Who securitized what, when, and how?
A comparative analysis of eight EU member states in the Iraq crisis

(Comments welcome!)

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1. Introduction

The 'great split' in the Iraq crisis 2002/2003 meant a serious backlash to the EU's endeavour to become a recognized security actor. Presumably, the EU still lacks a common security identity – i.e. a common understanding 'how the world is' and 'what should be done about it' – which is held to be a necessary pre-requisite for EU actorness. Yet for many, the Iraq drama appeared as a one-shot gaffe which is not likely to repeat itself. The CFSP has always been pushed forward by crises – a "*ratchet effect*" as Hill and Wallace (1996, 13) has coined it – which could be demonstrated by the adoption of a „European Security Strategy" (ESS) still in 2003. But in this respect, the paper calls for prudence since the inconsistent securitization of the members states on Iraq reveals a structural deficit of CFSP which is likely to reappear when the next crisis comes along.

Futhermore, the common perception was that the Europeans have fallen in two camps which can largely be attributed as Atlanticists and Europeanists known from the literature on CFSP (Stahl et al. 2004). The publication of a famous article on 30/1/2003 in various newspapers – "*Europe and America must stand united*" – supports this view. Moreover, the Europeanist camp was represented by France and Germany which co-alitioned with Russia by drafting competing Security Council Declarations in early 2003. Yet this paper is challenging the 'two camp thesis' by claiming that the countries' behaviour can rather be called idiosyncratic and that common action was merely incidental. In a qualitative assessment of eight member states' foreign policy behaviour in the crisis I will try to show that the countries diverged in conflict perception, the need for common action and the attributed role of the CFSP. This will be made visible by using securitization theory which was developed by the Copenhagen School in the 1990s (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998). Securitization seems well-eqipped to deal with the Iraq crisis since it focuses on the politication of threats regardless of their materialist foundation. In analysing who, when, and how European governments securitized Iraq, I will try to demonstrate that the reaction to the crisis was largely internally driven and thus the CFSP has a structural deficit since conflict perception and the attributed role of the EU remain country-specific.

The rich and extensive literature on the Iraq crisis can be grouped into three piles. First, some contributions deal with the crisis as such mainly stressing transatlantic relations (e.g. Gordon and Shapiro 2004, Petersen and Pollack 2003, Shawcross 2004). A second group focuses on single-country explanations (e.g. Heywood 2003, Kampfner 2004, Dalgaard-Nielsen 2003,

Aliboni 2003, Gaffney 2004, Styan 2004, Szabo 2004). Finally, a rising number of articles links the Iraq crisis to theoretical questions (e.g. Chan and Safran 2006, Dyson 2006, Mazarr 2007, Shannon and Keller 2007). To date, only a few contributions aim at explaining the overall phenomenon 'European split' (Schuster and Maier 2006, Mouritzen 2006) and the same applies to comparative assessments (Kritzinger 2003, Stahl 2005, Stuchlik 2005, Menon and Lipkin 2003). A comparative securitization approach could provide some value-added by exploring when and how the member states securitized 'Iraq' in the run-up of the war. By systematically comparing the securitizing behaviour of eight EU member states in the crisis (D, DK, E, F, GR, I, NL, UK) – complemented by 'the Brussels actors' - the common ground for a European security identity can be marked.

Besides securitization, this paper is based on the problem of foreign policy convergence and European foreign policy. With regard to the crisis, Everts and Keohane (2003, 176) put it well: "*the war in Iraq (...) showed that the EU had zero influence if its member-states do not pull together.*" Regarding the future prospects of the CFSP, I share the assumption that consistency of national foreign policy positions is a necessary (but, of course, not a sufficient) precondition for EU actorness. As Duke (1999) and Nuttall (2005) have shown, consistency may apply to different levels between different actors in the CFSP. I will concentrate here on the consistency between member states which is a fairly under-researched domain of European foreign policy and yet of no minor importance (White 2004, 55, 60). Moreover, the 'Brussels actors' – the Commission and the Higher Representative of the EU's CFSP – are also included in the analysis. The member states selected here are Denmark (DK), France (F), Germany (D), Greece (GR), Italy (I), the Netherlands (NL), Spain (E), and the United Kingdom (UK). Thus, this study is not a big member states case study only but comprises more than half of the EU-15. Selection criteria are:

- EU-membership since the TEU (1993)
- important players in the case
  - Security Council members (D, F, E, UK)
  - EU presidency (E, DK, GR)
- big member states (D, F, I, UK)
- small member states with prominent out-of-area engagement (DK, NL).

By focussing on the 'old' member states which acceded the EC in the 1980s at the latest the socilisation hypothesis can be challenged as a side-effect. The socialisation hypothesis implies that "*prolonged participation in the CFSP feeds back into EU member states and reorients*

their foreign policy cultures along similar lines" (Smith 2000, 614). This paper will rather suggest that in times of crisis, the member states remained unaffected by previous promises and rather acted like monads. In this respect, the study will support Hill's (1998, 36) notion of the "*renationalisation of foreign policy*".

2. On Securitization

The securitization approach developed by Buzan, Waever and de Wilde (1998) has changed the traditional understanding of 'security' in two respects. First, it broadens the security agenda by including threats eminating from non-military sectors (e.g. environment, culture, economy). Second, it refrains from taking the meaning of 'security' as given. Rather, it treats 'security' as a contested concept putting it in a social-constructivist context. What remains central is the notion of 'threat'. But different to the neorealist understanding of 'threat' as something quasi material and objective (Walt 1987), threats are defined by governments, politicians or members of the elite:

> "(..) *security is about survival. It is when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated reference object (..). The special nature of security threats justifies the use of extraordinary measures to handle them.*"
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> (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 21).

It is important to note that *"the senses of threat, vulnerability , and (in)security are socially constructed rather than objecitively present or absent."* (p. 57). The US-driven insistence on Iraq as a security concern in the aftermath of 9/11 may serve as a prime example for the usefulness and applicability of the (social-constructivist) securitization approach. The more so, as all material foundations of the attack (WMD, link to Al-Qaida) have dissolved.

Securitization can be understood "*as a more extreme version of politication*" (p. 23). Some societal actors or group of actors ("*enunciators*"/"*securitizers*") are raising their voice to make an issue a pre-eminent topic in the public debate – they are 'securitizing' an issue. As Sheehan (2005, 55) adds, "*securitizing is never an innocent act.*" Politicians may have honest or dishonest motives when they are trying hard to define a threat and make it a top-priority. However, the political authority or societal position give those "*managers of Angst*" (Huysmans 1998, 243) a first mover advantage. Yet, whether their effort succeeds depends on the public's acceptance (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 31). Acceptance makes the difference between the effort ("*the securitization move*") and the success ("*securitization*").

With regard to identity theory, it can be assumed that a securitizing move is likely to be successful if its contents resonates well with the respective national identity (Risse 2003, 115). In this anlysis, the enunciators are the member states' governments and those politicians in the EU-foreign policy system who are in charge of the CFSP (Solana, Patten, Prodi).

The CFSP is – in theoretical terms – a "*security complex, a set of states whose major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be anlyzed or resolved apart from one another*" (p. 12). The member states represent the "unit" level in the securitization approach (p. 6).

With the help of a securitizing move something is presented as an existential threat to a "*referent object*" (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 25). Typical referent objects are the society, the state, or the nation (p. 36). In this paper – for analytical purposes - I take the referent object as given assuming that the goverments are usually trying to securitize a threat to the country's population.

A (sucessful) securitization consists of three components (p. 26): existential threats, emergency action, and effects on inter-unit relations by breaking free of rules. 'Breaking free of rules' could mean in the Iraq case to break the norm of sovereignty without the United Nation's consent.

Little is said in Buzan et al. (1998) about comparative securitization. Consistent with the approach it can be argued that timing of securitization is important. This reveals when a state perceives a security threat. An 'early bird enunciator' not only sets the stage but also pre-directs the debate by naming and framing the issue. In the case, this role was deliberately taken by the Bush-Administration which more and more 'talked Iraq' in 2002. The EU felt compelled to react and to enter the debate – quite reluctantly as we will see. As Buzan et al assume, different actors hold "*different thresholds for defining a threat*" (p. 30). These thresholds not only become visible in different securitization timings but also in different threat perceptions. Common emergency measures though – the argument runs here – would require a similar threat perception. Analytically speaking, different securitization timing and different threat perceptions indicate substantial differences in conflict perception and worldviews. So it will be anlysed here when and what the governments securitized. As a third analytical category, I will examine the 'emergency actions', namely in how far the countries

have contributed to the attack on Iraq. By so doing, the consistency of the respective securitizations can be taken into account. In other words, in how far do timing, threat perception and emergency actions go together?

Two more definitions seem useful when assessing the member states' foreign policy behaviour. Terms are needed for governments/politicians who are refrainig from securitizing: "*Desecuritization – by contrast – means the attempt to remove an issue from the realm of the politics of existential survival*" (Sheehan 2005, 54). In addition, the empirical study has tempted me to introduce a third category: Non-Securitization – meaning the attempt to avoid any securitization move despite securitization moves of other important enunciators.

The following analysis will be divided in the three parts 'timing', 'threat perception' and 'actions taken'. It will be largely descriptive in an either chronological or country-specific manner. I mainly stick to primary sources (government statements, speeches, newspaper articles) which are complemented by secondary literature, in particular for the purpose of substantiating judgements.

3. The EU's securitization in the Iraq crisis

a. The immediate threat – when to move?

After the successful intervention in Afghanistan, Iraq more and more became the primary target of Washington's think tanks. In Bush's State of the Union Address in January 2002, he named Iraq as part of the „*axis of evil*". The reaction to this speech was rather negative, it "*caused a storm of protest and ridicule.*" (Shawcross 2004, 66). The German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joschka Fischer (22 February 2002), stated in his speech to the Bundestag as early as in February 2002 that he doubted any connection between Al-Qaida and Baghdad. In April 2002, the British Prime Minister agreed in principle to an intervention after having met the US President in Crawford, Texas (Kampfner 2004, 168) and he entirely shared the US-President's threat perception: "*The threat [of WMD, my annotation] is real.*"[1] Yet Blair publicly insisted all through the year that „*war was not inevitable*" and attempted to gain more domestic support as well as to secure legitimacy for military action. When the EU-

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[1] See "*President Bush, Prime Minister Blair Hold Press Conference*" the White House (6/4/2002), http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020406-3.html [15/8/2007].

leaders gathered in Barcelona in March, the Commission's head Prodi challenged Blair over Iraq – the latter still being isolated on the issue (Independent, 17 March 2002). In general though, Iraq remained a taboo in Barcelona: The Spanish Prime minister Aznar – Spain held the EU-Presidency at the time – prevented any attempt to place the topic on the agenda (CNN.com, 16 March 2002). Spain sticked to this policy of non-securitization during its entire presidency term. The issue was neither mentioned in the EU-declarations in the UN nor in Aznar's speech to the Arab League on 27 March 2002.[2] The only exception was the CFSP-declaration of 20 May 2002 when Baghdad was reminded to let the UN-inspectors return. But the text's central element was the relaxation of export restrictions for civilian goods due to humanitarian considerations. In the coming months, the EU commented on nearly every world trouble-spot – Kosovo, Bosnia, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Myanmar etc. – except one: Iraq. It was only after the release of the 'letter of the eight' that the CFSP came back – but no statement said anything about threat perception.[3]

Bush's West Point speech in June and *New York Times* and *Washington Post* reports in July on military plans against Iraq both indicated that Iraq was at the core of the US fight against terrorism. In July, the Blair government persuaded the Bush administration to go to the UN in order to secure legitimacy (Kampfner 2004, 191). On 5 August, the German Chancellor Schröder on the occasion of the Social Democrats' national election campaign warned the US „*not to play around with war or military action*" (Economist, 10 August 2002). Much earlier, governmental statements had been negative on a possible inclusion of Iraq in the anti-terror war (Harnisch 2004, 177).

By autumn 2002, it was clear that Bush had sided with the 'hawks' in his administration and strived for regime change in Iraq (Petersen and Pollack 2003, 135). Despite the British and German positioning, most EU countries still avoided clear statements on the Iraq issue. The Danish EU Presidency tended to dissipate any split and formulated a prudent declaration on the problems in the Middle East in the run-up of the Gymnich meeting in Helsingør (Financial Times Deutschland (FTD), 29 August 2002). On this occasion, the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stig Møller, called the discussion of military action still „*hypothetical*" (FTD, 2 September 2002). French foreign minister De Villepin and his Spanish colleague Ana Palacio added that the Security Council should keep all options on the table. Italy's Prime

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[2] See: www.europe-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_1258_en.htm.
[3] See 13th Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting (EU-GCC, 3/3/2003), Joint position on Iraq adopted by the 15 (17/2/2003) and the Demarche by the Greek Presidency to the Iraqi government on behalf of the EU (4/2/2003) and the GAERC-Session on External Relations (27-28/1/2003 and 19/11/2002).

Minister and acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Berlusconi, avoided any clear commitment at the informal meeting, but in Washington two weeks later he agreed to a UN-approved military invasion should Iraq not comply (AFP, 15 September). In his speech in Parliament in Rome (25 September 2002), he made it very clear that in times of crisis, Italy had always sided with the US.

Bush's speech before the UN General Assembly on 12 September hardly changed the other member states' reluctance to take a stance. The Netherlands and Denmark in particular avoided any early positioning. The first Balkenende government had supported the US but fell in October 2002. In fact, the welcomed Security Council Resolution (SCR) in November created some breathing space. In the following months, the Dutch government was preoccupied with coalition talks with the war-averse Labour party (PvdA). As a consequence, Balkenende opted for a low-key position concerning Iraq and even turned down the Anglo-Spanish offer to sign the 'letter of the Eight' (Gordon and Shapiro 2004, 129).

Due to its responsibility as EU President, Greece was also hesitant to any early and explicit positioning on the Iraq issue. Notably, Greece was partly in charge of the EU Presidency in the second half of 2002 as well – due to the Danish opt-out in security and defence issues, it chaired the respective Council meetings in 2002. Early statements by the Minister of Defence Papantoniou and Premier Simitis nevertheless suggested that the government vividly opposed any invasion of Iraq (AthensNews, 27 September 2002). Any urges to make this more explicit were countered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Papandreou, claiming that there was no reason „*why Greece should rush to take a stance*" (cf. AthensNews, 4 October 2002).

It was only after the 'letter of the Eight' (30 January 2003) and the EU's informal meeting on the Iraq crisis (17 February) that all positions became evident. France's resistance against US plans became ultimately clear on 20 January when the Minister of Foreign Affairs explicitly attacked the US policy in a press conference following a Security Council meeting. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Elysee friendship treaty on 22 January, Chirac and Schröder stated that they have the "*same judgement on the crisis*". In a joint declaration with Russia (10/2/2003) the two countries objected again to going to war and pleaded for more weapons inspections instead.

 As member of the SC at that time, Spain stood side by side with its Anglo-Saxon partners in early 2003 – as has been indicated already in Helsingør and became highly visible with the 'letter of the Eight' and at the Azores meeting with Blair and Bush just before the war began.

b. The immediate threat - what to securitize?

As mentioned above, the British government had been a staunch promoter of military action against Iraq right from the start. In his speech in the House of Commons, Blair insisted that Saddam would mean a real threat to Britain which demands action:

> "*Why now? People ask. I agree I cannot say that this month or next, even this year or next, that he will use his weapons. But I can say that if the international community having made the call for his disarmament, now, at this moment, at the point of decision, shrugs its shoulders and walks away, he will draw the conclusion dictators faced with a weakening will, always draw. That the international community will talk but not act; will use diplomacy but not force; and we know, again from our history, that diplomacy, not backed by the threat of force, has never worked with dictators and never will work. If we take this course, he will carry on, his efforts will intensify, his confidence grow and at some point, in a future not too distant, the threat will turn into reality. The threat therefore is not imagined. The history of Saddam and WMD is not American or British propaganda. The history and the present threat are real.*"[4]

On 23 September, the government published a dossier on "*Iraq's Weapons on Mass Destruction*" which was presented by Blair in the House of Commons the next day. In December, the government issued a second report focussing on the "*Crimes and Human Rights Abuses*" of Saddams regime. Prime Minister Blair explained to the members of the House of Commons in January 2003 his unequivocal support for the Bush Administration. A complementing dossier on "*Iraq: Its infrastructure of concealment, deception and intimidation*" which was published on 31 January became a PR-desaster ('*the dodgy dossier*') since some un-referenced and out-dated information had been included. Remarkably, Blair argued that even if the US had taken a less tough stance, it would have been him who had urged to act (Daily Telegraph, 14 January 2003).[5] When Aznar came up with the idea of an open letter demanding that „*Europe and America must stand united*", it was Blair who edited it (Die ZEIT, 6 February 2003, 3). Moreover, Blair objected to informing Solana and the Greek presidency about the open letter in advance (Kampfner 2004, 253). As Hughes (2003, 2) has noted it was not the letter's contents which was the problem but the evident lack of trust: Two days before, all ministers had agreed on a common statement on Iraq but had refrained from informing each other of the letter.

When France objected to any new resolution, British government members openly denounced the French representatives for creating a 'new Yalta' and fostering anti-Americanism (Guardian, 14 March 2003). Eventually, even the Foreign Office conceded that the UK, Spain, and the US did not succeed in achieving nine votes in the SC – a 'moral majority' so

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[4] "*Prime Minister's Iraq statement to Parliament*" (24/9/2002), http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1727.asp
[5] Yet as Hill (2005, 396) notes, this claim is not consistent with Blair's argumentation before 2002 when he had objected to any war on Iraq.

strongly desired by the British government.

In September, Aznar informed Bush that he could rely on Spain's support in case of a military attack on Iraq (El Mundo, 11/9/2002). Moreover, he stated that the UN should not become an obstacle to a necessary military intervention – so Spain's closeness to the US position had been obvious (Le Monde, 14 September 2002). The Aznar government launched the 'letter of the Eight' initiative on 30 January 2003 as well as co-drafted the vain second SC Resolution on 24 February. In addition to the British argumentation, the historic role of the US of helping out the Europeans in times of crisis was stressed, and Aznar pointed out that, given the alternative Bush v. Saddam, the choice should be an easy one (El Mundo, 13 September 2002). Moreover, when the difficulties in the Security Council became obvious, Aznar made it crystal clear that the war did neither mean a legal nor a moral problem since Saddam's regime resembled Hitler's, Stalin's, Pol-Pot's, and Milosevic's (El Mundo 15 March 2003).

In his speech to the Parliament in Rome, Prime Minister Berlusconi (25 September 2002) emphasized the "*dictatorial political regime*" in Baghdad which "*is a regional and global threat*" and so has to be disarmed with all means – as "*the lessons of history*" would remind us of. Thus, Italy also signed the pro-US letter, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Frattini confirmed Italy's support of a possible US intervention (cf. Aliboni 2003, 86). He later admitted that Italy's participation was partly due to the outspoken Franco-German positioning in January (FAZ, 28 April 2003). But the government's plain attitude was owed to a policy change in late summer 2002 since in February, the Iraqi Minister of Culture had been highly welcomed in Rome (Croci 2002, 93), and the Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Senator Mantica, had stated in August still that

> "*there is no doubt that the allies, which includes Italy, take a different approach to the Americans' (..). And all the allies have made it clear to the Americans that they are worried about the prospects of a war with Iraq.*"[6]

Denmark, as noted above, avoided any early clear positioning due to its moderator role as EU President in the second half of 2002. Yet the pro-US positioning could be easily perceived when examining the government's – and particularly Rasmussen's statements:

> "*There is no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein is a problem. ... He has the capability of producing weapons of mass destruction and the willingness to use them. We know that he has breached several U.N. declarations.*" (CNN.com, 4 February 2002)

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[6] "*Dictatorial Regimes Collapse Unaided*", Interview by Andrea di Robilant (La Stampa) with Senator Alfredo Mantica, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs with responsibility for the Middle East, Source: Italian Foreign Ministry, August 9, 2002, http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/Italy/italy-mfa-080902.htm [11/11/2004].

But when Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen on behalf of the EU had stated that the UN-Resolutions to date sufficed to legitimise a military intervention, this statement was met with bewilderment by most colleagues (Le Monde, 14 September 2002). Thus, the Danish government had no reservations against signing the letter of the Eight in January 2003, and entirely supported the US-argumentation in the SC. The government's main line of argumentation referred to Iraq's non-compliance behaviour which had violated international law.

The US threat perception was also shared in principle in The Hague: *"the very real threat posed by the possession by Iraq of WMD and its lack of active co-operation with the weapons inspectors"* (Letter to the Greek Presidency, 14 February 2003). On 2 February, the Dutch government declared that it appreciated military pressure in order to demonstrate the UN's willingness to act. Moreover, a second resolution was held to be desirable – but not necessary. If Iraq did not fully comply with the SCR – thus the government wrote in its letter to the Dutch Second Chamber and to the Greek Presidency – any extension of inspections would be pointless (Government.nl, 12 February 2003). On the EU's infamous 'war summit' on 17 February, The Hague openly sided with the Atlanticist camp – Portugal, the UK, Denmark, Italy, and Spain (Economist, 22 February 2003).

In August 2002, Chancellor Schröder had reacted to Cheney's speech in Nashville and cautioned the US because of its policy turn from Iraq's disarmament to regime change. Regardless of any Security Council Resolution, Germany would refrain from participating in military actions against Iraq. Schröder reckoned that Germany as a „*self-confident country*" would no longer persue „*easy ways*" in foreign policy. In addition, its military capabilities were already over-stretched.[7] At the informal EU-meeting in Helsingør, Foreign Minister Fischer warned the US not to go it alone and argued that the region would be further destabilised in the case of war – an argument which was also used by the Greek government (AthensNews, 27 September 2002). Furthermore, Fischer did not share the US-Administration's threat analysis and „*was not convinced*" (Szabo 2004, 40). As a member of the SC at that time, Germany had to experience that this early and extreme positioning left very little space of manoeuvre. It even subscribed to the ultimate use of force in the EU's common position on 17 February. But in fact, as Harnisch (2004, 185) notes, Germany never declared its 'No' to a SC Resolution legitimising military means and probably had considered

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[7] See Schröder's speech in Hannover on 5/8/2002, www.spd-bebelhof.de/div/such.htm [24/6/2005] and his Interview in the ARD-Report from Berlin on 9/8/2002, www.bundesregierung.de/interview-428321/Interview-mit-Bundeskanzler-Sc.htm [16/4/2005].

to abstain in case of such a decision.

Whereas Germany made up its mind rather early in 2002, France remained non-committal. Neither President Chirac at the Franco-German summit in Hannover in September nor the Minister of Foreign Affairs, de Villepin, evinced a determined position (Neue Züricher Zeitung, 8 September 2002, Economist, 10 August 2002). France finally gave in when the US re-drafted SCR 1441. After having insisted that the text should not legitimise any violence, Paris is said to have convinced Syria not to vote against it and this way helped to achieve a unanimous decision (Handelsblatt, 8/9 November 2002). Chirac even assured Bush that France would participate in military action if Iraq did not comply (FAZ, 19 March 2003). In December, a French liaison officer talked with US Commander Tommy Franks about the possibility to include 15,000 troops into the Allied forces (Gordon and Shapiro 2004, 142). Furthermore, Chirac told the French military to be aware of all situations. This was widely interpreted as a sign that France had not yet made up his mind (FTD, 8 January 2003). But after a SC meeting on 20 January, de Villepin announced that France would oppose any SCR leading to war (cf. Petersen 2004, 15). Yet completely taken by surprise by the letter of the Eight, the French President lost his *contenance* when the 'Vilnius 10' sided with the Eight one week later: „*They should have better remained silent*" he moaned and warned the „*badly brought-ups*" that their behaviour might diminish their chances for EU accession (Nouvel Observateur, 19 February 2003). Together with Germany and Russia, France presented some proposals for overcoming the deadlock in the SC in February and March. On 7 March, France could somewhat reap the harvest of its anti-war stance. In a SC debate, de Villepin succeeded in rhetorically out-performing his US counterpart and yielded an unprecedented applause from the audience. When the UK, Spain and the US attempted to gain a majority in the SC in favour of a second resolution, France actively lobbied against it, and finally, French president Chirac publicly announced France's veto against any resolution legitimising war (Le Monde, 11 March 2003). Not only that a war would destabilize the entire Middle East, it would also weaken the West's fight against terrorism. In addition, the role of the UN, of International Law and the inspectors' successful work were also part of the argumentation.[8]

The Greek position is not easy to discern since Greece acted on behalf of the EU since 1 January 2003 and partly already since 1 July 2002. However, the Minister of Foreign Affairs

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[8] Interview télévisée de M. Jacques Chirac, Président de la Republique par M. Patrick Poivre d'Arvor (TV1) et David Pujadas (France 2), (10/3/2003), and de Villepin (Le Figaro 26/2/2003) as well as practically all speakers in the National Assembly debate on 26/2/2003.

Papandreou made it crystal clear that Greece would not support any unilateral action against Iraq, leaving the question unanswered whether it would comply after a respective SC decision (AthensNews, 4 October 2002). Already in September, Premier Simitis had opposed an Iraq invasion (Athens News Agency, 9 September 2002), yet he took a cautious stance before the European Parliament on 14 January, urging for a more vigorous geopolitical presence of the EU in general (cf. AthensNews, 17 January 2003). A Greek concern remained the implications of a possible war for the Middle East (Simitis' letter to EU, 13 February 2003). Greece succeeded in organising and formulating common EU positions – examples were the conclusions of 27 January and 17 February and the tough *Démarche* to Iraq on 4 February (even exceeding the Greek position). Athens held the informal meeting to have been successful as it would not otherwise have suggested to turn it into an official one afterwards (EU Joint position, 17 February 2003). The 'letter of the Eight' took Greece by surprise, but as an initial reaction, the Foreign ministry claimed that it did not contradict prior EU decisions. Thereafter, Simitis strongly criticised the Eight, arguing that the declaration was at odds with the EU's endeavour to reach a common position (AthensNews, 31 January 2003). Papandreou (12 March 2003) admitted that the EU experienced a serious crisis and stated that big member states did not really pay attention to the small ones. Greece sided with the Franco-German-Russian initiative of early March (AthensNews, 7 March 2003). Eventually on the eve of war, Simitis expressed his government's strict opposition to war in parliament emphasising the lack of legitimacy and US unilateralism noting that a war *"(...) means catastrophes, denial of human values, the establishment of blind violence and arbitrary behaviour"* (cf. AthensNews, 28 March 2003).

The External Relations Commissioner at the time, Christopher Patten, followed a middle-of-the-road approach. On the one hand, he stressed "*the evil nature of the regime led by Saddam Hussein*" as well as the fact that "*Iraq never complied with this* [1284] *Security Council Resolution*". On the other hand, he cautiously stated that "*there are legitimate suspicions that the Iraqi regime is developing WMD. At his point of time, no clear evidence has emerged*" and pointed out that "*we must all respect the authority of the United Nations and of international law.*"[9] After having made these statements in September, he withdrew from the debate. Javier Solana, the EU's Higher Representative, took a low-key profile in the crisis, too. Usually, he followed SC statements and refrained from giving his personal point of view.

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[9] Quoted from: Speech by The Rt. Hon Chris Patten, Plenary Session of the European Parliament, Strasbourg (4/9/2002), similar: Interview with Chris Patten in: NPQ, Global viewpoint (9/9/2002).

In the second half of 2002, he more and more identified the state of the transatlantic relations as a matter of concern.[10] In a Financial Times interview (7 January 2003), he envisaged diverging worldviews and attributed them to an atlantic cultural and religious gap. He was then bypassed by events but he impressively regained his momentum in the following summer when he tabled a common strategy paper to become the ESS on the European Council meeting in Thessaloniki: "*A secure Europe in a better world*".

c. Emergency action - how to react?

The United Kingdom mobilised reservists in early January which finally added up to 30.000 troops in the Gulf. They actively took part in combat and took charge of the Southern sector in Iraq. By the end of 2004, it still held 8,700 troops (IHT, 4 February 2005). Until today, it has gradually reduced the occupation forces even when Bush decided for a temporary build-up of US-troops in early 2007.

Whether Denmark would actively support a military intervention even without a clear UN mandate was left open until 18 March (Copenhagen Post, 17 March 2003). The same day, the government decided to go to war and deployed a submarine, a destroyer and 160 troops to join the 'coalition of the willing'. Backed by the Danish Parliament, the *Folketing,* the Danish government officially declared war on Iraq – an unprecedented move since the war against Prussia in 1864. Denmark submitted its troops to US command, and its liaison officer Tidemand later admitted that even before the 'letter of the Eight', Denmark had been prepared to actively support the USA (FAZ, 8 April 2003). Denmark contributed 510 troops to the occupation forces. The Danish government objected to any US suggestions to extend the mission but remained determined even when one Danish soldier was killed in Iraq (Reuters, 1 October 2005).

By contrast, the Dutch government decided to refrain from active participation in the war (Radio Netherlands Wereldomroep, 18 March 2003). As the Minister of Foreign Affairs, de Hoop Scheffer, emphasised on 4 April 2003, this was not seen as a problematic stance since the Netherlands would thereby join Spain and Italy. Given this position, it turned out to be an embarrassing moment for the government when on the first day of the attack, a Dutch Lieutenant-Colonel appeared on TV next to the Commander of the coalition forces, Tommy

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[10] E.g. his article in the IHT (10/9/2003).

Franks (FAZ, 28 March 2003). The clear self-perception as part of the Atlanticist camp also became visible when the Netherlands actively compensated for the German denial to deliver Patriot missiles to Turkey. In June 2003, The Hague took part in the stabilisation force with 1,300 troops. When one soldier died in combat, Prime Minister Balkenende announced a re-consideration of the Dutch mission and decided to withdraw the troops after the mandate's expiration in March 2005.

Italy refrained from actively taking part in the war either with material or with troops but granted over-fly rights and allowed the US to use bases – yet not for direct attacks. After the Highest Defence Council, including President Ciampi, had stated that a direct participation in the war had to be excluded, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Frattini (29 March 2003) made it entirely clear that Italy was not a nation at war. Italy took part in the occupation forces with around 3,000 troops. Several hostage affairs put the Italian decision under constant domestic pressure. When the security agent Calipari was shot by US friendly fire after having managed to release the journalist Guilia Sgreba from an Iraqi terrorist group, Berlusconi surprisingly floated an Italian troop withdrawal (EUobserver.co, 16 March 2005) but re-considered the decision the next day. In December 2005, Italy's Minister of Defence announced a gradual withdrawal of 300 troops. The newly elected Prodi government ended the Italian engagement in Iraq by December 2006 (Le Monde, 1 December 2006).

Aznar announced that Spain would not actively take part in the war but send three ships and 900 troops for medical support and anti-mine capabilities. The role of the 900 was characterised in Aznar's words by their „*humanitarian mission*" (El Mundo, 19 March 2003). Spain contributed these 900 troops to the occupation forces. On 24 June 2003, the Aznar government announced to send 1.100 additional troops to be deployed in the Polish sector (Lee 2003). Due to the terrorist attacks in Madrid on 11 March, the Spanish election of 14 March 2004 got an historic flavour. After the *Partido Popular* had surprisingly lost the general elections, the newly elected Socialist government decided an immediate withdrawal from Iraq (FAZ, 16 March 2004).

Greece had tried hard to bring everybody together in the EU and to develop a common stance. When all its endeavours turned out to be fruitless, Simitis declared that Greece would not participate even if there was an approval by the UN-SC. In that case, Greece would support indirectly, logistically like in Afghanistan (FAZ, 19 January 2003). This was similar to the German position since Greece also rejected any active participation but allowed the US to use

its bases on Greek territory due to respective bilateral treaties. In February 2003, Germany, together with Belgium and France, even blocked a decision in the NATO Council regarding defensive missiles for Turkey for some time which led to a severe crisis in the Alliance (FTD, 11 February 2003). France joined Germany and Greece in opposing any participation in the war. Moreover, they rejected any direct participation in the occupation of Iraq. Instead, they preferred to contribute to the EU's, NATO's and the UN's assistance to the reconstruction of the country. While Germany trained Iraqi personnel outside Iraqi territory, France urged for a UN Resolution providing the UN with a central role in the country's reconstruction (Handelsblatt, 21 July 2003).

Criteria / *Country*	Securitization move: timing	Securitization: the threat	Securitization: Emergency action taken	Overall assessment
D (UN-SC)	5 August 2002	No immediate threat, risk of regional destabilization	'Double No'	De-Securitization
F (UN-SC)	20 Jan. 2003	No immediate threat, risk of regional destabilization	Active lobbying, Veto-threat in SC	De-Securitization
GR (EU-Pres.)	9 September 2002	No immediate threat, risk of regional destabilization	No participation in military actions	De-Securitization
NL	12 February 2003	Lack of Iraqi compliance, WMD	Only political support, participation in occupation forces	Non-Securitization
I	15 Sept. 2002	Solidarity with US, Regime character	Only political support, participation in occupation forces	Securitization
E (UN-SC, EU-Pres)	11 September 2002	Solidarity with US, Regime character	'Humanitarian mission', participation in occupation forces	Securitization
DK (EU-Pres.)	30 Jan 2003	Breach of UN-resolutions	Declaration of war, participation in attack and occupation forces	Non-Securitization
UK (UN-SC)	6 April 2002	WMD, Regime character	Participation in attack and occupation forces	Securitization

Table: Comparative securitization in the Iraq crisis

The table reveals the great split in the Iraq crisis. Let us now turn to some implications of the findings and draw some conclusions.

4. Conclusions: Idiosyncratic securitization and the deficits of the CFSP

I will start by referring to the empiral findings of the study. Subsequently, some implications for theory-building are discussed, and finally the focus will shift to the perspectives of the CFSP.

The analysis of the European Union's securitization timing has shown that the 'early-birds' (UK, D) reacted to US securitization moves in April and August 2002 respectively. Cheney and Bush speeches in late summer seem to have triggered some European reactions in September ('September group': E, GR, I, Commission). Finally, there were some late-comers who objected to any explicit securitization move before January 2003 (NL, F, DK, Council). Timing by no means predetermined the contents of the securitization move nor the following behaviour. Remarkably, there seem to be no signs of 'strategic interaction' with the notable exception of the 'gang of 8' and the Franco-German understanding (but only after 20 January 2003). The securitization timings indicate rather idiosyncratic foreign policies. This impression is supported by the threat perceptions and the emergency actions taken. With regard to emergency action, the camp-thesis can harldy be up-held. Even among the desecuritizers France, Germany and Greece three different policy behaviours applied (active lobbying/veto threat, double no, decent moderator/no participation). And the spectrum among the 'willing' reached from rhetorical support (NL), 'nation not at war' (I), 'humanitarian mission' (E) to 'declaration of war' (DK) and to finally massive military engagement (UK).

How can these findings be interpreted in light of future policy convergence so urgently needed for enhanced EU actorness? Evidently, the EU in the Iraq crisis looked less consistent than ever. What has been analysed for the war against terror – that already existing differences between the member states tended to sharpen (Hill 2004, 161; Duke 2002, 16) – has found its culmination point in the Iraq crisis.

It is not the place here to discuss the explanations for the countries' securitization in depth but it seems worth noting that all kinds of securitization strategies depend on domestic political configurations. This was evident in the Dutch case when the government explicitely justified its non-securitization behaviour with domestic constraints i.e. coalition-talks and public opinion.

What do the empirical studies tell us about the applicability of **securitization theory**? First, the difference between 'securitization move' and 'securitization' deserves attention. The

studies suggest that the heads of state and the foreign ministers sometimes try hard to convince the public – in the British case they have been trying for almost a year. So a single 'securitization move' can hardly be figured out, it seems more adaquate to think of a series of securitization moves. This brings us to the definition of 'securitization' as such: Securitization is only given if – as the definition claims – the audience accepts it. But who is the audience? Is it the political elite, the parliament, or the entire population? The British case again illustrates this point. In a narrow sense, securitization in Britain never took place since the public at no time was convinced by the government's securitization moves. But this narrow understanding would deprive the theory of its value-added. It seems more promising to choose a wider definition of 'acceptance' taking into account a possible élite-mass split and various degrees of acceptance on different 'sub-unit levels' of society. Borrowing the idea of 'contestedness' from identity theory and discourse analysis could help to conceptualize the sustainability of securitizations.

'Acceptance' has another implication in the theory which is oriented towards behaviour: 'Emergency action'. Emergency action constitutes an important element of (successful) securitization. As plausible as it looks, it remains doubtful whether the argument also works in the other direction. Can we conclude from the fact that Britain sent its troops to attack Iraq that the securitization had been successful? In order to complicate things further let me refer to the Spanish case: Can we conclude from the fact that Aznar downgraded the limited military engagement to a 'humanitarian mission' that the Spanish securitization had been unsuccessful? However, having no good answer to that problem myself just leads me to the plea that the relationship between securitization, acceptance and emergency action need to be sharpened.

Second, the notion of 'threat' seems worth mentioning. When considering the securitization moves in comparison it becomes obvious that the threat perceptions were different – even inside the 'coalition of the willing'. As Aznar's, Berlusconi's and Rasmussen's rhetoric revealed, their primary concern was not Iraq's possible WMD but the relationship to the US. The Danish Premier was outspoken on this: *"Who else could guarantee our security? Could France – could Germany? There is only one power on this earth that can: the USA"* (cf. CP, 25 March 2003). If I comprehend the theory well, it seems not only unproblematic but even logical to define 'threats' in a wider sense. The Iraq case is one of 'hegemonic securitization' meaning that besides the immediate threat some 'derivative threats' like the possible deterioration of the transatlantic partnership ranked high.

Third, the desecuritizers' behaviour put some challenges to the theory. Considering that a desecuritizer intends to 'remove the issue' one should have expected decent and placating rhetoric – maybe even silence – in order to downplay the partners' securitization moves. Not so in the Iraq case. The German government opted for a 'loud' desecuritization strategy in August and September 2002, the French followed in February and March 2003. It remains open to discussion whether such a 'politication of desecuritization' only seems plausible in a security complex which is characterised by 'hegemonic securitization'.

Fourth, the newly indroduced category 'non-securitizer' deserves some attention. Surprisingly, some governments (NL, DK) which – in principle – accepted the threat and its urgency sticked to a non-securitization strategy for most of the time under study. The Danish case is striking: How does a declaration of war fit to a non-securitization behaviour all through the year 2002?[11] Most probably, explanations would all touch upon the country's EU-Presidency in the second half of 2002. Due to the Danish opt-out in security and defence the government showed no interest in securitizing the issue. Yet the similar Spanish behaviour in the first half of 2002 raises doubts whether the opt-out is a sufficient explanation. Here the expectations to the EU-Presidency as a moderator come in. The Presidency's role rather demands to identify 'do-able' policy initiatives which are then streamlined into concrete projects. Its external functions are mainly representative and the respective national apparatus is already stretched with the operative work-load (Cameron 2007, 47). From this observation stems a first structural deficit of the CFSP: The presidency has no incentive to touch upon 'hot potatos'. What applies to the Presidency can be generalised for the other Brussels actors. A lack of horizontal coherence practically means a lack of mandate to speak up: When the divergence between the member states grew Solana, Prodi and Patten left the stage. This is a clear indicator that in terms of actorness, the EU remains a 'collective actor'. To put it bluntly, the innovations of the Amsterdam and Nice treaties gave the CFSP a face but not a voice.

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[11] Following Nikolaj Petersen (cf. Copenhagen Post, 6 March 2003), the desire to avoid any clear positioning reflects that Danish loyalty has been divided between the UN (Møller) and the US (Rasmussen) – Europe not at stake. Not only that the government followed a non-securitisation policy, the literature on the Danish presidency in this respect is revealing: Neither Rasmussen (15 January 2003) in his personal retrospective on the Danish presidency nor synopses on „Wonderful Copenhagen" (Laursen/Laursen 2003, Friis 2003) nor a Danish analysts' roundtable (Wehmueller 2003) found 'Iraq' worth even mentioning. This impressively demonstrates that the separation of 'Europe' and 'security' is widely accepted in the Danish élite.

Two further observations seem equally worrying and suggest that the Iraq crisis was more than "*an accident waiting to happen*" (Cameron 2003, 1). In spite of treaty obligations and the record of CFSP, European institutions are not accepted as suitable forums for security policy – by the way regardless of the Atlanticist/Europeanist attitude. As the Iraq affair has demonstrated, the securitization forums for member states' foreign policies were press conferences in Washington, newspapers and domestic election campaigns – not the European institutions.

Moreover, the national differences in securitization tend to be a structural phenomenon resisting to socialisation processes, considering that all of the countries under study have been members of CFSP right from its inauguration. In addition, not only have the big member states taken the most radical positions, but the degree of introversion and lack of co-operation also applies more to the bigger member states than to the small. The outspoken non-interest of the Blair, Chirac, and Schröder governments in their smaller partners, the EU-Presidency, Solana, and the European Commission sheds some gloomy light on the perspectives of future foreign policy convergence.

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