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# Co-operation, co-optation, competition? How do Britain and Germany interact with the European External Action Service?

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*[Draft Paper – please do not quote without permission]*

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**Abstract:**

*The establishment of the EEAS represents a significant organisational, institutional and – potentially – ideational upgrade of the EU's external relations capabilities. Intended to provide the enhanced and augmented role of the High Representative with the resources of a genuine diplomatic service, the EEAS has brought together officials and experts from the Council Secretariat, Commission and across the Member States. However, for all its promise, the life of the EEAS has so far been troubled. The process of setting up such a complex organisation has been difficult, with both the Commission and some member states placing significant obstacles in its path. This paper examines how Britain and Germany in particular have approached the establishment of the EEAS and contributed to its subsequent development, drawing on data from official documents, parliamentary transcripts and interviews conducted in each state's foreign ministry, as well as within the key institutions in Brussels, including the EEAS. It argues that while each has supported the idea of the EEAS in theory, they view it – and seek to engage with and utilise it – in different ways, reflecting their own historic attitudes to foreign policy cooperation within the EU. This in turn suggests that the EEAS has become a new arena for inter-state competition and rivalry. The paper concludes that far from resolving long-standing questions over how to achieve more coherent EU-level foreign policy, the establishment of the EEAS reveals that finding answers to these questions remains as challenging as ever.*

## Introduction

The European External Action Service (EEAS) represents part of the institutional response to the perennial problems of inefficiency and incoherence that have affected the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) since its establishment at Maastricht in 1991. The challenge policy-makers have faced since that time, encapsulated in Christopher Hill's concept of the 'Capabilities-Expectations Gap' (1993), is of achieving that coherence and efficiency by making more effective use of all the instruments and resources available to the Union. In particular, this involves better use of the significant economic, trade and aid instruments traditionally deployed by the Commission to support the foreign and security policy goals determined by the Council through the CFSP. While attempts were made in the treaties of *Amsterdam* (1997) and *Nice* (2000) to improve the ability of the EU to agree and then implement particular CFSP objectives, these did not address the key issue relating to the institutional division between EU external relations as practised by the Commission on the one hand, and the CFSP as an entity controlled and administered through the Council's structures on the other. The 2007 *Lisbon Treaty* sought to address this, attempting to turn the "rather accidental arrangements" that had existed up to that point into "something more sensible and coherent" (Crowe, 2008: 13). The EEAS is the show-piece of this new, joined-up approach to EU external relations, representing one of *Lisbon's* "more eye-catching innovations" (Whitman, 2008: 6). It thus represents a significant organisational, institutional and – potentially – ideational upgrade of the EU's external relations capabilities.

While innovative in theory, the life of the EEAS to date has been difficult however. In part, this reflects the enormous difficulties inherent in creating such a complex new institution. Intended to provide the enhanced and augmented role of the High Representative with the resources of a genuine diplomatic service, the EEAS has brought together officials and experts from the Council Secretariat, Commission and across the Member States. The establishment of new systems and procedures and the development of a new 'corporate culture' and *esprit de corps*, inevitably take time. That there have been some significant problems in terms of how those in charge of the EEAS, and particularly the High Representative herself, Catherine Ashton, have managed these processes is clear. Indeed, these are acknowledged in the comprehensive list of 35 short- and medium-term recommendations put forward by

Ashton and her organisation in the recent EEAS review (EEAS, 2013).<sup>1</sup> Equally, however, it is clear that both the Commission and some states have also placed significant obstacles in the path of the new institution. In the case of the latter in particular, this reminds us that the establishment of the EEAS is just the latest stage in the ongoing debate over the extent of the EU's role in representing and fulfilling the foreign policy objectives of its members. Consequently, Hemra *et al.* describe the EEAS as the “institutional embodiment” of their “somewhat ambivalent ambition that the EU should be a diplomatic heavyweight” (2011: 3).

This paper is interested in how two states in particular – Britain and Germany – have approached the establishment of the EEAS and contributed to its subsequent development. It contends that while both have supported the idea of the EEAS to varying degrees, the different ways in which they have viewed, engaged with, and sought to utilise it reflect deeper, historical attitudes to foreign policy co-operation within the EU. The paper is divided into four sections: the first contextualises the EEAS, examining its origins and purpose; the second and third examine the development of the respective policy positions of Britain and Germany towards the new institution; and the fourth section offers a comparison of how each has engaged with the EEAS. Overall, the paper concludes that how these states have behaved reflects the wider reality that rather than resolving the question of how to achieve a more coherent EU-level foreign policy, the EEAS has become a new arena for inter-state competition and rivalry over the direction of the CFSP and the extent to which integration within foreign and security policy can and should take place.

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<sup>1</sup> In her foreword to the document, Baroness Ashton describes the process of establishing the EEAS as akin to “trying to fly a plane while still bolting the wings on...It was in a word, tough” (EEAS, 2013: 1).

## 1. The origins and purpose of the European External Action Service

The idea for a European diplomatic service first emerged from the *Convention on the Future of Europe* launched in 2002 and assigned the task of considering “the key issues arising for the Union's future development and try[ing] to identify the various possible responses” (Brady and Barysch, 2007: 3).<sup>2</sup> The *Convention* envisaged an entity that would support the work of the High Representative (established at *Amsterdam*) by bringing together the policy advice provided by the Council Secretariat, the relevant directorates-general of the Commission, and its global network of overseas missions (Miller, 2003: 50). The process by which the EEAS formally came into being began with the signing of the *Draft Constitutional Treaty* in October 2004. However, it went into abeyance twice – first, following the rejection of this treaty by French and Dutch voters in referenda in 2005, and then in 2008 when the revised treaty was also rejected, this time by the Irish (Behr *et al.*, 2010: 4). It was only with the final ratification of the *Treaty of Lisbon* in 2009 that the work of constructing the EEAS could begin in earnest.

Since its inception, though, the development of the EEAS has been notable for a considerable vagueness over its design, structure and ultimately its purpose beyond the fairly general outline provided in *Lisbon*. This defined the role of the EEAS as follows:

“[Its] scope...should allow the [High Representative] to fully carry out his/her mandate as defined in the Treaty. To ensure the consistency and better coordination of the Union's external action, the EEAS should also assist the President of the European Council and the...Commission in their respective functions in the area of external relations as well as closely cooperate with the Member States.” (Consilium, 2009: 2)

Lieb and Maurer (2008: 2) highlight the “considerable leeway” in the treaty text over interpreting the EEAS’s actual role, while Crowe (2008: 7) notes that *Lisbon* is “thin on detail” beyond its role in assisting the High Representative. A number of observers have argued, however, that the reforms introduced by *Lisbon* have the potential to bring considerable benefits to the development and exercise of EU foreign and security policy. For example, Behr *et al.* (2010: 5) highlight the potential for far

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<sup>2</sup> The *Convention* was the product of the *Laeken Declaration* at the December 2001 European Council (Consilium, 2001) which itself had grown out of discussions at the Nice European Council the previous year.

greater coherence among the different institutional actors involved, consistency in pursuing particular agendas and pushing policies through to their conclusion, better use of existing resources and capabilities, and a far higher overall visibility for the EU as a foreign policy actor. Duke (2008) and Lieb and Maurer (2008) make similar points.

Despite the EEAS's considerable potential, however, a significant proportion of the analysis since it formally came into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 has been critical. In particular, this has emphasised the challenge faced by the new High Representative, Britain's Catherine Ashton, in terms of building up institutional capabilities, producing immediately an expanded and more coherent foreign policy, and recruiting the staff to deliver this (Burke, 2012: 2). For example, Hemra *et al.* describe it as suffering from an "institutional and political malaise" and lacking "a vision and clear strategy to make the most of its capabilities" (2010: vi, 23) and Stefan Lehne (2011: 18) warns that there is a danger the new service could "drift into irrelevance" without this. More recently, he has suggested that the EEAS suffers from a "weak institutional identity" (Lehne, 2013). Arguably of far greater concern for the High Representative, though, are the anxieties expressed by some member states over the extent and direction of the EEAS's development. For example, in a letter to Baroness Ashton on 8 December 2011, 12 foreign ministers, including those of France, Germany, Poland and Sweden, stated that:

"The [EEAS] has the potential to significantly enhance the effectiveness and coherence of the EU's external action. *From the start we have strongly backed the view and have a major interest in a strong and efficient EEAS. ...We would like to join efforts to further enhance the effectiveness of the EEAS and to help it develop its full potential. In this context we would like to offer some suggestions on how the functioning of the Service could be further improved...*" (emphasis added)<sup>3</sup>

Although couched in diplomatic language, this is a clear statement by the signatories of their concerns over what they feel is the slow pace of development, and the need for the High Representative to take a firmer grip of the process. Similarly, an Austrian foreign ministry *non-paper* of April 2011 noted that cooperation in the field in terms

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<sup>3</sup> Joint letter from the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, Catherine Ashton, 8 December 2011. This will be discussed in more detail below.

of EU delegations to third countries was “not very homogenous”.<sup>4</sup> In particular, it identified coordination, information-sharing within delegations, and between EU delegations and member state embassies, and crisis management as areas of concern (see also Lehne, 2011). A German foreign ministry official interviewed for this project voiced similar concerns (discussed below).<sup>5</sup> The danger, then, is that rather than providing real leadership in developing and then implementing EU foreign policy, the EEAS risks being “little more than a secretariat for foreign policy coordination” (Lehne, 2013).

The establishment of so important an institution was always going to be complex and difficult. To begin with, the EEAS was seeking to absorb long-standing components of both the Council Secretariat and the Commission, raising what Duke (2008: 15) calls “a multitude of turf sensitivities”. However, the problems it has faced are illustrative of a deeper issue, which is the role of the member states in its inception and construction. Crowe (2008: 7) argues that the creation of such an institution with “so little guidance” in the Treaty would obviously be contentious. In this regard, it is interesting to note the similar paucity of detail in the original *TEU* regarding the CFSP, which stands in stark contrast to the detailed proposals set out in the same document for the path to Economic and Monetary Union. As Ginsberg (1998: 14) notes, the provisions on the CFSP were “necessarily vague” in order to secure agreement. Most obviously, this highlights the similar challenge in the case of the EEAS of putting flesh on the bones of a policy and institutional construction that touches on issues of national sovereignty and consequently remains hugely sensitive for some member states.

It is this that makes the role played by Britain and Germany in the establishment of the EEAS so interesting. As two of the EU’s leading diplomatic powers, they were influential not only in the negotiations that led to its creation, but also in the debates that have taken place subsequently over its strategic direction, management and staffing. On the one hand, with the EEAS they have sought to create an institution able not only to play a strong diplomatic role for the EU and be of benefit to their overall foreign policy aims, but also to reduce the power of the

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<sup>4</sup> Austrian non-paper, “*European External Action Service – Cooperation between EU Delegations and EU Member State Embassies on the ground*”, 12 April 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

Commission in foreign affairs by accruing the main instruments of foreign policy-making and implementation to the Council. On the other hand, whilst doing this, they have also sought to maintain their own national diplomatic networks and relationships (Furness, 2011: 13). In this sense, therefore, how these two states have approached the establishment and development of the EEAS encapsulates the on-going dilemma they have faced since cooperation first began in foreign and security policy – i.e. between efficiency on the one hand and the maintenance of national sovereignty on the other.<sup>6</sup> This makes it important to consider what their particular national interests were and are as regards the EEAS, how these have been articulated, and the extent to which there has been any convergence between these. It also enables us to think about how and why the EEAS has become a new arena for competition between the member states, rather than providing a new ideational or normative centre for a genuinely ‘common’ foreign and security policy.

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<sup>6</sup> Lehne (2013) characterises the problem slightly differently, declaring that “[e]verybody supports coordination in principle, yet at the same time nobody wishes to be co-ordinated”.

## 2. British policy towards the EEAS

British policy towards the EEAS has been based around three core principles. These are: the maintenance of intergovernmentalism within foreign and security policy-making at the Brussels level; a general scepticism towards institution building, expansion or development; and a determination to ensure value for money. Each has informed how Britain has viewed the EEAS and its potential impact on the CFSP, and emphasise the deeper pragmatism inherent in UK foreign policy. Initially, Britain was ambivalent towards proposals to create a European-level foreign service. As one retired Foreign Office official put it, “when it came [we] weren’t the most enthusiastic in the club”.<sup>7</sup> In particular, the British government was concerned about the much more *communautaire* approach to foreign and security policy-making being advocated by some, particularly Germany (e.g. House of Commons, 2003b; 2004; Crum, 2004). Amongst other things, this was suggesting that the Commission become more integral to EU external relations decision-making, an idea that was strongly opposed in London.

As the process of negotiating the *Draft Constitutional Treaty* progressed in the early 2000s, however, the government's position altered. The reforms that would bring the EEAS into existence were seen as offering the chance to streamline the Union’s external relations capacity, bringing this more under the Council’s ambit, strengthening the intergovernmental character of the CFSP, and in turn achieving greater accountability to member states. These pragmatic and functional justifications have been used consistently by governments ever since, including by the current coalition, even though in opposition the Conservatives vociferously opposed the establishment of the EEAS and have more recently raised hurdles to its functioning, discussed below.<sup>8</sup> For example, William Hague stated in the House of Commons on 3 June 2010:

“[M]y party did not support the creation of the External Action Service, but it is now a fact... It is our task now to ensure that the service is both useful to the nations of Europe and respects the role of national diplomatic services” (Hansard, 2010c).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office official (retired), September 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, November 2010.

<sup>9</sup> That said, former Labour Foreign Secretary David Miliband criticised this position, declaring: “[T]he current government...don’t seem to have much of an agenda and they’re particularly

For Britain, therefore, the appeal of the EEAS lies first and foremost in its ability to complement national foreign policy objectives, while the idea of establishing a rival or competitor to member state predominance in foreign and security policy is deemed unacceptable. This approach is consistent with previous British positions supporting the establishment of CFSP within a separate pillar (*Maastricht*, 1991); the appointment of a High Representative for CFSP operating from within the Council (*Amsterdam*, 1997); and the creation of the Political and Security Committee (*Nice*, 2000). Thus, there is considerable continuity between Britain's approach to the EEAS specifically and European-level foreign and security policy cooperation more broadly.

The evolution of the British position revolves principally around British understandings of what the EEAS is, and what it is not. Britain does not consider it a diplomatic service in the classic sense, so a first priority has been to ensure it does not encroach on traditional national responsibilities, particularly the provision of full consular services. For example, in a written Parliamentary answer in June 2002 outlining the Government's view about the creation of a "common European diplomatic service", the Foreign Secretary Jack Straw declared that "it is for EU member states to organise their respective diplomatic services at the national level" (Hansard, 2002). Similarly, Peter Hain, Britain's representative to the *Convention*, noted that Britain had "argued against" its proposals for a "fully-fledged diplomatic service" (House of Commons, 2003b). In 2006, Geoff Hoon, Minister for Europe, declared that the government was "sceptical" about the advantages of having a "quasi-diplomatic service", declaring that "[w]e still believe that this kind of external representation is best done through the member states, and indeed most...are of that opinion" (House of Lords, 2006: 38). In 2009, Chris Bryant, Minister of Europe, again dismissed suggestions the EEAS might assume a consular role on behalf of member states:

"I disagree with...[the] characterisation of the [EEAS] as a diplomatic service in all but name...we are determined that [it] should not move down that route. It is important that we retain our own consular services...we believe that we provide those services in an exceptional way..." (House of Commons, 2009)

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conflicted when it comes to Europe because they don't know if they want a stronger European foreign policy or not, but that's for them to work through." (Interview, House of Commons, London, 6 December, 2010).

British opposition to any provision of consular services at European level was reiterated by several of those interviewed. One official noted the government's opinion that no European-level body could be trusted to provide the same level of service to British citizens:

“[W]e had no faith whatsoever that a European function could ever provide the level of service to British nationals that we felt that they expected, so no politician would ever take the risk.”<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, a diplomat in UKREP highlighted the political sensitivity, particularly for the coalition government, about any “perception that the EAS was taking on work that properly belonged to national foreign offices”.<sup>11</sup> A determination to prevent the EEAS from ‘encroaching’ on the diplomatic prerogatives of member states thus represents a clear ‘red line’ for the UK. The EEAS “supplements and complements, but does not replace, the UK diplomatic service” (Hansard, 2012).

The second British priority has been to ensure that the EEAS does not dilute the CFSP's intergovernmental character. The question of the precise role to be played by the High Representative as head of the EEAS is illustrative of this. As noted, Britain supported the creation of this post, but when the idea first emerged from the *Convention* that the High Representative would ‘double-hat’ as both head of the CFSP and also as the Commissioner responsible for external relations, this was highly problematic for London. In particular, there were questions over what such double-hatting would mean in terms of the Commission's relationship to the CFSP. In 2003, for example, Peter Hain highlighted government concerns that as a consequence the Commission might in effect gain “a back door into the [CFSP] in areas where it does not have a competence” and while there might be “tight linkages” between the two posts, declared that the government was “not satisfied with the position as it currently stands” (House of Commons, 2003b). The government position, articulated subsequently by the FCO Political Director, Peter Ricketts, was therefore against the new post being “a full member” of the Commission (House of Commons, 2003a).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, January 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>12</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the *Convention* debates over the role of the High Representative, and Britain's approach to this issue, see Menon (2003).

Equally, there was determination to ensure that both the High Representative and EEAS would be subject to control by national governments through the Council of Ministers. In this, Ricketts was confident in 2003 that the British view was prevailing among EU partners:

“[T]he debate is moving in the direction that our Government has set out...the idea that we should strengthen the High Representative and...his attachment to the Council as the deliverer of decisions adopted in the Council is gaining ground...we need to gather as many as we can around our approach.” (ibid.)

In 2004, Jack Straw reiterated this, making explicit Britain’s view of the basis for the High Representative’s authority:

“[Their] responsibility is to carry out the common foreign policy agreed...by Ministers. ...The overwhelming responsibility on him or her is very clear, it is the mandate of the Council – full stop. ...he cannot possibly give us orders. This is a union of Nation States.” (House of Commons, 2004)<sup>13</sup>

He then emphasised the increased control member states would enjoy over the external relations functions exercised by the Commission, particularly vis-à-vis the overseas missions, as a consequence of the strengthened role of the High Representative and the creation of the EEAS (ibid). In 2007 Kim Darroch, Britain’s Permanent Representative to the EU, made a similar argument:

“Our view is that...the High Representative representing both the Council and the Commission and [EEAS]...does increase the Council’s role. It gives us more influence over how the Commission spends its external affairs budget...the opportunity to put diplomats from Member States into...joint missions overseas and...enhances the role of the Council overall, so we see this as a good thing without wanting to caricature it as a Council takeover.” (House of Lords, 2007: 26)

Following the agreement of *Lisbon*, in 2008 the government stressed its success in ensuring that the CFSP remained “in the hands of the Member States [and] based on consensus” (FCO, 2008). Under the new arrangements, the role of the High Representative would be to “enact agreed foreign policy” which in turn would “remain an intergovernmental area of activity controlled by the Member States *and*

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<sup>13</sup> Straw went on to stress British efforts to address the problems the draft Treaty represented in this regard: “I was concerned...that this person could not be tripped up by responsibilities to the College of Commissioners, in particular...that: “...Commissioners shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government or other body.” I felt that that statement...was quite inappropriate for the European Foreign Minister, which is why...one morning [I] went through this in very great detail with colleagues. Most of them...had not thought about this but...considered what I was saying and agreed it had to be changed; so it has been changed” (House of Commons, 2004).

*strengthening [their] authority over other areas of EU external action*” (ibid) (emphasis added). The Government also re-iterated the possible advantages for Britain of the new dispensation. Thus, Chris Bryant stated in October 2009:

“[I]n a country where all the Member States of the EU have a significant interest we would want the High Representative to be able to use all the different levers that are available through from pre-conflict to conflict to post-conflict to peace-building, and at the moment those are spread differently around the various different elements of the Council and the Commission and we believe that it is important to have much better co-ordination.” (House of Commons, 2009)

That said, while Parliament encouraged the government to “engage positively” (House of Lords, 2008b: 197) with partner states in developing the EEAS following *Lisbon*, it noted the lack of detail in either the treaty or the government’s responses to questions as to what structures would ultimately emerge (House of Commons, 2008; House of Lords, 2008b).

The third British priority, linked to both of these, has been to ensure complementarity and value for money. There is nothing new in this, of course. British opposition to unnecessary institution-building has been clearly apparent in the context of the ESDP/CSDP, and similar concerns pertain here. The benefits of the EEAS are in bringing the EU’s disparate range of external relations functions as far as possible under one institutional roof. It is therefore imperative to prevent expensive and unnecessary duplication of functions or bureaucratic growth. For example, in 2006 Geoff Hoon emphasised the need to avoid “duplicat[ing] existing services provided very effectively already by Member States” (House of Lords, 2006: 39). Similarly, following *Lisbon* the FCO made clear that the purpose of the High Representative and EEAS should be to “reduce bureaucratic duplication and improve the coherence and effectiveness of policy implementation” (FCO, 2008; see also House of Commons, 2009).<sup>14</sup> The UKREP official noted that these were objectives established originally by Labour but which have also been pursued by the Coalition since 2010.<sup>15</sup>

An important aspect of this since 2010 has been the principle of ‘budget neutrality’. In essence, this demands that the EEAS should require no more

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<sup>14</sup> Regarding consular services, it is worth noting that some smaller states have seen in the establishment of the EEAS “opportunities to reduce their own diplomatic networks and in so doing to save a bit of money” (interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012).

<sup>15</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

expenditure than that required by the institutional elements it is replacing/combining. An FCO official declared that the EEAS must “create savings” and that the British government was “committed to cost and budget neutrality overall”,<sup>16</sup> something with which his UKREP colleague concurred. Budget neutrality is an aim that is also repeated regularly in official government statements. For example, David Lidington, Minister for Europe, declared that the establishment of the EEAS “should be guided by the principle of cost-efficiency aiming towards budget neutrality” (Hansard, 2010a) and must provide “value for money” (Hansard, 2010b; see also Hansard, 2011a; 2011b; 2011c). That said, the UKREP official noted that in practice “we [have] had to tolerate a certain amount of growth in the EAS budget and from the perspective of our ministers, that’s something we’re not very happy about”.

Overall, therefore, Britain’s view of the EEAS remains guarded. The UKREP official articulated the main British attitude as being to cooperate with the new institution “where it has a clear added value on issues that matter” to Britain, for example in achieving stability in the European neighbourhood, conflicts in Africa, Iran and the Middle East Peace Process. The unspoken inference, though, is that where it does not do so, Britain will remain wary of engagement with it, at least under the current government. This guardedness can be seen in the three core principles which underpin British policy: intergovernmentalism, scepticism towards institution-building, and a desire to ensure value for money. As part 4 of this paper will demonstrate, these principles have determined how Britain has engaged with the establishment and subsequent development of the EEAS.

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<sup>16</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, February 2011.

### 3. German policy towards the EEAS

In contrast, German policy towards the EEAS has always been more favourable. However significant the potential functional or instrumental benefits of the EEAS in terms of streamlining foreign policy-making (e.g. AA, 2007b), for Germany it is as important for the emphasis it places on what is *common* in CFSP, reflecting the British view that Germany arguably has “a more genuine commitment to a real European foreign policy”.<sup>17</sup> This fits very much into its broader ideational view of how the CFSP should function, particularly, in the words of one Federal Foreign Ministry official that it should provide “the famous telephone number that Mr Kissinger mentioned” and enable Europe “to speak with one voice” (see also Merkel, 2010; Bundesregierung, 2010b: 2).<sup>18</sup> Consequently, Germany was always “very much in favour of [the EEAS] and pushed it from the start, and we’re still doing that”. Historically, Germany has favoured bringing the CFSP closer to the Community’s frameworks, and was unhappy with the separation institutionalised by the pillar system at Maastricht (Aggestam, 2000: 73). More broadly, it has sought a better linkage and coordination between the policy produced by the CFSP, and the financial and economic instruments available through the first pillar to implement this. It has also favoured the extension of majority voting within the CFSP and allowing the European Parliament greater scrutiny over it (ibid).

This would suggest that there is little common ground between Germany’s more *communautaire* vision and Britain’s championing of intergovernmentalism. However, it is interesting to note that while both come from seemingly opposite sides in terms of the direction of travel they favour for the CFSP, there are areas of commonality. In particular, both see an effective High Representative supported by an efficient EEAS as important to strengthening the EU’s global voice (albeit only in certain circumstances for Britain, particularly strategic partnerships). Moreover, Germany is also anxious to ensure that institutional development delivers coherence and efficiency, not unnecessary bureaucracy or expense. The difference is that Germany has presented these ‘macro’-objectives in terms of achieving broader

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<sup>17</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>18</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, April 2012. Separately, in a recent article examining the attitudes of EEAS officials towards their new service, Juncos and Pomorska found that despite differing views on how best to organise it, one important shared idea was “support for...a stronger European voice in the world to be achieved with the help of the new service” (2013: 15).

‘European’ goals, whereas Britain’s approach has been more functional, focusing on how the EEAS can support the achievement of national objectives. That said, Germany nonetheless views the EEAS (and High Representative) as contributing to the accomplishment of German foreign policy objectives as pursued through the CFSP.

At the root of German policy has been a frustration at how the CFSP interacts with other areas of EU external relations. The EU suffers from a “disconnect between money and politics” in terms of how it delivers foreign policy.<sup>19</sup> A key aim of *Lisbon* from the German perspective, therefore, is to develop a genuinely “comprehensive approach [on] all aspects of the [EU’s] external action” (see also Bundesregierung, 2010b: 2).<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the “philosophical idea” behind the role of the High Representative, supported by the EEAS, is to “guarantee” this.<sup>21</sup> Greater coherence, coordination and continuity in foreign policy are essential, but can only be delivered centrally through what is referred to as the “single-desk principle” (Bundesregierung, 2010b: 3, 8).<sup>22</sup> While Germany and particularly its foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, advocated a more federalist approach at the *Convention* (e.g. Fischer, 2000; see also Menon, 2003), what ultimately emerged were proposals for a High Representative who would be independent, both of the Commission and of the European Council, and supported by the EEAS.

The German government has repeatedly emphasised the importance of this independence if the High Representative and EEAS are to deliver on the three objectives required of them. It was referred to, for example, in the 2009 coalition agreement between the CDU, CSU and FDP which suggested that the “interlinkage of EU foreign policy with the individual foreign policies of member states is best achieved by an independent EEAS” (Bundesregierung, 2009a: 118; see also AA, 2008: 84). Other official statements have made similar points (e.g. Bundesregierung, 2009b; 2010a: 2; Bundestag, 2010a: 1; AA, 2012). From the German perspective, indeed, if the problems of “lowest common denominator” policy and “conflicting interests [among] member states” are to be resolved, achieving independence from the

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<sup>19</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Interview, German Permanent Representation, Brussels, November 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Interview, German Permanent Representation, Brussels, November 2010.

<sup>22</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

Council is just as important as independence from the Commission.<sup>23</sup> Policy should rather be driven by a “neutral person”,<sup>24</sup> with the achievement of a coherent CFSP “in the interests of all member states” (Bundesregierung, 2010b: 3). (The views of German officials on whether and how far this aim has actually been achieved are considered below.)

As noted, an important area of commonality with Britain is to avoid the creation of unnecessary additional bureaucracy and ensure value for money. For example, one German official notes that one expected advantage of the EEAS will be the “institutional memory” it provides now that the High Representative and her staff have replaced the rotating presidency in chairing meetings of the FAC, PSC and various working groups (see also, AA, 2008: 10).<sup>25</sup> However, if the new structures are to be justified, such streamlining must also be accompanied by a concomitant improvement in the “interconnectedness” of EU-level foreign policy-making (Bundesregierung, 2009b). Equally, the principle of ‘cost neutrality’ must apply (Bundesregierung, 2010b: 5; Bundestag, 2010a: 2).

At the same time, there are a number of significant differences. First, Germany officially welcomes the additional power of scrutiny the European Parliament now enjoys through the budgetary responsibilities the High Representative exercises as a Commission Vice-President (Bundesregierung, 2009b; 2010b: 3). It is interesting to note, though, that while this may be seen as increasing transparency and accountability (e.g. Bundesregierung, 2010b: 4), some German officials are less convinced and one suggested that it would not be a good idea for MEPs to have any further involvement as they “don’t really know much about foreign policy”.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the Government has reassured the *Bundestag* that its rights of scrutiny over Germany foreign policy are in no way changed by *Lisbon* (Bundesregierung, 2010b: 3). A second important difference comes in the German position vis-à-vis the provision of consular services by the EEAS. Whilst accepting that this remains a possibility only in the long-term, the government is open to the possibility provided the relevant legal questions are resolved (e.g. Bundesregierung, 2010c: 7). This was

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<sup>23</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

<sup>24</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, January 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

<sup>26</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

confirmed in interviews, with one official making the point that the first priority is for “the EAS to do its job properly” but that in a few years “we can talk about [it] taking over consular affairs”.<sup>27</sup> A third difference comes in German attitudes to EU representation in 3<sup>rd</sup> countries and in international organisations. Again, an emphasis is placed on the EU being able to “speak with a single voice” (AA, 2008: 108), with the EEAS having a vital role to play through the EU delegations, but this is an issue upon which there has been considerable disagreement with Britain’s current government (see below).<sup>28</sup>

Overall, it is important to note that while the original federalist vision outlined by Joschka Fischer at the *Convention* in 2000 may not be representative of Germany’s overall objective for EU foreign and security policy, the achievement of further integration is. For Germany, strengthening the roles of the High Representative and EEAS is an important component of this: the aim is to create “a stronger Europe...in this situation we need more Europe, so this is our approach”.<sup>29</sup> While this contradicts the principles of British policy towards the EEAS, it is interesting that both see the new body as an instrument able to accomplish their particular aims. This indicates not only that there is much still to resolve in terms of how the EEAS will develop and the role(s) it can play, but that determining these will continue to be an area of disagreement and competition between member states.

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<sup>27</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

<sup>28</sup> Interviews, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012 and United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>29</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

#### 4. British and German engagement on the EEAS

While the establishment of the EEAS represents a major institutional reform, it is not yet clear whether it will prove to be “one of the most meaningful innovations” of *Lisbon* (Bundestag, 2010b). Although it has the potential to transform both the output and implementation of the CFSP, the vagueness in the treaty provisions concerning its creation noted above reflect the ambivalence of member states identified by Hemra *et al.* (2011). Moreover, they demonstrate the stalemate in negotiations between those preferring a more centrally managed, ‘European’ foreign policy machine – particularly the smaller states – and those (e.g. France and Britain) concerned with the maintenance of intergovernmentalism and preservation of national sovereignty in this policy area.<sup>30</sup> A British official summarised this division as follows:

“[T]here is some pragmatism but...the approach does also reflect relatively deep-seated views...I think Germany has traditionally wanted more Europe across the board, and that includes more Europe on foreign policy, whereas...the UK and France have a stronger tradition of independent diplomacy and are perhaps...more cautious.”<sup>31</sup>

In this sense, the EEAS is a microcosm of the central tension that has always overshadowed foreign policy cooperation.

Britain and Germany are excellent exemplars, therefore, of these competing approaches. The arrangements that led to the creation of the EEAS demonstrate that neither has achieved an ascendancy, but also that there is no over-riding norm for greater integration in CFSP. Moreover, the fact that both see the EEAS (and High Representative) as important to the achievement of *national* foreign policy objectives underscores the instrumentalist approach both take towards the new institution, regardless of the ‘European’ language that Germany may use in describing its long-term benefits. Consequently, the EEAS and the negotiations that brought it into being represent first and foremost an arena of competition between the states. Moreover, now that the EEAS has been established, this competition continues, the focus being on the policies the new organisation should prioritise and the allocation of key portfolios within its Brussels structures and in its overseas missions. Indeed, a

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<sup>30</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>31</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

German official noted that “it’s a bit of a competition” to get national diplomats into key posts, with the French “ahead there”.<sup>32</sup> This suggests that how Britain and Germany engage in this competition has been and continues to be driven by national interest.

For the purposes of this paper, the period of analysis has been divided into two halves representing the pre- and post-*Lisbon* periods. As noted, the pre-*Lisbon* period was punctuated by periods of intense diplomatic activity beginning with the *Convention* itself and followed by the two IGCs in 2004 and 2007. In between these was the so-called ‘period of reflection’ (e.g. House of Lords, 2005: 18; AA, 2007b), during which time the discussions “went off the boil”.<sup>33</sup> Prior to the 2007 IGC, however, the UK government sought to re-open the decisions on the revised role of the High Representative and the establishment of the EEAS to seek further ‘clarifications’ of what the new arrangements would entail, which Avery and Missiroli suggest came as “a surprise to many” (2007: 6).

More broadly, British engagement has followed a standard path. Thus, input into the initial negotiations on the EEAS was led by the FCO’s Europe Directorate, which ensured consultation with ministers and drafted the instructions for UKREP.<sup>34</sup> However, other parts of Whitehall were consulted as appropriate, particularly, for example, the Treasury on the issue of budget neutrality and there was “a lot of interaction with DfID” on the question of development programming.<sup>35</sup> UKREP, meanwhile, played an important information gathering role, particularly from the Commission, Council Secretariat and European Parliament.<sup>36</sup> One key issue for Britain was the place of ESDP/CSDP within the new structures. Indeed, part of the rationale for the EEAS was “to better integrate the soft power instruments...with the more hard power instruments like CSDP”.<sup>37</sup> French determination not to dismantle or rebuild the existing structures or change reporting lines meant that much “was left

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<sup>32</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, April 2012. The official goes on to note some of the problems in recruiting German diplomats to EEAS postings overseas: “If you’re looking for somebody for Abuja...then you have to knock on doors. If you’re looking for someone for New York, you’ll have a lot of applicants.”

<sup>33</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>34</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>35</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, February 2011.

<sup>37</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

unchanged” and the current structures “are not as joined-up” as Britain would like.<sup>38</sup> Ministerial involvement was also significant, with first David Miliband and then William Hague and David Lidington having been closely involved and “very interested” pre- and post-*Lisbon* respectively.<sup>39</sup> Thus, despite initial concerns or misgivings following the *Convention*, Britain did become fully engaged in the process of establishing the EEAS, not least to ensure that what ultimately emerged did not go against the three core principles discussed previously. This echoes its strategy prior to and during the IGC negotiations that produced *Maastricht* (e.g. Smith, 2004).

Germany by contrast was always strongly supportive of the concept of an EEAS, as noted. An initial proponent of the service, it cooperated with France in presenting the initiative. Indeed, as Joschka Fischer (2008: 345) points out, it had also worked closely with France ahead of the 2000 Nice Summit which had initiated in the first place the broader treaty reform process that ultimately resulted in *Lisbon*.<sup>40</sup> As one German official recalls, however, some member states needed to be convinced:

“I think we had to convince a couple of them. The first idea that came to many people’s minds was: foreign policy, now done by Brussels? No way. This is national sovereignty. So we had to explain what we want[ed] and how it’s supposed to work and by and by I think more people understood that it’s basically a good idea and we should give it a try.”<sup>41</sup>

During the ‘period of reflection’, German commitment in the longer-term to achieving treaty change remained strong, although discussions remained “behind closed doors”, involving the highest official and ministerial levels in the *Auswärtiges Amt* and Chancellery.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the same official is very clear of the importance of Germany in getting the treaty process back on track. Noting that the input for the 2007 IGC “was set by Germany”, he argues that “it was basically our Chancellor, Mrs

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<sup>38</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, February 2011.

<sup>40</sup> Jacques Chirac is also keen to claim the credit for what became the *Lisbon Treaty*. In his memoirs he declares: “In the speech I gave to the Berlin Bundestag in June 2000, I was the first head of state officially to launch the idea of a European constitution”; he goes on to acknowledge, though, that “it could not have seen the light of day if there had not been a Franco-German agreement to develop it” (2012: 307-8).

<sup>41</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, April 2012.

<sup>42</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, April 2012.

Merkel, who...said, this is our chance, let's make use of it".<sup>43</sup> The German approach can therefore be seen as much more positive and proactive than Britain's.

Post-*Lisbon*, meanwhile, Britain and Germany have demonstrated similar preoccupations in terms of ensuring the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the EEAS. As noted, the formation of Britain's coalition government in 2010 changed the underlying political view of the EEAS. However, while philosophically opposed to its establishment, the government took a pragmatic decision to engage with the EEAS "as something which was an established fact and to then manage the risk".<sup>44</sup> However, at the same time it remains very important for FCO officials to remember that the "bottom line was that the Tories opposed [its] establishment... which is our backstop on the policy".<sup>45</sup> This has been reflected in a determination to ensure the EEAS and High Representative "[k]eep their political focus" on issues where Britain sees them as adding value, such as the development of strategic partnerships.<sup>46</sup> These were an idea that Britain "signed up to...from the start" and which will be "a really important bit of European policy" given the potential impact of bringing the EU's collective weight to bear on relations with the US, Russia, China etc.<sup>47</sup> For Britain, this is an area where the EU can add genuine value through the strategic continuity the High Representative and EEAS can provide. For example, David Lidington stated in July 2011 that Britain was

"keen that the EU identifies concrete goals [for strategic partnerships], preferably using its trade levers, with each country. And that the EU places an equally high priority on its relations with India." (Hansard, 2011d)

However, there remains some "frustration...about the EAS's inability to really grip" the strategic partnerships policy.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, in the foreign policy component of the British Government's recent *Balance of Competences* review exercise, concerns have been expressed that in the case of the EU and China, the strategic partnership "has never equalled the sum of its parts" (FCO, 2013: 51).

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<sup>43</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, April 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>45</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, February 2011.

<sup>46</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>47</sup> Interview, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, February 2011.

<sup>48</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

British pragmatism is also clear in the focus on budget neutrality and in the considerable sensitivity it exhibits over the EEAS and external representation. For example, in a written statement in 2011, David Lidington emphasised that “the EAS should limit its representation of the member states to agreed areas” (Hansard, 2011b). In particular, there are concerns over how far the EEAS would seek to “assert the right to make greater statements on behalf of the EU”, something which is a “red line” for Britain.<sup>49</sup> British opposition on this question has led to tensions with Germany and other member states, however. Indeed, one German official was particularly critical of Britain’s refusal to allow the EEAS to speak in international organisations unless it was “in the name of the EU *and* its 27 member states”, something he described as being “almost sabotage” given the large number of international declarations this had affected.<sup>50</sup> He went on to suggest that FCO officials were actually “very uncomfortable” with this position, but were operating on “strict and direct orders” from William Hague. Responding to this, however, a British diplomat considered that this German view “probably” reflected the fact that they were not on the Security Council and so the alternative – i.e. a stronger EU – was “the most promising for a bigger German role”. He did accept, though, that on this issue Britain was “on the opposite side of the argument” to Germany.<sup>51</sup>

This indicates a number of things. First, Britain has shown itself willing to reject any proposals that it feels threaten the prerogatives of member states in CFSP. It indicates an inherent pragmatism and defensiveness to British engagement, something which can also be seen in other policy areas, for example in how it has approached ESDP/CSDP in recent years. At the same time, though, the EEAS is also encouraging some potentially interesting changes in the processes by which Britain makes inputs into the CFSP. While previously it would have prioritised engagement with incoming presidencies, because this work is now carried out by the EEAS the FCO in particular is now paying more attention to the new body. For example, it was suggested that whereas previously the FCO’s Africa Director might not have engaged especially with the Brussels’ institutions, under the new dispensation he/she will need to get to know and communicate more regularly and effectively with the EEAS’s

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<sup>49</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>50</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, April 2012. At the time of the interview, the official put the figure at over 100.

<sup>51</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

Africa Director, and so on.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, the PSC may now become “a more important place for brokering compromises”.<sup>53</sup> It is interesting to note the differing views between FCO officials about the longer term prospects for cooperation between London and the EEAS. Thus, the UKREP diplomat suggested there had been a “greater alignment” of UK and EEAS interests because of “similar policy instincts”, whereas a London-based official was less optimistic, concluding that while Britain would work with it, “they don’t really add a lot”.<sup>54</sup> Finally, it is interesting to note that the High Representative being British is not considered especially significant and the current government has certainly not deemed it a reason to be supportive of her. As one official put it, “I think that if ministers had felt that there were wider issues for the UK interest that meant that we had to publicly oppose the EAS...they would have been quite happy to do that.”<sup>55</sup> Rather, where Britain has been satisfied with what the EEAS has done, it is “not necessarily because Ashton’s British, but [because] their policy instincts are similar to our policy instincts”.<sup>56</sup>

Despite Germany’s more positive and proactive stance towards the EEAS, it demonstrates some similar preoccupations, particularly with body’s functioning and organisation.<sup>57</sup> In part these reflect the fact that during its first years, the EEAS has been an organisation that is not yet functioning “at full speed” (Consilium, 2009: 10). A German foreign ministry official criticised it for being slow to provide documents on CSDP questions, doing so “only at the very last minute”, but then demanding an immediate comment or policy response from national capitals.<sup>58</sup> Of more serious concern, however, has been the manner in which the High Representative has managed the EEAS in its first months of operation. For example, one German official suggested that the EEAS has insufficient “political clout” and that the High

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<sup>52</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>53</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>54</sup> Interviews, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012, and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, January 2012.

<sup>55</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>56</sup> Interview, United Kingdom Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.

<sup>57</sup> See also Pomorska and Vanhoonacker (2013) in which the authors identified similar concerns among officials in the EEAS and other Permanent Representations.

<sup>58</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, January 2011. Separately, a Swedish diplomat made a similar comment, suggesting she was “totally shocked that papers, documents were not sent out. You had to look for things. And I thought...this [is] Brussels, this well-organised...capital of the EU, so I was very much shocked... [But] it’s still quite a young organisation and it’s getting better.” (Interview, Swedish Permanent Representation, Brussels, May 2012.)

Representative's lack of a foreign policy background means she struggles to "live up to" her predecessor; meanwhile another questioned the ability of either the EEAS or High Representative to deal with policy in crisis areas such as Sudan.<sup>59</sup> Part of the explanation offered for this is the difference between the *pre-* and *post-*Lisbon arrangements, and particularly the end of the rotating presidency:

"[K]nowing we had only six months, you put all your energy in it. But if you're now High Representative having four years, why should you rush...and meeting a lot of resistance? So that's my worry about the new set-up."<sup>60</sup>

The comments of another indicated that the personality of the current High Representative when compared with that of her predecessor, Javier Solana, was also significant. Thus, when Solana was High Representative, even though he was not chairing meetings of the FAC as Catherine Ashton does under the new arrangements, "still, you had the impression he was chairing".<sup>61</sup> An official in the Council Secretariat highlighted some of the difficulties Baroness Ashton's faces in asserting her authority in Council meetings, however:

"we had a [FAC] and one of the agenda items was the Middle East Peace Process...we had an exchange of views on where things are and how things are happening. What did you have? ...11 of the 27 ministers taking the floor to describe their own personal visit to Gaza...How could Ashton shut some up? She just said, well I take note of all your experiences and... contributions, and we'll move on."<sup>62</sup>

Such concerns form part of a wider series of issues Germany has with the current structure and set up of the EEAS. It is, for example, seeking revisions to Article 9 of the 2010 Council Decision which set out how the EEAS would function. These relate particularly to financial aid and financial instruments (Consilium, 2010), with Germany concerned that the Commission has retained too much financial control, leaving the EEAS merely "involved in programming".<sup>63</sup> This and related concerns about how the EEAS is being organised led to a significant intervention in the form of the '*Non-Paper of the 12 Foreign Ministers*' sent to the High Representative in December 2011. Non-papers are commonly employed within German administrations to float policy ideas or place issues on the agenda while

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<sup>59</sup> Interviews, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, January 2011.

<sup>60</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, January 2011.

<sup>61</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

<sup>62</sup> Interview, Council Secretariat, Brussels, November 2010.

<sup>63</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

circumventing strict rules on legislative scrutiny.<sup>64</sup> In this case, the intention was to raise a number of issues upon which Germany had concerns prior to the High Representative's publication of her own official report, but also to demonstrate how widely shared these anxieties were.

A "German initiative", the non-paper was intended to offer "constructive" input and further enhance the effectiveness of the EEAS to "help it reach cruising speed".<sup>65</sup> To do this, it highlighted 5 areas of concern: preparation for the FAC; coordination with the Commission; internal EEAS procedures; the building up of overseas delegations; and the full involvement of member states. From the German perspective, the value of the EEAS lies in its ability to provide a coherent and global approach. This non-paper encapsulates, therefore, the wish for a more effective linkage between the EEAS, the Commission, and the member states, something which needs to be addressed both in Brussels but also in the EU's many overseas delegations. However, while the final document was co-signed by 11 other foreign ministers there was disappointment subsequently when the High Representative "did not make one single concrete suggestion...on how to improve the functioning" of the EEAS in her own report.<sup>66</sup> The comprehensive nature of the German *non-paper* suggests a maximalist approach intended to ensure the EEAS fulfils its potential as set out in the original treaty. It also contrasts with the more 'hands-off' British view of the new institution. Moreover, while the ideas may have been presented in partnership with other states, they represent a clear effort by Germany to influence the long-term direction of the EEAS. Furthermore, the suggestion that Germany is already looking to the new Commission and the next High Representative "to see if there will be more dynamism in the EEAS after that" indicates that it will continue to pursue its policy ambitions in this regard.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> The legal requirement in Germany that all ministries inform the *Bundestag* about any official papers or opinions, including the agreement of agendas for the Foreign Affairs Council, can be time-consuming and also make it harder to have policy discussions before arriving at a formal position. Instead, the *Auswärtiges Amt* will often produce a *non-paper* on an issue it wishes to discuss, circulating this domestically or among partner states to gauge opinion or move the policy discussion forward. Similar requirements on scrutiny also exist in Denmark and The Netherlands. (Interviews, Council Secretariat, Brussels, November 2010 and Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.)

<sup>65</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

<sup>66</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

<sup>67</sup> Interview, Federal Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 2012.

## **Conclusion**

The EEAS's own review into how it is working was published in July 2013. As noted above, it contained 35 short- and medium-term recommendations to improve the service's organisation, functioning and staffing. The most notable among these include: the need to improve its policy planning capability and its capacity to address the "external aspects of key EU policies" such as energy security; better coordination of the Relex Group of Commissioners, including confirmation of the "lead co-ordinating role" of the High Representative; ensuring that Heads of Delegations see all instructions sent from Brussels to ensure they are no longer bypassed; and overhauling the "management and procedures for CSDP operations" (EEAS, 2013: 16-18). The message these recommendations send is that the next stage in the development of the EEAS will be based around consolidation of its position as the lead actor in EU external relations. However, while there is considerable detail on how this will be pursued in terms of its relationship with the Commission, there is much less about the relationship with member states, which is perhaps unsurprising. As Jan Techau (2013) has argued, though, a recent "series of diplomatic successes", including Ashton's sound handling of the E3+3 process with Iran, relations between Serbia and Kosovo, and her high-profile visit to Egypt in July this year when she met the deposed president, Mohammed Morsi (see also EurActiv, 2013), will all have bolstered her reputation as the EU's foreign policy chief. Perhaps the biggest challenge remains the relationship the member states. How – and how far – her recommendations will be acted upon and implemented to a large extent depends on them, particularly as they look towards the appointment of her successor.

The dynamics of this relationship between the EEAS (and High Representative) and the member states have provided the focus of this paper. By examining the interactions of Britain and Germany, two of the EU's biggest diplomatic powers, with the EEAS since its inception, it has sought to shed light on how the EEAS was established and has developed, and the role member states have played in the challenges it has faced. It has argued that the two states in question have each pursued – at times vigorously – particular outcomes based on their own view of and ambitions for European foreign policy co-operation. In the case of Britain, this has been a 'minimalist' outcome, defensive in nature and seeking to ensure that the

EEAS can in no way encroach on member state sovereignty in foreign policy. Germany, meanwhile, has sought a more ‘maximalist’ approach that would enable the EEAS to become a genuinely independent institutional centre of foreign policy-making within the EU, sitting between Council and Commission and able to drive the *common* in CFSP. While these objectives may be opposed, there has been some similarity in how they have engaged with the new institution, particularly in seeking to influence the issues and policies the new service should prioritise. The central tension remains, however: both have very different views on the degree of integration they wish to see – or are willing to accept – in CFSP, and European external relations more broadly. With 26 other member states also with a range of views on this issue, and with the High Representative having just set out a bold agenda for change, there remains a great deal to resolve. Consequently, for the time-being at least the EEAS will continue to be an arena for disagreement and competition over the nature and direction of cooperation in EU foreign and security policy.

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