy and Greece. It became clear relatively early on that the UK and Italy, because of their commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan, were not willing to lead an EU operation. France had already taken the lead in Congo in 2003 (operation Artemis) and Greece was not interested because of the potential Turkish participation in the mission. Hence, huge pressure was placed on Germany, especially because the German operation headquarters (OHQ) had been recently validated as being able to lead a multinational operation. Some non-German officials saw the mission as a test.³³ In addition to this, the then High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, personally put extra pressure on Germany as he was keen to put the recently adopted Battlegroup concept to the test. He suggested that the mission could be fulfilled by the Franco-German Battlegroup, which was primarily German staffed, a proposal that Germany declined.³⁴

At first, the Ministry of Defense (BMVg) was reluctant to participate in such an operation, especially in a leading role. An internal document issued by the BMVg assessed the mission as 'potentially putting the lives of German soldiers at risk, without a clear strategic objective'. The assessment of the mission by the BMVg explains the initial reluctance of the Minister of Defence, Franz-Joseph Jung, in January 2006. He first outlined the risk of overstressing German forces, notably because of German participation in Afghanistan. Jung also feared that the Bundeswehr lacked sufficient experience in Africa, and was not ready to take the lead.³⁵ Hence, Jung's initial reaction was to dismiss any leading role for Germany and, subsequently, the Bundeswehr.³⁶ This reluctance seems to be based on technical considerations (notably the risk of overstressing the German armed forces). However, interviewees in the Ministry of Defence offered a slightly different story. According to them, initial reluctance was due to the nature of the mission itself, which was perceived as vague, potentially dangerous, and without the potential for any substantial political gain. An interviewee summarizes the feeling among the BMVg as follows:

The mission was not clear, and, contrary to France, we had almost no African experience. The force generation process would have been difficult, and you have to remember that it is difficult for us to justify sending troops abroad. We lack this experience, and it is not in our culture.³⁷

Hence, it seems that Minister Jung listened to the assessment of his staff, but decided to phrase the reluctance of the BMVg in a different way. Apparently, he thought that being reluctant on the basis of a lack of military capability was more politically acceptable (especially for Germany's partners) than being reluctant on the basis of a lack of experience. This is confirmed very clearly by one interviewee:

Jung knew that it was difficult for us to admit that we were reluctant to go to Africa, especially with the French and the British pushing for the ESDP to gain political maturity in this region. So we argued, at least at first, that it would be difficult for us from a strictly military perspective.³⁸

It is then clear that the Minister of Defence, regardless of his motivations, did not want Germany to take any leadership role in the mission.³⁹

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AA) had a slightly different perspective. According to interviewees, the German delegation in Brussels welcomed the request from the UN quite positively. As a German diplomat recalls: 'We were not in principle opposed to the mission. The way we assessed it was that it was good for the EU and good for Congo. As such, we should be part of it'.⁴⁰ Hence, it seems that the AA was much more willing than the BMVg to engage troops on the ground. However, because of the nature of the coalition government, it would have been difficult for the Minister of Foreign Affairs alone, Frank-Walter Steinmeier (member of the SPD), to overcome his colleagues' reticence (Jung was a CDU member).

Chancellor Angela Merkel herself decided to play a leadership role in the mission after a Franco-German meeting with President Chirac. Hoping to prove her commitment to the Franco-German relationship, Chancellor Merkel is reported to have agreed to German participation in the mission in principle, while demanding a UN Security Council mandate and limiting German deployment in Congo to Kinshasa (the rest of the German troops being deployed in Gabon). The meeting was held in Paris on 23 January 2006, hence before some of Jung's declarations. This chronology of events can be interpreted either as the time Chancellor Merkel needed to finally make her decision or as a last attempt by Jung to twist the Chancellor's idea to his own conclusions. A German officer confirms this point: 'It all came from the Chancellery. Merkel agreed on the mission, and on German participation. Jung had nothing else to say'.⁴¹

This decision by Merkel is a clear example of policy leadership in the decision-making process, in which the Chancellor imposed her will on a minister, although they both belonged to the same political formation. An opposition leader, Birgit Hamburger (FDP), declared that: 'Chancellor Merkel took an engagement with President Chirac for the sake of the Franco-German relation only, without discussing the issue in detail'.⁴²

Another element of the decision was emphasized by several interviews: the pressure upon Germany was increasing as it was now expected to take initiatives in the field of the ESDP. According to an interviewee:

When it became clear that neither the French nor the British wanted to take the lead, we were left with nothing but having to go ourselves. I think that Chancellor Merkel understood that Germany's position and reputation in Europe would suffer if we could not prove that we were able to take the lead when faced with the opportunity to do so.⁴³

We see here the influence of Germany's role in Brussels. Germany was considered one of the 'big three', along with France and the UK, and other member states were expecting it to take its share in the development of the ESDP. Hence, Germany became a 'leading power against its will'.⁴⁴

Once the decision was made, the government still needed to secure the support of the Bundestag. Although it is unlikely that parliament would have gone against the government's will, MPs knew that the mission had no real support among the

public. They subsequently sent an exploratory mission to the DRC (as they wanted to make their own assessment of the situation), and discussed in detail specifics of the operation (rules of engagement, material, commodities for the soldiers, and so on). As one MP recalls:

The process was too long. But it was not an easy decision to make: there was no popular support for the mission. We needed to be 100% sure that the mission was necessary, and that our troops would not be uselessly put at risk. Should we not have been convinced that all the required guarantees were fulfilled, we would not have allowed the mission.⁴⁵

This opinion is not shared by some policy-makers, who were sure that:

The Bundestag would have followed the government anyway. It was only one year after the general elections, and no one could afford a governmental crisis. MPs think they are important because they are constitutionally entitled to ultimately decide upon a military intervention, but they do what the government wants them to do.⁴⁶

The truth is probably somewhere between these two extreme opinions. Although it is unlikely that parliament would openly oppose the government on this topic, the drafters of the mandate in the BMVg and the AA certainly took into consideration the MPs' concerns regarding troop safety.

In the end, Germany agreed to take the lead, providing the OHQ in Potsdam and one-third of the troops on the ground. In this case, we can see that the German strategic culture that informed the assessment of the BMVg would have opposed the Congo mission. But the decision of a political leader overcame this reticence. In this case, the importance of Franco German relations is supposedly the key element of the decision.

We can now turn to the reaction of the German public, followed by an analysis of the official justification to take the lead in the EUFOR RD Congo mission.

Public Reactions

The reaction to the mission was largely hostile among the German public. After Germany declared its intention to lead the EU mission on 21 March 2006, a large front of criticism emerged. On 30 May, 57% of the German population was opposed to a mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (40% approved, 3% without opinion).⁴⁷

The opposition parties, notably the FDP, recalled Jung's declarations of January and February 2006, and declared that the latest developments were a broken promise. The Linkspartei proposed to deploy civilian observers instead of militarizing the mission.⁴⁸ Even inside the government parties themselves, opposition arose. The main criticisms were concentrated on the utility of force itself. Johannes Kars (SPD) doubted the effectiveness of the mission in terms of securing the electoral process.⁴⁹

The mission itself was soon portrayed as being potentially dangerous, and Congo was pictured as not being far from hell on earth. Kinshasa was described as a 'boiling

cauldron', ready to explode at any moment.⁵⁰ The capital was also portrayed as violent, messy, complicated and dangerous, and a newspaper discussed a 'peace mission in the middle of chaos'.⁵¹ For example, child soldiers were portrayed as 'living bombs', trigger-happy children ready to fight Western troops.⁵² To add to this unflattering picture, newspapers published 'Congo stories' from their correspondents, who were eager to tell the 'most dangerous moment of [their] lives'.⁵³ Week after week, the mass media portrayed the DRC as a dangerous trap for German soldiers.

The opposition was reinforced by the impression that Germany was not prepared for this mission. Building on Jung's early declarations, several articles listed all the shortcomings revealed during the planning phase, and criticized the inadequate equipment and preparation of the Bundeswehr. The deployment was even criticized for not equipping tents with a cooling system and it was claimed that soldiers had difficulty accessing the internet, making communication with their families difficult.⁵⁴

We can here observe the resilience of German strategic culture and its opposition to the use of force. The classical argument was found in the Linkspartei's call for civilian observers. But other elements of German strategic culture, which consider the integration of the Bundeswehr in society as a cardinal principle, can be found in the calls for a European standard of living, even in Africa. The German soldier being a 'citizen in uniform' suggests that he deserves some special treatment, a fact that appears unthinkable to other armies. The traditional reluctance to use military force in 'out-of-area' operations was reinforced by the description of the DRC as being chaotic and dangerous, with no possibility of a good outcome. It is clear that the German Chancellor made a decision that did not fit into the German strategic culture. It is interesting to now turn to the analysis of the rhetoric used by the government to justify the mission.

For Europe's Sake

When looking at the rhetoric used by the government to justify the mission, one is astonished by the strength of pro-European statements. German leaders virtually never talk about Germany in the EUFOR mission, but only talk about the European Union as a 'force for good', and assimilate German participation with the EU itself. As Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier stated in an op-ed: 'It is European soldiers who last year made sure that the first democratic elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo in forty years were peaceful'.⁵⁵

German soldiers are never mentioned, as they are portrayed as being 'Europeans'. Interestingly, Steinmeier emphasizes only one aspect of the mission: securing the electoral process, hence showing that the EU (and Germany in it) is a force supporting democracy, a notion that he knows will strongly resonate with post-World War II German identity. Implicitly, Steinmeier assimilates the democratization of Germany after the Nazi period to the action that the EU is undertaking in Congo. Hence, the German strategic culture, which has been built in opposition to Nazi militarism, is used as a justification for a military operation in the DRC. Those who claim that Germany, because of its past, should not engage in any form of military action have it wrong. Because of its past, Germany is bounded to help democratization

processes, as it has been successful twice in the country itself (after World War II, with American help, and after reunification, when the German Democratic Republic was absorbed into the democratic structures of the Federal Republic of Germany).

The same line of argumentation was used when Steinmeier defended the principle of the mission to the Bundestag.⁵⁶ After having outlined the goals of the mission and emphasized that Europe should take responsibility, Steinmeier summarized in his conclusion why, according to him, the mission was important: 'A success of these elections will be a decisive step towards a Democratic Republic in Congo. It is important and, in my view, also right that we partake in this'. As he did previously, Steinmeier emphasized the importance of the mission as a way to democratize the DRC. It was Germany's responsibility to help this democratization process, an argument based not on material elements but rather on moral considerations ('it is also right'). There is here an example of a strategic use of the German strategic culture, which is now used to justify the military action.

The same disappearance of 'Germany' in favour of 'Europe' can be found in a letter sent by Franz-Joseph Jung to the German soldiers returning from the DRC. In his letter, Jung writes that: 'The mission in the DRC was necessary because Europe has a special interest in the development of this country'.⁵⁷ The German participation is not even evoked, as it is assumed that if it is in the interest of Europe, it is in the interest of Germany. Hence, German participation is justified by the assimilation of German and European interests. Further on, he adds: 'In that sense, Europe can be proud of the achievements of the EUFOR troops during the last four months'.

Addressing the freshly repatriated German contingent in Cologne on 5 December 2006, Jung adds: 'The European decision to launch this mission was a good one . . . You, soldiers of Germany, along with your partners from other countries, stepped in for European interests'.⁵⁸ Once again, although Germany was the leading nation, it was Europe that must be proud of the mission. The German and European interests were supposed to match perfectly, and hence justify the mission. The initial hesitations and concerns were not evoked, as the decision was now a 'good one'.

In conclusion, we can note that the decision to engage troops in Congo was made by a single political actor, in this case Chancellor Merkel, for the sake of French–German relations and to convince Germany's European partners that it would be a serious actor in the field of the ESDP. However, the initial decision was made by Merkel as, having been elected just six months earlier, she could afford to give proof of her commitment to the ESDP to her European partners, despite internal opposition. Had the internal political situation been less permissive, her initial decision could well have been very different. This decision was in conflict with a central aspect of German strategic culture: its aversion to the use of force. Hence, the official rhetoric was to justify the mission by employing language taken from another constitutive element of the German identity: the commitment to democratic ideals and to the European Union. Germany's unique interests virtually disappeared in the official discourse to be replaced by a commitment to the democratic values of the EU, which had little to do with the reasons that led Germany to take a leading role in the mission. We have here a clear example of the strategic use by political actors of

certain sets of norms (democracy, European integration) to overcome another set of norms (aversion to the use of force).⁵⁹

Refusing to Commit Troops to EUFOR-Chad/CAR

Instability on the Chad-Sudan-CAR border is linked to the presence of armed groups involved in various types of violence. Massive flows of refugees from Sudanese Darfur first crossed the border into Chad in 2003–2004. In 2006, as a result of the deterioration of Chadian internal politics, the humanitarian situation worsened and led international organizations and several NGOs to call for an international intervention to help restore security in the region.

France was instrumental in pushing for an EU mission in Chad, as an intervention in Darfur itself would have been counterproductive at a time when the UN was negotiating with the Sudanese government for the deployment of a United Nations–African Union operation. The legal basis for the operation is the Council Joint Action 2007/677/CFSP of 15 October 2007. The operation's goals were the following:

- To contribute to the protection of civilians in danger
- To facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid
- To contribute to the protection of UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment.

The mission was deployed for one year, from 15 March 2008 to 15 March 2009.⁶⁰

Internal Political Context

As we have seen previously, the decision to intervene in Congo was heavily criticized in Germany. The Bundeswehr was also under pressure during 2006–2007 after the release by the tabloid *Bild* of a picture of German soldiers in Afghanistan playing with skeletons.⁶¹ These shocking pictures emerged at a time when the Special Forces (KSK) were already under scrutiny for allegedly having brutalized a German citizen of Turkish origin, Murat Kurnaz, during his arrest at the Afghan-Pakistani border and before his transfer to Guantanamo.⁶² The political context was thus not favourable to another intervention, which was confirmed in interviews: 'After Congo, which turned out to be a bad experience, and the bashing that the Bundeswehr was enduring, we had the feeling the French were asking a bit too much from us. It was neither a good mission nor the right time'.⁶³ In September 2006, the government was 'unpopular like never before', and only 53% of Germans trusted the party they usually voted for, showing a disenchantment towards the main two parties governing Germany.⁶⁴

Decision-making Process

France was the initial promoter of the mission. Newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bernard Kouchner, had a long experience in humanitarian affairs as the co-founder of Médecins sans Frontières and Médecins du Monde,

and was convinced that humanitarian corridors needed to be established to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid. As a French diplomat recalls, quoted by Frank Renaud: 'In the Ministry, everybody thought that he [Kouchner] had it wrong. Humanitarian corridors are helpful where there is no access to the refugees. But Darfur is already the first humanitarian intervention in the world. There are 80 NGOs in the country, and their problem is not the humanitarian corridors...'. The diplomat then turns to a criticism of the lack of courage of some of his colleagues, who did not dare criticize the minister: 'I remember it annoyed me during the meetings with the Minister: you had people who were previously criticizing the humanitarian corridors, but were now agreeing with everything the Minister said'.⁶⁵

It appears that the initial assessment by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs was wrong, and that diplomats were aware of it. However, they tried to take advantage of their minister's convictions: 'We knew that he was wrong. However, as he really wanted this operation, we thought that it would be good for the EU if it was an ESDP operation'.⁶⁶

Apparently, Kouchner first came up with the idea for an ESDP operation during preparation for a high-level conference on Darfur, scheduled for June 2007 in Paris, during which he travelled to N'Djamena and convinced Chadian President Deby to approve a UN mission in Chad, albeit with the military component under European command. This proposal was not discussed with the European partners in advance, and it seems that the German presidency of the Council forbade Kouchner to announce an ESDP operation in the region at the Paris conference.⁶⁷ Hence, the entire French diplomatic machinery was, after the adoption of a Crisis Management Concept (CMC) by the Council in September 2007, mobilized to convince its partners to contribute to a new ESDP operation.⁶⁸

The German assessment of the operation, however, was quite different. A German internal document described the French proposal as 'vague', potentially militarizing humanitarian aid. French involvement in a former colony was perceived as contrary to official French neutrality. Quite clearly, Berlin feared being dragged into an operation serving French interests (a feeling reinforced after the military help that Paris provided to Chadian President Deby in January 2008), in a former French colony, without a clear exit strategy.

Hence, when Nicolas Sarkozy, Bernard Kouchner, Angela Merkel and Frank-Walter Steinmeier met in Meseberg on 10 September 2007, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs clearly stated that Germany would not participate in the mission. According to a participant at the meeting, Kouchner first tried to expose his perspective, notably the need for humanitarian corridors, in his typical emphatic style. However, his counterpart's reaction was not expected:

Steinmeier interrupted him, and replied that it was out of question for Germany to participate in the mission. He did not see the need for humanitarian corridors, as international help was delivered to NGOs on the ground, and criticized French support to Deby's regime. For him, the mission was useless and potentially dangerous, and he had trouble seeing any German interest in the mission.

When Kouchner replied that it was a European interest rather than a purely German interest, Steinmeier bluntly answered that he should not confound French and European interests.⁶⁹

Hence, it is again clear that there was a strong decision made by a political leader. However, there is still the need to explain why Germany did not veto the mission and agreed to commit financial resources and detach military personal in the OHQ in Paris. On this, the explanation is well summarized by a diplomat:

It was one of the first times that Sarkozy and Merkel met. We did not want to embarrass a newly elected French government. Sarkozy and Merkel already had some *a priori* on each other, and we did not want to add to the cold relations of the early Sarkozy era.⁷⁰

We see here again the effect of the French–German relationship, although, on this occasion, German leaders did not feel obliged to commit troops. They assured a minimum service, in order not to embarrass France.

A German diplomat offers a complementary explanation:

How could we block the mission? If 26 countries agree to the principle of the mission, why should we be the only one to block it? It would be a bit arrogant to tell 26 other countries that they are wrong, and that we are the only ones to be right. This is not how the EU works, and this is not how Germany plays by the EU rules. We don't do that.⁷¹

The importance of the German role in Brussels is underlined again here. Germany was perceived as an honest broker, trying to find a consensus between diverging opinions, and it was difficult for policy-makers to appear as the reluctant partner.

To conclude, we can once again observe the role of policy leadership in the decision not to participate. This decision found a positive echo in the administration (in comparison with participation on EUFOR RD Congo, to which the BMVg was initially reluctant). Contributing to the mission via the Athena mechanism was decided for two reasons: to preserve relations with France and to avoid being portrayed as the 'vetoer' in comparison with other European countries.⁷²

Here again, we can observe a decision made by political actors taking into consideration the constrained political environment. I now turn to an analysis of Germany's motivations for refusing to commit troops in Chad.

A Mission Perceived as Being Useless and Dangerous

The first line of argument was that the mission was ultimately not in German interests. Interviewees all argued that the German policy towards Africa mostly had to do with development and technical aid, and that Germany did not enjoy special relationships with African countries. The interviewees saw this favourably, as it allowed Germany to be neutral and impartial in its policy towards Africa. Interestingly, most of the interviewees agreed with the statement that: 'Germany does not have any interest

in Africa, and our presence there is purely technical. Our policy is purely development-based, and has nothing to do with economic interests' in one form or another. Interviewees all made a connection between the absence of German interests in Africa and Germany's refusal to commit military troops.⁷³

The second argument was that the use of military troops did not fit with the German strategic culture, a point stressed by military officers and diplomats alike. A few quotes illustrate this point:

- 'Berlin does not accept that we can have interests that might be defended by military means: going against our strategic culture may have huge political costs'.
- 'We don't necessarily see humanitarian aid as having to be backed up by military forces: it is not in our culture and it is not natural for us'.
- 'We still don't have the same relation with the use of military force as other Western countries'.⁷⁴

Hence, the strategic culture argument, which was secondary to other interests in the EUFOR RD Congo mission, is used to justify non-participation, at least with military means.

A third argument, related to the previous one, is that the lessons learned in Congo were damaging for the Bundeswehr. Some interviewees referred to the fact that German soldiers were complaining of lack of comfort, and that the Bundestag was highly reluctant to authorize any other military operations in Africa, especially only one year after operation EUFOR RD Congo. This reinforces the previously discussed point that the internal political context was not permissive and political leaders would have been under huge pressure when trying to justify a new mission.

A final argument by the interviewees was the degree of French involvement in the mission. For all the interviewees, the mission was perceived as defending French interests and not European ones. Hence, they all expressed fear that they would lose their reputation of impartiality: 'We clearly had no interest involved in the area. For us, it was a French mission, under an EU cover. Why should we be involved when we are not concerned?'.⁷⁵

It is interesting to note the use of the German interest argument. German and European interests are no longer intertwined, as they were to justify the German participation in EUFOR RD Congo. This time, the lack of German interest is used to explain the non-participation in the mission. The rhetoric changed significantly in comparison to the declarations related to EUFOR RD Congo. It is also noticeable that the refusal to participate, which fits into the German strategic culture, is also justified in these terms.

The Public Debate

As the decision not to participate in the mission was made quite early, the public debate was almost non-existent in Germany. The only open-source publications available come from German think tanks, and they are quite critical of the mission, using the same line of argumentation as policy-makers. According to Kathrin Brockmann and Daniel Göler from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik

(DGAP), the mission was ‘poorly planned, with unclear goals which did not ameliorate the visibility nor the strength of the EU as an international actor’.⁷⁶ Denis Tull, from the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), gives another example. He assesses that the ‘French support to President Deby fundamentally changed the framing conditions of the mission. In light of this, the EU must check if and under which conditions it is still wise to launch the mission’.⁷⁷

Almost two years later, an extensive assessment of the ESDP operations produced by the SWP criticized the French role: ‘The operation represents the successful attempt by a single European state to get its own interests placed on the European agenda’.⁷⁸ It is interesting to note that the debate inside the intellectual community about the mission shares this assessment: the mission was seen as a façade for French interests.

Public Justification

As the decision not to participate in the mission was made relatively early, German policy-makers did not need to justify their non-participation. It was rather difficult to find documents and the only relevant one was a declaration made by the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Martin Jäger, on 11 January 2008: ‘We said, from the very beginning, that we would not participate . . . Every country has its priorities. We are very much involved in Afghanistan, in the Balkans and we don’t have any force available for such a deployment’.⁷⁹

Here, the official justification for not participating was a lack of capacity, which was also the initial justification for the reticence towards EUFOR RD Congo. However, when asked about this, a German military official replied: ‘It had nothing to do with a lack of military capacity. We could have participated, had we wished to do so. It is that we had no interest in participating in a French mission’.⁸⁰ It is notable that the official justification, designed to be widely accepted (how could we blame a country that is already militarily overstretched?), once again has nothing to do with the real reasons for Germany’s decision not to participate.

To conclude, the decision not to militarily participate in the mission was made by political leaders but this time the decision fit into the traditional German strategic culture framework. Hence, policy-makers did not have to justify their non-participation as the mission was perceived as being contradictory to their own strategic culture and to German interests. However, it is worth noting that the mission was not vetoed in order to preserve Germany’s role in the EU and their relationship with France. The official justification advanced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (lack of military capability) had little to do with the real reasons for non-intervention. In this case, we have an example of policy leadership easily implemented, as it fits into the national strategic culture.

Conclusion

As the detailed case studies have shown, strategic culture is, for policy-makers, both a constraint and a resource. When faced with conflicting pressures from the international environment (in this case France and the European Union) and from their

own national constituencies, political leaders strategically decide to prioritize certain pressures depending on the internal political context. The ultimate decision to use (or not) military instruments is made by policy-makers for contingent reasons. The EUFOR RD Congo case illustrates that the rhetoric used to justify the mission was consistent with a specific facet of the state's strategic culture (in this case, promoting democracy and Europe), although the reasons that led to the decision were different. However, it is clear for policy-makers that the mission was exceptional, which means that they were aware that they violated other aspects of their own strategic culture. When they returned to a more traditional situation, such as Chad/CAR, policy-makers reverted to phrasing their decision with reference to more dominant aspects of their strategic culture. Interestingly, this research also shows that these discursive strategies are audience-driven: policy-makers are able to use specific facets in order to articulate discourses tailored to specific constituencies and publics (German public opinion in 2006 and French political leaders in 2007).⁸¹

This research illustrates that a moderate constructivist understanding of culture can take into account a renewed ontological status of the agent as being both constrained by, and actor of, its own strategic culture. This conception of strategic culture and its relation with the agent has the potential to enrich the existing literature on strategic culture and, ultimately, our understanding of security and foreign policy outcomes by cumulating knowledge from comparative case studies. They also show the potential added value of further investigating the notion of strategic culture as a *set*, comprising different *facets*, especially when there is potential for contradictions between the various facets of the same strategic culture. This may help our understanding of what could appear at first glance as contradictory or inconsistent behaviour. Strategic culture is seen as a resource for policy-makers, which can influence their decisions but is by no means the only explanatory variable to understand and analyse a state's foreign policy.

These findings have continuing relevance for our understanding of Germany and its foreign policy. Former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl recently lamented that 'Germany is no longer a predictable power'.⁸² This statement reveals the unease created among policy-making circles by the multi-faceted German strategic culture and its, at times, difficult adaptation to the pressures of the international environment. The case of NATO intervention in Libya is particularly interesting in this regard. The refusal to participate in the mission can be explained by a difficult electoral context for the coalition in power, reinforced by large opposition among the population (70 per cent).⁸³ The German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Guido Westerwelle, supported the German government's abstention policy at the United Nations, showing a classic example of restraint in the use of force, a defining feature of the German strategic culture. But Philip Rösler, President of the Free Democratic Party (the political group to which Westerwelle belongs) thanked NATO members for their intervention in Libya.⁸⁴ Rösler is here expressing another facet of the German strategic culture: a commitment to multilateralism and to Western partners. This commitment to multilateralism is demonstrated by the German decision to beef up its mission in Afghanistan and to take part in AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) surveillance flights in the country, which took some pressure off Germany's allies.⁸⁵ The different

facets of the German strategic culture are used by policy-makers in the political discourse, and an understanding of strategic culture as a set helps our understanding of Germany's foreign policy. As such, it is a more sophisticated account than the one provided by the cultural analysts of the 1990s.

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NOTES

1. The author distinctly remembers that words such as 'traitor', 'unreliable' or 'coward' were pronounced in the French Ministry of Defense. French officials were surprised and could not answer the question I am investigating in this paper: why did Germany participate in EUFOR Congo and not in EUFOR Tchad/RCA?
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7. Rashed Uz Zaman, 'Strategic Culture: A "Cultural" Understanding of War', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2009), pp. 68–88.
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10. Kerry Longhurst, *Germany and the Use of Force* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Wilhelm Mirow, *Strategic Culture Matters. A Comparison of German and British Military Interventions since 1990* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2009).

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12. *Ibid.*, p. 530.
13. Daniel Vernet, 'The Dilemma of French Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 4 (1992), pp. 655–64; Maurice Vaïsse, *La Puissance ou l'Influence? La France dans le Monde depuis 1958* (Paris: Fayard, 2009); Charles Cogan, *French Negotiating Behavior: Dealing with La Grande Nation* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2003).
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24. Longhurst, *Germany and the Use of Force* (note 10), p. 138.
25. Bastian Giegerich, *European Security and Strategic Culture. National Responses to the EU's Security and Defence Policy* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2006); Mirow, *Strategic Culture Matters* (note 10).
26. Interview with a German military officer, Berlin, January 2010.
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32. Christoph Koch, 'Alle lieben Angela', *Jetzt.de*, 24 January 2006.
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50. 'Was wollt ihr tun, wenn der Krieg kommt?', *Die Welt*, 31 July 2006.
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52. 'Die Furcht vor der "Duell-Situation"', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 June 2006.
53. 'Angst im Kongo: Unser Autor über die gefährlichste Situation seines Lebens', *Die Welt*, 7 July 2006.
54. 'Soldaten im Kongo vermissen klimataugliche Ausrüstung', *Die Welt*, 5 July 2006.
55. 'Sicherheit als globales Gut', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 9 February 2007.
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61. 'Deutsche Soldaten schänden Toten', *Bildzeitung*, October 2006.
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63. Interview with a German officer, Berlin, January 2010.
64. 'Unpopular wie noch nie', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8 September 2006.
65. Frank Renaud, *Les Diplomates, Derrière la Façade des Ambassades de France* (Paris: Nouveau Monde Editions, 2010), pp. 53–4.
66. Interview with a French diplomat, Paris, July 2008.
67. Interview with a German officer, Berlin, January 2010.
68. Helly, 'The EU Military Operation' (note 60).
69. Interview with a German diplomat, Berlin, January 2010.
70. Interview with a German diplomat, Berlin, January 2010.
71. Interview with a German diplomat, Berlin, January 2010.
72. The 'Athena' mechanism, created in 2004, is a common fund, abounded by member states depending on their gross national income (GNI). Pre-operational phase costs (fact-finding missions) in the case of military missions are considered 'common costs' and can be funded via the Athena mechanism. These Athena funds can be used to conduct and terminate an ESDP mission as long as implied costs are common. ESDP military mission costs that are not common continue to be borne by member states on the basis of the 'costs lie where they fall' principle.
73. Interview with a German diplomat, Berlin, January 2010.
74. Interviews with diplomats and military officers, Berlin, January 2010.
75. Interview with a German diplomat, Berlin, January 2010.
76. Kathrin Brockmann and Daniel Göler, 'Europäische Streitkräfte im Treibsand', DGAP, 2008, p. 1.
77. Denis M. Tull, 'Tschad-Krise und die Operation EUFOR Tschad-ZAR', SWP, 2008, p. 1.

78. Patrick Berg, 'EUFOR Tchad/RCA: The EU Serving French Interests', in Muriel Asseburg and Ronja Jempin (eds), *The EU as a Strategic Actor in the Realm of Security and Defence? A Systematic Assessment of ESDP Missions and Operations* (Berlin: SWP, 2009), p. 67.
79. 'Tchad: l'Allemagne n'a jamais eu l'intention de participer à la force EUFOR', *Agence France Presse*, 11 January 2008.
80. Interview with a German officer, Berlin, January 2010.
81. I am grateful to Thomas Rid for emphasizing this point. An argument regarding the continuing support of the German political class to the Afghanistan mission in spite of growing public reluctance (showing the political instrumentalization of the different justifications of the mission) can be found in Thomas Rid and Martin Zapfe, 'Mission Command without Mission. German Military Adaptation in Afghanistan', in Theo Farrell, Frans Osinga and James Russel (eds), *Military Adaptation in the Afghanistan War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, forthcoming).
82. "'Wir müssen wieder Zuversich geben", Helmut Kohl über Außenpolitik, der es an Verlässlichkeit mangelt', *Internationale Politik*, September/October (2011), p. 10.
83. Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, *Politbarometer April I*, Mannheim, 2011.
84. Christine Hoffmann, 'Lust am Untergang', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 4 September 2011.
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