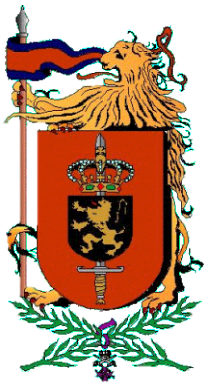

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Swedish Security & Defence Policy 1990-2012

The transformation from neutrality to solidarity through a state identity perspective

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"God and the soldier we both adore
when at the brink of ruin, not before.
The danger over, both are like requited,
God is forgotten, and the soldier slighted."

– ***Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)***

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Abstract

This thesis aims to analyse the transformation of Sweden's state identity as well as its Security and Defence Policy through a theoretical framework based on Alexander Wendt's *"Social Theory of International Relations"*. By identifying factors (both internal and external) that have affected Sweden's actions and policymaking, the thesis provides an understanding of the gradual conversion from neutrality, isolation and national defence to military non-alignment, cooperation and international operations. The thesis discusses a future renationalisation in international relations and identifies difficulties with Sweden's policy of being militarily non-aligned in peacetime aiming for neutrality in wartime. Because of Sweden's membership in the European Union, NATO's Partnership for Peace, and the Declaration of Solidarity, the neutrality option does not seem particularly viable if a conflict were to arise in Sweden's vicinity.

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1. Introduction

> *"[T]he world in which we live is not one – and never was one – which presents itself to us for independent response to its objective stability or uncertainty, like a volcanic region which will punish its inhabitants who do not understand its structure and respects its sovereignty. Our response is a condition of the social world we inhabit; our security policy is a choice we make among options – limited by history, by the 'accomplishments of our ancestors', in Nietzsche's phrase, but always entailing human agency and choice."*[1]

The world as we know it today is significantly coloured by the Cold War's legacy, and has greatly affected states' perceptions and concepts of security, and in turn, their security and defence policies. Discussions on the term security, with its multifaceted meaning depending on who it involves, became increasingly relevant during the peak of the Cold War, and even more so after the fall of the Soviet Union when the term *"could not be accounted for satisfactorily within the conventional framework."*[2] This resulted in a new broadened definition of the concept of security.[3]

Since the cessation of the Cold War, states have expanded their perspective on *"securing not just the 'inside' but also the 'outside' (of a state) ... expanding the spatial scope of security measures from the nation to the whole world"*[4]. Due to globalisation and the increasingly co-dependency between states, conflicts in the world affected nations regardless of their geographical location by, for instance, financial impact and streams of refugees. Therefore, Europe's security policies and armed forces have undergone an extensive transformation as a result of an increasing international focus, a greater collaboration regarding Peace Support Operations (PSO), defence material (e.g. Pooling and Sharing) and military exercises, as well as a deepened cooperation on collective security – formally enacted through organisations such as the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO), the European Union (EU), and the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO).

Because peace support operations have different characteristics than conventional warfare, often with complex threats and an diffuse opponent, European armed forces had to learn new skills

[1] McSweeney, B., *Security, Identity and Interests*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: (1999), p.11
[2] Ibid., p.1
[3] Ibid., p.1f
[4] Ingram, A., Dodds, K., *Spaces of Security and Insecurity,* Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Company (2009), p.188

and adapt their military thinking and mind-set in order to accomplish their "new" tasks, quite different from the training during the previous decades.[5]

> *"The EU has only slowly woken from the slumber of Cold war military thinking over the last decade, and some countries are more awake than others."*[6]

Similarly, the Swedish Security and Defence Policy has transformed from a national to a global perspective imbued with its international commitments. Sweden has since the end of the Cold War gradually changed and separated itself from its long history of neutrality and conscription, to becoming militarily non-aligned in peacetime and aiming at neutrality in war (though, having strong political alignments with the Nordic countries and through countries that have signed the Lisbon treaty), and has abolished conscription in favour of a professional army.

> *"Of Sweden's three official cold war 'policy pillars' – independence, neutrality in wartime and military non-alignment – only military non-alignment remains. Independence has become interdependence, and neutrality is no longer the only, or even the most likely, option should there be a war in Europe.*"[7]

This thesis attempts to identify which factors have contributed to this political and military metamorphosis.

1.1 Background

This section presents the concept of security and the post-Cold War transformation of European armed forces.

1.1.1 Concept of Security

The old concept of security is based on two political principles[8]:

1. The nation-state protects its population from internal and external threats by the police and military force.
2. The nation-state has a clear division of mandate between the police protecting the state against internal threats, and the military against external threats.

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[5] Grevi, G., et al., European Security and Defence Policy: the first 10 years (1999-2009), *European Union Institute for Security Studies,* (2009) http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/ESDP_10-web.pdf (2013-04-15), p.73
[6] Ibid., p.80
[7] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), *The Nordic countries and the European Security and Defence Policy,* New York: Oxford University Press (2006), p.169
[8] Seidelmann, R., Old versus new security. A contribution to the conceptual debate. *Center for Global Studies – discussion paper 1,* (2010-05) http://www.cgs-bonn.de/pdf/DP-1-Seidelmann.pdf (2013-04-12)

The view on security during the Cold War was dominated by military security and the ability to project its military force as an extension of the state's politics[9], similar to Clausewitz's aphorism that *"war is an extension of politics by other means"*[10].

> *"If military force was relevant to an issue, it was considered a security issue; and if military force was not relevant, that issue was consigned to the category of low politics."*[11]

Thus, "security" was something that belonged and was upheld by the state, and was more or less measured in military resources.[12] The state's ability to protect itself from other states and the power to influence or force other states behaviour were often dependent on its military capability and political will.[13] During the Cold War a balance-of-power arose between the USA and the Soviet Union – two blocs with different political viewpoints – together with their followers that had similar political interests and/or state identities. However, states also had to deal with other security issues that were non-militarily related, such as threats of *"economic, natural resource and ecological dimensions"*[14].

The new concept of security, therefore, implied a broader definition of security. In order to meet the multifaceted world that revealed itself after the Cold War, nations had to alter and redesign their national defence policies. The new concept of security has a different perspective on security, shifting the *"burden of security from the individual state to the international level"*[15]. Unlike previously, alliances were not "*as-much-as-integrative-as-possible but more of a multilateral type"*[16]. Buzan's et al. definition of security is divided into five security areas: economic (financial resources and welfare), environmental (survival of human civilisation), political (state stability and legitimacy), social (maintaining a national identity), and military (armed forces' capabilities and states' perceptions of other states' intentions).[17]

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[9] Seidelmann, R., (2010), p.5
[10] Widén, J., Ångström, J., *Militärteorins grunder,* Stockholm: Försvarsmakten (2004), p.9
[11] Baldwin, A. D., The concept of security. *Review of International Studies,* Vol.23 No.1 (1997-01) p.9
[12] McSweeney, B., *Security, Identity and Interests – A sociology of international relations,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1999) p.28
[13] Seidelmann, R. (2010) p.4
[14] McSweeney, B., (1999) p.35
[15] Ibid., p.45
[16] Seidelmann, R., (2010), p.8
[17] Barry, Buzan. Weæver, Ole. De Wilde, Jaap. *Security: A new framework for Analysis,* London: Lynne Rienner Publishers (1998), p. 22ff

In summary, from alignments that focused purely on military capabilities and threat-projection, to states working together in a given area, such as United Nations peace support operations.

1.1.2 Military Transformation post-Cold War

The end of the Cold War marked the dawn of a new era of understanding security, which resulted in a change of European states' security and defence policies, and subsequently transforming their armed forces. The military reformations in Europe is perhaps most noticeable by the changeover from conscription and defence of national territory, to armed forces consisting of employed personnel and participating in multinational operations abroad and the rise of a collective security through the EU and NATO.

1.2 Purpose and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to identify factors that have affected the transformation of the security and defence policy in Sweden since the end of the Cold War – in correlation with Marco Wyss's four reform-phases presented below and a theoretical approach inspired by Alexander Wendt's social theory of international relations. Additionally, this thesis will offer an understanding of how the view of national security has evolved in conjunction with international security development.

The research questions are:

- Which factors, relating to the evolution of Sweden's state identity, have affected the transformation of Swedish Security and Defence Policy since the end of the Cold War?
- Does the transformation of Sweden's Security and Defence Policy since the 1990s correlate with Wyss's reform-phases?

1.3 Method and Material

This part explains the thesis's methodology and research limits.

The purpose of this thesis is, through a state identity perspective, to identify factors that have affected the transformation of Swedish security and defence policy between 1990 and 2012. The thesis utilises Alexander Wendt's social theory of international relations, attempting to create an understanding of this transformation and why the defence policy looks like it does today. Furthermore, Marco Wyss's four military reform-phases have been used in order to systematise the thesis by giving a clear view of the structure and a clear basis for the empirical analysis. While the scheme may be perceived as slightly generalised, it provides a structure and a starting-point for comparing how well the Swedish security and defence policy has correlated with the general

transformation of European armed forces, thus, acts as a complement to answering the research question. The thesis focuses on the concept of security and the factors (mostly internal and external) that have affected Sweden's state identity and in turn its security and defence policy.

A qualitative text analysis has been conducted to elucidate relevant factors and comprehend how Sweden's security and defence policy and actions have evolved. The choice of a qualitative systematising method is based on the importance of acquiring a holistic perspective as well as bringing forth the essential content of the empirical data[18]. The choice of research material for this thesis is based on Swedish government bills from the current period, literature regarding the transformation of European and Swedish Armed Forces (SWAF), treaties and decisions made by the European Union on security and defence issues – aiming to give an adequate research base to identify significant factors that have affected the outline of the Swedish security and defence policy.

Additionally, this thesis is based on the social scientific *methodological holism* and concept of *interpretivism*. The former, signifying that the perception of the world is subjective and that its individual members influence the actions by a collective.[19] The latter, declaring that in order to understand the social world – the social phenomena, human behaviours and actions – one must find *"an understanding of human behaviour through an interpretation of the meanings, beliefs, and ideas that give people reason for acting"*[20], such as through a hermeneutic approach.[21]

Therefore, *"to comprehend and understand what a text says in relation to the question asked"*[22] and because behaviour *"is a product of the meanings and intentions employed by social actors ... not unlike that engage by the translator of a text"*[23] one can use a hermeneutical approach *"'to bring to light an underlying coherence or sense' with respect to the objects defined by the field of study"*[24], as the behaviour and actions of a state.[25] This is consistent with the thesis' choice of a social constructivist approach focusing on the social structure of international relations.

[18] Esaiasson, P. et al., *Metodpraktikan – tredje upplagan,* Vällingby: Norstedts Juridik AB (2007), p.238
[19] Halperin, S., Heath, O., *Political research, methods and practical skills,* New York: Oxford University Press (2012), p.82
[20] Ibid., p.40
[21] Ibid., p.40
[22] Esaiasson, P. et al. (2007), p.249
[23] Halperin, S., Heath, O. (2012), p.40
[24] Ibid., p.40
[25] Ibid., p.40

Finally, it would be impossible to cover all aspects and nail down the precise events and sole factors that have affected Sweden's security and defence policy; nonetheless, this thesis attempts to identify the general key factors to offer an understanding of how Sweden's state identity has gradually changed during the period 1990-2012.

1.3.1 Systematising

In order to identify factors that have affected the transformation of Swedish security and defence policy this thesis will emanate from the scheme presented in Marco Wyss's *"Military transformation in Europe's neutral and non-allied states"*, which identifies four phases of transformation of the European armed forces after the end of the Cold War:

1. **A first reform wave from 1990 to 1995** where most states reduced their military defence budgets because of the peace dividend after the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989.
2. **A second reform wave from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s** when focus shifted from defending national borders to participating in multinational peace-support-operations abroad. The events during the Balkan Wars speeded the transformation of European armed forces and states' collaboration with the EU and NATO.
3. **A third reform wave began in early 2000-2005** further improving interoperability and reaction time by re-organising armed forces into a flexible modular-based structure. The war on terror would prove to have a significant impact on states' security and defence policies, as the war in Afghanistan would have on its armed forces.
4. **A fourth reform wave can be discerned from around 2005 to the present-day** *"in which armed forces are trying to learn the lessons from Afghanistan and, more importantly, budget austerity is leading to often uncoordinated cuts in defence spending, force reductions and scrapping of military hardware"*[26]. Simultaneously, the EU is starting to consolidate its role as a global actor and strengthen collaboration between member states.[27]

In conclusion, in order to identify factors of the transformations of Sweden's state identity and policy, the thesis will focus on external and internal factors in each phase. This implies that there might be several external and/or internal factors depending on the events in each phase (e.g. membership in the European Union, the war on terror, or the change of governments).

[26] Wyss, M., Military transformation in Europe's neutral and non-allied states. *The RUSI Journal*, (2011-05-20) http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03071847.2011.576474 (2012-11-08), p.45
[27] Ibid.

1.4 Research Limits

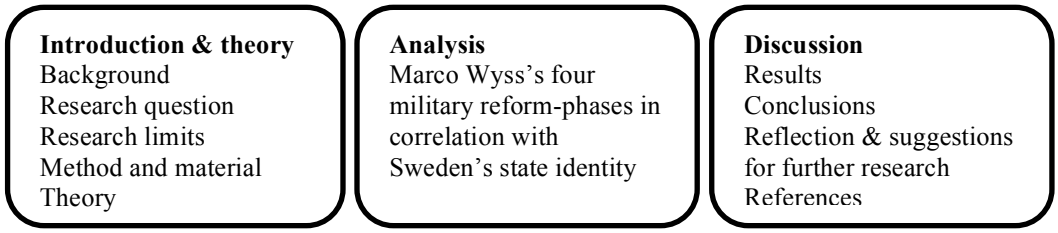
The study is demarcated to the period 1990-2012 for several reasons:

- The end of the Cold War acted as a watershed on the perspective on security amongst European nations – some made major political reformations seeking military alignment, others continued with their previous politics only altering them slightly.
- Swedish security and defence policy has during this period undergone an extensive change from semi-isolation to participation in international operations and promotion of collective security and solidarity strategy, as well as increasing training and exercises with NATO through its membership in the Partnership for Peace programme.
- The EU has increased its power, capabilities, and influence significantly during this period – both on its member states as well as in world politics. The Lisbon Treaty was ratified in 2007 by the EU member states. Undoubtedly, the European Union has played a key part in influencing the European nations' perspectives on security and their defence policies.
- Sweden has twice been the lead-nation in setting up one of the two European Battle Groups – Nordic Battle Group 2008 and Nordic Battle Group 2011.
- Sweden abolished conscription in favour of all-volunteer armed forces in 2010.

The thesis will mainly focus on how the evolution of the European Union and the membership in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, have affected Sweden's state identity by reviewing relevant literature and security and defence policies from the early 1990s to 2012.

1.5 Disposition

After an introduction of the thesis framework, there is a background presenting the transformation of European armed forces post-Cold War. Thereafter, the research question will be analysed using Wyss's schedule and against the thesis's theory model, followed by a discussion of the results obtained thereby answering the research question.



2. Theory

Constructivism emphasizes the social aspects in international relations, how shared ideas, norms, and values create a common ideational structure that affects nations' behaviours and their self-image – *"who they are, their goals, and the roles they believe they should play"*[28]. These structures affect nations' interests, identities, and consequently their actions. Of course, these structures are not constant – on the contrary, they are variable and mirror the current norms, values, and knowledge of the nations' populations. Thus, a nation's ideational structure is co-dependent with and affected by its population, in turn the population is affected by the nation's ideational structure – resulting in an interaction between the collective (persistent over space and time) and its internal individuals (current members of the government).[29]

> *"[W]e normally think of states as persisting through time despite generational turnover, in part because their properties seem quite stable: boundaries, symbols, national interests, foreign policies, and so on. Such continuities help give temporal continuity to the succession of governments, enabling us to call every national government in Washington, DC for 200 years a 'US' government. And even at any given moment we normally think of states as being more than just their current members."*[30]

Wendt's social constructive theory of international relations describes how states are a social structure that consists of and depends on individuals (the population) and their authorization of collective actions (the government). Wendt argues that the primary actors in world-politics are states, which consist of and depend on individuals and their shared knowledge and ideational perception.[31]

A state's behaviour, and by extension how its political culture and norms affects other states' behaviour, depends on its identity (*"like capitalist states, fascist states, monarchical states"*[32]) and on how it is perceived by other states as being successful in material, power, wealth, and/or status and prestige), and finally which motives, national interests and needs (*"physical survival, autonomy, and economic well-being and collective self-esteem"*[33]) the state has.[34]

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[28] Guzzini, S., Leander, A., Constructivism and international relations – Alexander Wendt and his critics, Taylor & Francis e-Library (2006), p.25
[29] Wendt, A., (1999), p.217
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., p.2
[32] Ibid., p.226
[33] Ibid., p.198
[34] Ibid., p.197f

This theory implies that a state's behaviours, interests, and actions are affected and somewhat guided by its identity, which in turn is influenced by how its self-image is perceived by others. Which self-image (built on culture, norms, and history) does the nation have? How does the "world society" perceive the nation, and why is that? In what way does this affect a nation's actions and how it outlines its defence policy?

> *"[T]he structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and ... the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature."*[35]

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Below is a model of Wendt's social theory of international politics in order to illustrate and clarify how this thesis aims to apply Wendt's theory to the previously stated research question.

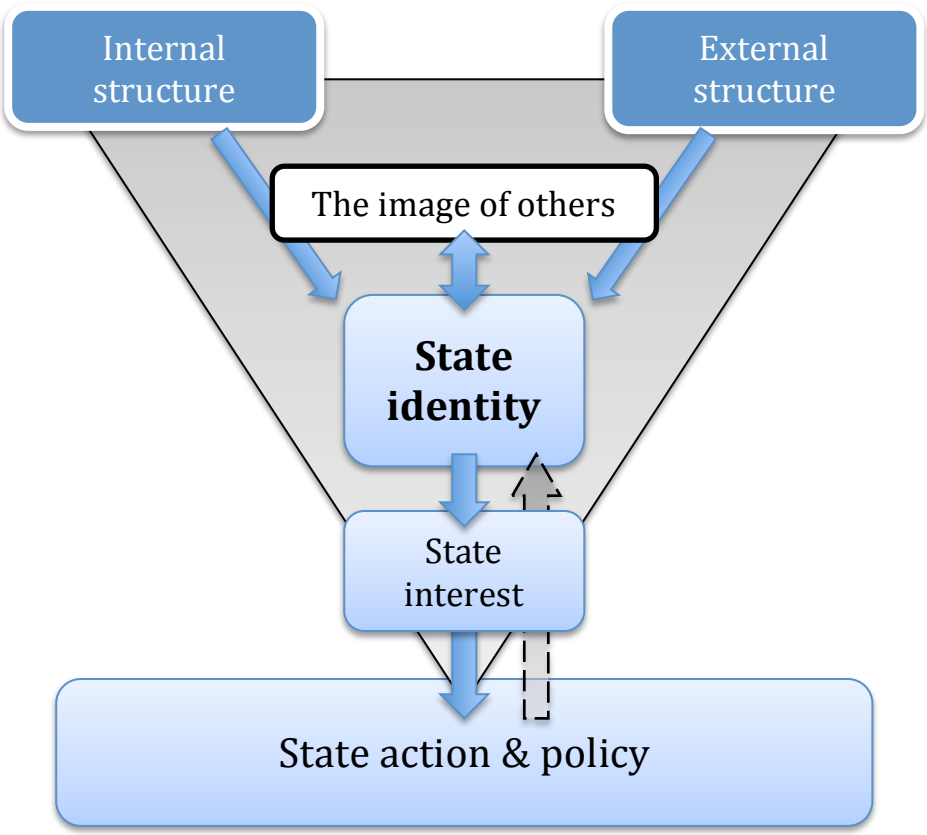

Figure 1: model based on Wendt's social theory of international relations

[35] Wendt, A., (1999), p.1

Internal structure – domestic actors and the nation's shared knowledge and culture

The internal dimension of state identity is, according to Wendt, "socially shared knowledge is knowledge that is both common and connected between individuals"[36], and that culture is "norms, rules, institutions, ideologies, organizations, threat-system, and so on"[37]. The internal structure is, therefore, inter alia a product of the nation's historical-political culture affecting its current politics.

> *"This 'physiological' structure relates the various individuals and bureaucracies which make up a state actor to each other, assigning functional, territorial, or issue-area sovereignties within a framework of rules and procedures for settling jurisdictional conflicts and ensuring their harmonious operation."*[38]

Though, as mentioned earlier, the internal structure can be altered by its individuals and domestic politics (thus, changing the shared knowledge – culture, norms, and values), which affect the state identity and in turn, the image of others and external structure. Similarly, the external structure can attempt to influence and participate the domestic politics in the internal structure.[39]

In other words, in both the internal and the external structure there will be dissensions between actors in respective structure (difference in political opinions, beliefs, and how the state should act and behave), as well as, between internal actors and external actors. [40]

External structure – international actors, culture, and norms

The external dimension of state identity is, quite obviously, what is outside the internal structure, such as other states, international organisations (e.g. the United Nations and NATO), institutions (e.g. the European Union), and interest organisations (e.g. the International Committee of the Red Cross). Similar to the internal structure, the external structure consists of a variety of actors with different beliefs and opinions regarding internal structure and state identity.[41]

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[36] Wendt, A., (1999), p.141
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid., p.207
[39] Alexandrov, M., The concept of state identity in international relations: a theoretical analysis. Journal of international development and cooperation, vol.10 no.1 (2003-09) http://ir.lib.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/metadb/up/74007022/JIDC_10_01_03_Alexandrov.pdf (2013-03-26), p.40
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid., p.40

The image of others – the collective perception of state identity

Wendt believes that a state's self-image is either negative or positive depending on the relationship to its external actors. For example, Sweden sees itself from the perception of other states, how they interpret and perceive Sweden's actions and how they perceive Sweden's role and ability to influence world-politics – *"it is by taking the perspective of the Other that the Self sees itself."*[42] A negative self-image is the result of external actors being critical, disapproving, and behaving in a disregarding fashion toward the state (e.g. the UN passing sanctions on North Korea's nuclear tests[43]). In contrast, a positive self-image is the result of respect, recognition, and appreciation from external actors.[44] For example, Sweden's self image during the 1980s is likely to have been perceived as being a neutral state, defending human rights, arguing in favour of disarmament and acting as the world's global conscience – and condemning other states' actions/violation against these matters.[45]

State identity – a state's collective identity

A state's identity is based upon the perception of both internal and external structures. The state identity is the core of the nations shared knowledge, norms, and values, which affects its actions. This in turn affects internal structures (national) and external structures (international), as well as "the image of others". Furthermore, the state identity is subjective, meaning that different perceptions and understandings of a state's identity can arise within the internal and external structures.[46]

> *"The character of this internal–external relationship varies, however, which suggests that rather than being a unitary phenomenon susceptible to general definition there are actually several kinds of identities."*[47]

Moreover, these identities have an inbuilt intersubjective quality, for example: *Sweden might think it is a great power (and try to project this image), but if that belief is not shared by other states then Sweden's identity will not work in their interaction,* therefore, the internal and external structures and their understandings of a state's identity continuously adjusts, adapts, and

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[42] Wendt, A., (1999), p.236
[43] UN News Centre, *Security Council and UN officials condemn DPR Korea's nuclear test,* (2013-02-12) http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44122&Cr=democratic&Cr1=Korea#.UXe-KivkWNs (2013-04-24)
[44] Wendt, A., (1999), p.236f
[45] Ahlin, P., *Det heliga utanförskapet: Sverige som åskådare och aktör i Europa och i världen,* Stockholm: Timbro (2000), p.11
[46] Wendt, A., (1999), p.224
[47] Ibid.

respond to the state's actions and change in behaviour.[48]

> *"Both the internal and external dimensions of state identity necessarily include multiple, often contradictory representations of state and beliefs about its appropriate behavior."* [49]

Therefore, state identity is shaped and re-shaped by its internal and external actors producing a collective identity consisting of, for instance, shared guidelines, interests, principles, policies or culture – creating a collective identification and feeling of being part of a group. An example of collective identity that has evolved into a collective security is the European Union, whose member states' are strongly affiliated with one another, thus, not seeing each other as security threats. Instead, they are focused on protecting the union from outside threats through a common security and defence policy.[50]

State interest – closely linked and shaped by the state identity

> *"States are actors whose behavior is motivated by a variety of interests rooted in corporate, type, role, and collective identities."*[51]

Unsurprisingly, every state has its own specific interest and motives depending on cultural and historical factors, though Wendt argues that one can identify four general universal interests that must be fulfilled in order to survive as a state. These four interests also, to some extent, regulate states' alternative courses of action in their foreign policies:[52]

- Physical survival – refers to the survival of the state as a collective, since individuals can be sacrificed for the sake of the state's existence.
- Autonomy – in order for a state to regenerate its collective identity, the state must not merely survive; it must retain its liberty to control its resources and choice of government to meet the demands from internal and external actors.
- Economic well-being – not necessarily only economic growth (which often is the definition in some state form, such as capitalistic ones), but the state's resources and how it maintain the mode of production.

[48] Wendt, A., (1999), p.224ff
[49] Alexandrov, M., (2003-09), p.40
[50] Wendt, A., (1999), p.106
[51] Ibid., p.233
[52] Ibid., p.235ff

- Collective self-esteem – similar to individuals seeking acceptance, appreciation, and belonging to a group, states seek legitimisation and acceptance of its own existence through the relationship with its external structure (particularly that external actors recognise a state's sovereignty *"since it means that at least formally a state has an equal status in the eyes of Others"*[53]. Collective self-esteem is, therefore, strongly associated with state identity (and at the same time its collective identity, negative or positive self-image).

State action & policy – the product of the state identity and interests.

> *"[O]ver time states have developed a deep reservoir of common knowledge about who they are and what they want. Had this not occurred the international system today would be far more chaotic and conflictual than it is—indeed, there would not be an 'international system' at all."*[54]

The learning process leading up to this common knowledge is what Wendt means by "state identity" and how state actions depend on the relation and reflection by its external actors (other states, organisations, and institutions, as well as the collective identity amongst states with similar culture, norms, and principles with an understanding of, and identification with, each other). Thus, these social structures only exist in process and actions – not in material resources nor in the minds of internal or external actors – but in the interaction between internal and external actors, shaping states identities and behaviour.[55]

> *"For example, 500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than 5 North Korean nuclear weapons, because the British are friends of the United States and the North Koreans are not"*[56]

[53] Wendt, A., (1999), p.237
[54] Guzzini, S., Leander, A., Constructivism and international relations – Alexander Wendt and his critics, Taylor & Francis e-Library (2006), p.208
[55] Wendt, A., Constructing international politics, *International security*, vol. 20 no.1 (1995), p.74
[56] Ibid., p.73

3. Analysis

This chapter analyses the presented empirical material in correlation with the previously stated transformation phases, from 1990 to 2012. Each phase ends with a short summary in order to provide the reader with a clear overview of the most significant issues during each phase and how it has affected Sweden's state identity and the outline of its defence policy.

3.1 Swedish Security and Defence Policy pre-1990

In order to fully understand Sweden's security and defence policy and its state identity during this era one must first look back to events before the Cold War ended.

Since the 20th century Swedish long-term defence motions have decreased from covering a 12-year planning horizon to a 4-5 years one. In addition, these motions have often changed afterwards because of political and/or economic reasons resulting in a rather short-term defence planning. Often the armed forces and the politicians disagree about the military expenditure regarding current threats and security issues resulting in the politicians, to simplify, "determining" the seriousness of these threats and dimensioning these to suit the proposed defence budget – the so called "policy of adaption".[57] This has had major effects on the armed forces and Swedish security policy, especially during the inter-war period and the large military reduction that followed since the general opinion was that the world was going to be more secure and stable from then on. Furthermore, the policy of neutrality was never stated in the constitution but rather existed on the interaction between Sweden's state identity and actions.

In order to make Sweden's neutrality credible after the concessions it had made during the world wars, the armed forces were considerably strengthened. For example, Sweden had the second strongest air force in Europe and about a third of the population of seven million people were affected by Sweden's defence planning (both military and civilian), finally, the enlarged defence industry resulted in that Sweden becoming independent of other states' supplying military equipment in peace or war time.[58]

> *"The role of Swedish defence, as part of our overall security policy, was to contribute to stability in Northern Europe. A military attack on Sweden should require such large*

[57] Rydén, B., *Principen om den anpassningsbara försvarsförmågan – ett implementeringsperspektiv på svensk försvarspolitik under försvarsbeslutsperioden 1997-2001,* Diss., Örebro University (2003), p.31
[58] Gyldén, N., *Sweden's security and defence policy – through the Cold War and towards the Turn of the Century,* Stockholm: Ministry of Defence (1994), p.12

resources and be so time-consuming that the potential advantage of the attack did not measure up to the efforts involved."[59]

Furthermore, for almost 200 years, Swedish neutrality and security policy more or less aimed to isolate Sweden from the rest of Europe. However, the policy of neutrality has often been up for interpretation when facing new realities and opportunities. The definition of neutrality has been adjusted to what has been most suitable for Sweden at each given time.[60] This redefinition of Sweden's policy of neutrality has in fact been a rather recurrent phenomenon, starting when Sweden became neutral in 1810 (when Jean Baptiste Bernadotte was elected heir-presumptive to the throne after the expensive Thirty Years' war and the rule of Karl XII). Sweden's policy was slightly biased having a stronger connection and trust westwards with England than eastwards with Russia – de facto a position maintained through the Great Wars and the Cold War up to the present day, in turn affecting the future outline of Sweden's defence policy, armed forces, and relations with Russia.[61]

During the Cold War, tension between Sweden and the Soviet were apparent, mainly due to the latter seeing Sweden as a "western-nation", thinking we cooperated with the US (which we secretly did in return for high-tech military equipment, as well as with the assumption of western support if the policy of neutrality would fail in the event of war), but also due to the recurrent violations of each other's territory when gathering signal intelligence. In order to make Sweden's neutrality credible after WW2, the armed forces were considerably strengthened in line with its strategy of deterrence. The government even commenced a secret project creating nuclear weapons, although this was never fully carried out.[62]

The relation became even frostier due to the Catalina-affair in 1952 when the Soviets first shot down a signal intelligence aircraft and later on the search and rescue aircraft near the Swedish island Gotland.[63] More incident were, the submarine intrusions in the early 1980s (even into the 1990s), in particularly when the Soviet U137 stranded outside of the Swedish naval base in Karlskrona in 1982. The Soviet Union was most definitely seen as a direct military threat to Sweden.[64] After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Sweden was cautious of its security

[59] Gyldén, N., (1994), p.29
[60] Ibid., p.78
[61] Ibid., p.7ff
[62] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.254
[63] Lindholm, H. R., DC 3-affären 1952 och nu, *Royal Academy of War Science,* no.3 (1993), p.213-217
[64] Gyldén, N., (1994), p.37f

implication in the long-term; would Russia arise to becoming an even greater power with renewed interest in our vicinity?[65]

Moreover, the policy of neutrality was deeply rooted in the minds of Swedes, it had kept Sweden out of war for nearly 200 years and steered the nation unharmed through two world wars. Almost as permeating was the support to the UN (a cornerstone of Swedish foreign policy by the government in the 1950s[66]) and Sweden's self-image as an actor of peace and disarmament, which was particularly evident during the mid-1980s when Sweden more or less took on *"the role as a self-imposed global conscience"*[67]. Perhaps in a way to justify and convince the international community that its neutrality *"was not only a way to save their own skin, but that it really served the international community's higher interests"*[68]. It was as if neutrality had become an end in itself, a strongly positive and morally unwavering statement. However, because Sweden was a democracy with western perspectives it had some difficulty sustaining the credibility of neutrality during the Cold War and the battle between democracy and dictatorship.[69] Similar difficulties appeared during the Korean War and the Gulf War.

Sweden supported the UN Security Council's resolution to intervene in the Korean War (1950) and assisted with a field hospital, but stated that it would remain outside if a major war broke out[70]. Similarly, during the Gulf War (1990) Sweden's foreign minister of that time said that:

> *"Sweden is not belligerent, but we are not neutral in the conflict. This is not a war between the United States and Iraq. Belligerent is the United States and the so-called coalition, which actions are legitimized by Security Resolution 678. As a loyal UN member, we have from the start supported all resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council. Our support for the UN is based on the fact that organisation's ultimate purpose is to maintain international peace and security. The fulfilment of this objective may, in accordance with the UN Charter, as a last resort, require the use of armed force when other measures are insufficient."*[71]

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[65] Gyldén, N., (1994), p.66
[66] Ahlin, P., (2000), p.54
[67] Ibid., p.11
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., p.11f
[70] Ibid., p.55
[71] Parliamentary protocol 1990/91:51 (1990-01-17), §5: Information from the government regarding current situation on the Gulf crisis, Statement 35: foreign minister Sten Andersson, http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Kammaren/Protokoll/Riksdagens-snabbprotokoll-1990_GE0951/ (2013-04-29)

Sweden wavered on how it should act in connection to the Gulf War and with regard to its strong commitment to the UN; how would Sweden back up its verbal support for the UN with concrete action? Discussions shifted between humanitarian aid, military resources and staying completely outside of the conflict. It finally resulted in Sweden (once again) supporting the operation with a field hospital.[72]

3.2 Phase 1: 1990-1995

This era had a drastic effect on the Swedish state identity and the security and defence policy, because of the peace dividend, the absence of a threat from the east, and the closer cooperation with NATO ant the EU. Between 1991-1994 Sweden had a conservative government for the first time since 1982, although in 1995 there was a transfer of power back to a social democratic government. [73] The change to a right-wing government would show itself to be quite significant for the outline of the Swedish security and defence policy.

3.2.1 The European Union

> *"Europe was not ready to respond to the post-Cold War world - a more violent world than anticipated – with adequate defence budgets."*[74]

The post-Cold War era marked the dawn of a new era in the understanding of security (as presented in *"1.1.1 Concept of security"*). Largely because of the peace dividend, which more or less was result of two aspects: technological developments (nuclear weapons) and increasingly industrial and economic interdependence between nations. Simply, a war did not outweigh the benefits of peace; consequently, the thought of war between European states was diminishing.[75] Subsequently, European states altered their security and defence policies and in turn transformed their armed forces to better match the "new security issues" – a decreasing immediacy of defending the state from external threats (although still existing), and an increase of newer, differing or re-emphasised, security challenges with diverse demands and prerequisites (such as

[72] Ahlin, P., (2000), p.55
[73] Government Offices of Sweden, *Sveriges regeringar under 100 år,* http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/4393 (2013-05-02)
[74] Haine, J-Y., ESDP: an overview. *European Union Institute for Security Studies,* (2004), http://bdi.mfa.government.bg/info/Module%2002%20-%20Diplomacia%20na%20ES/dopalnitelna%20literatura/overview%20ESPD.pdf (2013-04-15), p.2
[75] Münkler, H., "Old and new wars" p.190-199 in Cavelty Dunn, M., Mauer, V. (ed), *The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies,* New York: Routledge (2010), p.190f

war-fighting abroad, peace support operations, domestic policing missions). This turned out to be a financial and ideological challenge for many European states.[76]

> *"Most European countries simply cannot 'do everything' with their armed forces therefore. They need to make hard choices about what they are actually for and structure their military reform programmes on this basis."*[77]

During the Cold War, Europe relied on protection from the US and NATO.[78] Discussions regarding better integration between European states after the unification of Germany and the end of the Cold War eventually led to the creation of the European Community (EC) and the idea of a common foreign and security policy.[79] In 1992, the EC changed its name to the European Union (EU) when the Treaty on European Union (TEU, also known as the Maastricht treaty) was signed, which initiated the process of creating a political union and European integration with a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). One of its objectives was to facilitate higher military collaboration in Europe.[80]

> *"the European Union 'must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises'."*[81]

3.2.2 NATO and the Partnership For Peace (PfP) Programme

Sweden has been a member of the PfP since 1994 and participated in NATO-led exercises and operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Libya, and outside Somalia on anti-pirate operations. This has supported to improve and transform the Swedish Armed Forces' capabilities and interoperability with other NATO affiliates.[82] The basis for PfP implies that *"each nation individually decides in which areas, and in which way, it wants to cooperate with Nato. Thus,*

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[76] Edmunds, T., What are armed forces for? The changing nature of military roles in Europe, *International Affairs,* vol.82 no.6 (2006-11) http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2006.00588.x/abstract (2013-04-16) p.1062
[77] Edmunds, T., Malešič, M., *Defence transformation in Europe: Evolving military roles,* IOS Press (2005), E-book, http://ebooks.iospress.nl/volume/defence-transformation-in-europe-evolving-military-roles (2013-03-18), p.9
[78] Haine, J-Y., (2004), p.1
[79] McSweeney, B., (1999) p.5
[80] Haine, J-Y., (2004), p.1
[81] Grevi, G., et al., (2009), p.13
[82] NATO's relation with Sweden (2013-04-25), http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52535.htm (2013-04-29)

from a Swedish standpoint, we decide the scope of our involvement on the basis of Sweden's interests as a non-aligned country"[83].

From a Swedish perspective, the PfP was an opportunity to seek guidance and information on how to transform and adapt its armed forces to become interoperable with NATO-led operations, which were beginning to be more and more common.[84]

3.2.3 Swedish Security and Defence Policy post-Cold War

At the beginning of the 1990s there was hesitancy from Sweden's side to join the EU considering Sweden's long history of neutrality and what effect the widening concept of security (and rise of new threats) would have on Sweden. Becoming a EU-member was seen as somewhat contradictory and incompatible with Sweden's policy of neutrality, which resulted in an intense domestic debate concerning Swedish neutrality and adjustment of the security policy – a step away from its neutrality.[85] A similar debate had taken place when Sweden joined the UN in 1946, but the political will of joining a collective security was greater than preserving neutrality, and abandoning part of the neutrality was *"a logical consequence of entering an organisation based on the obligation of solidarity between its member states"*[86]. In 1991, the right-wing government stated that a possible EU membership would not impinge on the policy of neutrality, and that this would gain Sweden's alternative courses of action in the event of conflicts or war.[87]

> *"The Swedish policy of neutrality may have been fixed 'as the Swedish granite'. However, it has never been so fixed that it could not have been redefined. The ability to adjust the policy to new realities and requirements has on the contrary been very possible."* [88]

Therefore, in light of the growing "European identity" Swedish security and defence policy changed in 1992, signifying that Sweden's policy of neutrality was no longer consonant with the on-going security transition in Europe and Sweden's rapprochement towards a membership in the EU. Hence, new wording was adopted stating that Sweden would be *"non-participating in alliances in peacetime, aiming at neutrality in war"*[89]. In order to be militarily non-aligned Sweden was to *"maintain an adequate defence capability, to enable us to be neutral in the event*

[83] Regeringen, *Sverige och Nato,* (2012-04-19) http://regeringen.se/sb/d/2561/a/13848 (2013-04-29)
[84] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.8
[85] Ibid., p.69
[85] Ibid., p.305
[86] Ahlin, P., (2000), p.8
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., p.7
[89] Gyldén, N., (1994), p.79

of a war in our vicinity. No one else defends Sweden, and Sweden defends only itself"[90]. Furthermore, another phrase was added opening the door to future collaboration with the EU, which might appear a bit contradictory to the last statement: *"our security policy objective is to secure our freedom of action … as an individual nation or in cooperation with other countries"*[91].

In conclusion, the focus for the Swedish Armed Forces remained strongly on a territorial defence in the event of a great power war in Europe, even though the risk of such an event was small. Sweden was cautious to draw any conclusions after the fall of the Soviet Union since the development either could be an increased democratisation and economic growth, or a regression towards authoritarianism.[92] With wide political support the SWAF began a major reorganisation and modernisation, as well as stating that *"an important aspect of the Security and Defence Policy is to outwardly promote détente, disarmament, cooperation and democratic development --- that even in economic difficulties continue to ensure a strong, comprehensive and independent defence"*[93].

3.2.4 Conscription

Around the 1990s many European countries started to question the conscription system, especially the inequality that only some needed to do their military service. Because of the peace dividend and further reductions of the armed forces, many states could not justify the economic cost of educating large segments of the population every year. Furthermore, the coalition's victory in Iraq, consisting of employed soldiers, against Saddam Hussein's conscript army in the Kuwait War in 1991 had fuelled the debate about abolishing conscription as a way to ensure the recruitment to the armed forces, and instead implementing all-volunteer and professional standing armed forces.[94]

One of the first to take the decision of phasing out conscription was Belgium in 1992[95] closely followed by France and the Netherlands in 1997[96,97]. In 1993 Sweden's Prime Minister stated

[90] Gyldén, N., (1994), p.78
[91] Ibid.
[92] Government bill 1991/92:102, *Totalförsvarets utveckling till och med budgetåret 1996/97 samt anslag för budgetåret 1992/93,* Stockholm: Ministry of Defence, p.9
[93] Ibid., p.8f
[94] Wolke Ericsson, L., *När värnplikten muckade i Sverige*, Nationalencyklopedin, http://www.ne.se/rep/när-värnplikten-muckade-i-sverige (2013-04-22)
[95] Quaker council for European Affairs, *The right to conscientious objection in Europe: A review of the current situation,* (2005-04) http://www.refworld.org/docid/42b141794.html (2013-04-16), p.14
[96] Ibid., p.29
[97] Ibid., p.49

that an eventual increase of international peacekeeping operations might be a problem with the current structure of the armed forces based on conscription, implying that soldiers and officers would participate on a volunteer basis in those operations. Furthermore, there was a fear that the training and equipment were not sufficient if a peacekeeping mission changed into a veritable war.[98] Possibly, this was one of the first signs of the current transformation of the Swedish defence policy from national defence to a mission-based armed force. Although, the political left was against abolishing conscription and inaugurating standing armed forces – a policy that is firmly fixed and remains so to present-day (which might explain the haste of replacing conscription by the right-wing parties in 2009-2010).[99]

3.2.5 Summary

Having in mind the cataclysmic change in the concept of security in the aftermath of the Cold War during this period, it was naturally difficult to fully grasp its consequences and how this at the moment might affect Sweden's security policy and armed forces. Sweden's role as a neutral moralising nation abated somewhat after the EU and PfP membership – the risk of stepping on someone's toe affiliated with Sweden increased, therefore Sweden toned down its previous condemningly rhetoric and "self-righteousness" and took on a more cautious self-image.

Furthermore, the end of the Cold War and the indication of a military transformation in Europe, enabled Sweden to modernise its armed forces, for example to acquire the multirole fighter "JAS 39 Griffin", the battle tank "Leopard II", and generally modernise equipment. The phrase "leaner but meaner" signified the trend towards a smaller armed forces of a higher quality.[100]

Finally, the PfP programme has helped to improve the transformation and interoperability of the SWAF. However, the close cooperation with NATO and the Swedish position as a military non-aligned country might have been interpreted as somewhat perplexing when joining the PfP programme[101]. Still, being a PfP nation was to some extent the golden mean for Sweden who saw NATO as a partner that shared and promoted values related to Sweden's interests and identity without compromising its non-alignment[102]. Furthermore, the choice of not becoming a full member of NATO was more likely because of Sweden's ideological (and perhaps

[98] Gyldén, N., (1994), p.85
[99] Defence Commission 2001:44, *Ny struktur för ökad säkerhet – nätverksförsvar och krishantering,* p.246
[100] Gyldén, N., (1994), p.93ff
[101] NATO's 'neutral' European partners: valuable contributors or free riders?, *NATO Review Magazine* http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2013/Partnerships-NATO-2013/NATOs-neutral-European-partners/EN/index.htm (2013-04-29)
[102] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.69

"inherited") policy of neutrality, which was deeply rooted amongst the public and acted as a deterrent to such a membership. Moreover, because of the positive history of Sweden's neutrality, seeing that it "saved" the country from the consequences of the two world wars, abandoning non-alignment was, and still is, not particularly likely in the near future.[103]

[103] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.70

3.3 Phase 2: 1995-2000

The broadened concept of security and the shift of military focus from defending national borders to participating in multinational peace-support-operations abroad affected European governments' security and defence policies, which called for better interoperability and an overall modernisation of the European armed forces. Troop numbers were reduced and the transition from conscription in favour of standing professional Armed Forces was noticeable.[104]

3.3.1 The EU and European Armed Forces

The social democrats were negative towards the EU when the right-wing government applied for a EU membership in 1991. Later on, Sweden joined the EU in 1995 following a referendum the previous year passed only by a small majority in favour of a EU membership[105]. As previously stated, after almost two centuries of peace and semi-isolation, Sweden's perspective on the EU was more of an economic union rather than an organisation building collective security, especially because of the current economic difficulties.[106]

At the Amsterdam treaty in 1997, due to the Balkan wars and Europe's failure of not intervening in time, it had become apparent that the CFSP should be complemented with a defence policy. The policy aimed to further strengthen the unity between the EU member states and its influence on world politics, and increase the EU's military and civilian capabilities in conflict prevention and crises.[107]

Sweden (and Finland) succeeded in de-emphasising the EU's focus on collective security, and instead focused more on crisis management and peace making operations. However, the policy also stated member states were to cooperate (on civil-military, political, economic, and social issues) in order to strengthen the external capacity of the EU, aiming for a common defence policy in the CFSP framework[108], which resulted in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 1999.[109] Consequently, this *"indicates an important change in the security identity of*

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[104] Wyss, M., (2011), p.45
[105] Swedish Parliament informs about EU (2013-01-02), http://www.eu-upplysningen.se/Sverige-i-EU/Sa-blev-Sverige-med-i-EU/ (2013-04-26)
[106] Gyldén., (1994), p.79
[107] Rutten, M., *From St-Malo to Nice: European defence: core documents,* Challiot Paper no.47 (2001-05-01), http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp047e.pdf (2013-04-16), p.8f
[108] Centre for Security and Defence Management (CSDM), *Problem space report: EU as a global actor based on the wider Petersberg Tasks,* (2012-01) http://www.focusproject.eu/documents/14976/0a29bb72-f73b-4417-8834-2199e0151544 (2013-04-30), p.18
[109] Andersson, J. J., *Armed and ready? The EU Battlegroup Concept and the Nordic Battlegroup,* Stockholm: Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (2006), p.11

the two countries. This change was most important for Sweden, which was more attached to a policy of neutrality than was Finland."[110]

The following tasks could be executed through the ESDP framework:[111]

- Humanitarian aid and rescue operations
- Conflict prevention and peace-keeping
- Combat force in crisis management

One of the policy's objectives was to develop Europe's armed forces' rapid response ability within or outside a NATO framework.[112] The Balkan wars had intensified and speeded up European military collaboration due to the realisation of the difference of military capabilities between the US and the European armed forces. Consequently, the US was concerned whether European armed forces with their smaller defence budgets would merely focus on low-intensity peace-supporting operations from now on; hence, continue to be dependent on the US to provide strategic military resources and security in the future.[113] Not surprisingly, doubts arose regarding the future of the US-Euro alliance.

The Balkan wars had shed light on the European armed forces' insufficient capability of peace support operations, because:[114]

- Most European armed forces were, more or less, still focused on national defence, many with a conscription system. They lacked the know-how and ability to deploy forces abroad (both in materiel terms and the ethical issue of using conscripts on such missions, which led to states setting up temporary voluntary forces for specific operations).
- Peace support operations *"abroad rarely involve crucial security interests, European security, which was a matter of necessity during the Cold War, has now become a matter of voluntary national choice. --- At the same time, no individual member state could hope to deal with this type of conflict alone: it called for a collective response."*[115]
- The European Armed Forces budgets were (and still are) slimmer than the US budget.

[110] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.307
[111] Official website of the European union, *Common security and defence policy,* (2010-07-05) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/lisbon_treaty/ai0026_en.htm (2013-04-17)
[112] Rutten, M., (2001-05-01), p.8
[113] Grevi, G. et al. (2009), p.71
[114] Haine, J-Y., (2004), p.2
[115] Ibid.

Consequently, this resulted in the European Armed Forces having problems managing both their national defence and participating in international operations. In spite of the wars in the Balkans the European states were slow in restructuring their armed forces, which meant that for quite some time they most likely would still be dependent on US-support when intervening in conflicts.[116]

3.3.2 Swedish Security and Defence Policy

> *"In Europe, our principal security-political goal is to permanently ensure cooperation of close trust between all states. This is in line with our conviction that Sweden's security must be based to a considerable degree on mutual security grounded in stable political and economic relations between democratic states. ... Sweden's military non-alignment aimed to remain neutral in case of war in our vicinity remains. It implies that we have an adequate defense capability. By maintaining a credibility for our long-term strength and adaptability of our defence, it will in turn contribute to security and political stability in the northern European region."*[117]

In 1995, Sweden joined the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP), and intensified its cooperation with NATO and its new Baltic member states seeking to enhance security in Europe and the Baltic Sea.[118] Simultaneously with the involvement in the EU and NATO and the intensification of peacekeeping and multinational operations, which gradually adjusted Swedish security policy, a transformation of Sweden's Armed Forces was becoming apparent – in 1996 the Swedish Ministry of Defence stated:

> *"we ought to continue adapting our capability to participate in international peace-support operation towards the form that the Implementation Force (IFOR) at the moment is developing"*[119].

The Ministry of Defence stated that Sweden's membership in the PfP programme was crucial in order to attain a sufficient level of interoperability to effectively participate in humanitarian and peace support operations in a UN or EU framework.[120]

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[116] van den Doel, T., *The usability of the European Armed Forces: Measuring input and output to military effectiveness,* The Hauge: Netherlands Institute of International Relations (2004), p.13
[117] Government bill 1996/97:4. *Totalförsvar i förnyelse – etapp 2,* Stockholm: Ministry of Defence, p.30
[118] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.8
[119] Government bill 1996/97:4, p.56
[120] Hederstedt, J., *Internationalisera försvaret!,* Stockholm: Ministryof Defence (1999), p.17

In the government's propositions 1996/97:4, the new concept of security is discussed in light of events the previous years. Sweden did not face any direct military threat to the nation's territory at the moment or in the foreseeable future, and instead addressed threats such as *"vulnerability in the society in peacetime such as deposition of radioactive substances, terrorism, severe disruptions in society regarding information and infrastructure systems, and stream of refugees to Sweden"*[121]. The previous uncertainty of the security climate after the disintegration of the Soviet Union was now becoming clearer – the security developments in Europe had been favourable for Sweden meaning that current political will or military resources to conduct an armed attack was very limited. [122]

The Swedish security policy had in a few years shifted to meet the implication of the new concept of security, and in turn restructured the armed forces and its capabilities to better suit peace-support and humanitarian operations. Furthermore, it stated that Sweden ought to continue "*cooperation with other states fulfilling its long-time efforts, particularly in the UN, of peace and disarmament and democratic, social, economic and environmental sustainability."*[123]

3.3.3 Summary

Sweden's membership in the EU would later show to be more than what the general opinion first thought of as an economic union, and greatly influence Swedish security and defence policy. The EU membership had a great impact on Swedish policy, resulting in practically abandoning its historical and ideological neutral standpoint. Similarly, the PfP assisted Sweden in transforming its armed forces and increasing its ability to participate with other nations.

In conclusion, this new orientation for the Swedish Armed Forces became increasingly evident – changing its focus to almost exclusively training and participating in international operations within the UN, the EU, and/or the NATO framework. This did not only affect the structure and training of the combat units, but also meant a step away from the traditional national defence and the (in-)ability to mobilise materiel and personnel. The persistent general political opinion was that a forewarning of a greater threat to the nation was to arise; it would come at least ten years before giving enough time to rearm and refocus to a national defence once again.[124]

[121] Government bill 1996/97:4, p.61ff
[122] Ibid., p.30
[123] Government bill 1996/97:4, p.35
[124] Hugemark, B., Tunberger, J., *Trovärdig solidaritet?: försvaret och solidaritetsförklaringen,* Stockholm: Den nya värlfärden (2010), p.19

3.4 Phase 3: 2000-2005

This period meant further improvements in interoperability and reaction time by re-organising the armed forces into a flexible modular-based structure, modernising and specialising leading to a reduction in size. Of course, the war in Afghanistan and the financial crisis would have a great impact on the Swedish security and defence policy and development of the armed forces.

3.4.1 The EU's Battle Group Concept

Sweden saw the EU as a way to strengthen security and stability in Europe and was positive towards closer relations between its member states.

The European Union increased its military capability through the ESDP, laying the foundation for the Battle Group (BG) concept at the Helsinki European Council summit in 1999, which in many ways facilitated the transformation of the European Armed Forces[125]. The summit paved the way for a collective military capability within the EU. At the Le Touqet summit in 2003 a proposition to create "battle groups" was presented. These battle groups would consist of land, sea, and air-elements with roughly 1500 troops with the ability to rapidly respond (short planning-period) and an initially deploy within two weeks.[126] The concept developed to be capable of handling tasks such as humanitarian aid, peace enforcement, crisis management, and post-conflict stabilisation operations.[127]

Even though there have been several crises and conflicts where the Battle Group could be utilised, the Battle Group has never been deployed. Critics proclaim that the concept is flawed from the start because the member states' troops are already tied up on UN or NATO operations, there is a lack of political will, and there are the economic consequences ("costs lie where they fall"[128]) of a deployment. This throws a spanner in the works for the credibility of the ESDP and the EU's military capability, making the Battle Group concept a mere paper tiger.[129]

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[125] Lindström, G., Enter the EU Battlegroup. *Challiot papers: European Institute for Security Studies,* no.97 (2007-02) http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp097.pdf (2013-04-11), p.63f
[126] Grevi, G. et al. (2009), p.73
[127] Lindström, G. (2007), p.18f
[128] According to an audit of the Nordic Battle Group 2008, the total cost was slightly over 4 billion SEK ≈ €500 million: The Swedish National Audit Office, RiR 2010:20, *Den nordiska stridsgruppen 2008 – en del av EU:s snabbinsatsförmåga,* Stockholm (2010), p.118
[129] Balossi-Restelli, L. M., Fit for what? Towards explaining Battlegroup inaction, *European Security,* vol.20 no.2 (2011), p.176

3.4.2 The Global War on Terror

The terror attack on the Twin Towers in New York in 2001 shocked the world and the security atmosphere.

> *"Two months ago, when hi-jacked planes destroyed the World Trade Center, some were quick to argue that this ended an era that we used to call 'post-Cold War'. They saw the dawn of a dramatically new era: 'the age of terrorism'. Of course, only time will tell if we are really on the threshold of a dramatically different new era"*[130]

The now famous phrase "war on terror", proclaimed by President George W. Bush shortly after 9/11, *"begins with al Qaeda, but it does not stop there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated … We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest"*[131], resulting in the US, according to NATO's self-defence term in Article V, invading Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, basically attempting to defeat terrorism with military force alone.[132]

Furthermore, Bush announced that the US *"will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime."*[133]

The war on terror thus became a global issue in its scope and justification. Similar to the EU's policy of securing areas and dampening conflicts outside of the union, the US policy focused on securing the world from terrorist groups irrespective of where those were situated, thus, somewhat undermining state sovereignty and justifying the invasion of Afghanistan. Furthermore, the ultimatum of either being on the side of the US, or the terrorists, indicated how the framework of securing the whole world was reduced to either being connected and cooperative in participating on terms favourable to the US, or vice versa and being regarded as a potential threat.

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[130] Presentation by Ambassador Minuto Rizzo (NATO Deputy Secretary General) during the "Mediterranean Dialouge International Research Seminar" at the NATO Defense College, Rome, Italy, 2001-11-24. http://www.nato.int/cps/fr/SID-9CD83F58-210459C9/natolive/opinions_18980.htm (2013-04-12)
[131] President Georg W. Bush's speech 2001-09-20, *Address to a joint session of congress and the American people*, United States Capitol, Washington D.C.
[132] Wilkinson, P., "Terrorism" p.129-138 in Cavelty Dunn, M., Mauer, V. (ed), *The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies,* New York: Routledge (2010), p. 136
[133] President Georg W. Bush's speech 2001-09-20

"Threats appear to emanate from non-integration … 'In this century, it is disconnectedness that defines danger. Disconnectedness allows bad actors to flourish by keeping entire societies detached from the global community and under their control.' Eradicating disconnectedness, therefore, becomes 'the defining security task of our age' and geographical integration becomes a medium of security policy."[134]

It was quite obvious that fighting terrorism with only military resources would not get to the roots of terrorism. Therefore, the EU created the European Security Strategy (ESS) with its objectives to fight against terrorism, decrease the spreading of mass destruction, dampening regional conflicts and organised crime, by using both military and civilian resources.[135] This resulted, among others, in de-emphasising the importance of nations' membership status (in for example the EU or NATO) and focusing on "connectedness" and cooperation in the fight against terrorism, implying that non-alignment was not an impediment for such cooperation[136].

3.4.3 Financial Crisis and Defence Expenditure

The aftermath of the financial crisis showed an overall reduction in defence spending. Probably, this was not an affect from the peace dividend but rather an attempt to balance state finances. Compared to other states', Sweden's defence expenditure, in correlation to the national GDP and actual spending, decreased significantly – from being in a top position amongst the Nordic countries, to a last place, even though Sweden has not been affected by the crisis to the same extent as many other European states.[137]

Furthermore, defence expenditure in European nations with similar state interests as the US is decreasing – relying on the US military dominance in the world. However, the US is showing tendency to reduce its military expenditure and re-prioritise its military focus and presence from Europe to Asia and the Pacific, meaning that European states might have to fend for themselves to a greater extent than before.[138]

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[134] Ingram, A., Dodds, K., (2009), p.188f
[135] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.74
[136] Ibid., p.89
[137] Nordlund, P., Åkerström, J., FOI-R-3508-SE, *Försvarsutgifter i budgetkrisens spar – en försvarsekonomisk omvärldsanalys,* Stockholm: FOI, Swedish Defence Research Agency (2012-10), http://www.aff.a.se/budgetkrisen.pdf (2013-05-06), p.10
[138] Ibid.

Simultaneously, the general trend is that while the western countries are making military cutbacks, the eastern countries (chiefly Russia and China) are increasing its defence expenditures. Conclusively, the increasingly shaky Eurozone has led to tensions rising between EU member states amid bailouts to nations with great financial problems.[139]

3.4.4 A Swedish Perspective

> *"Sweden has always contributed actively to the UN's peace-building activities. As EU members, we have additional possibilities to support and underpin the UN system. By working actively to provide the EU with a strengthened capacity — both politically and with civilian and military means — to contribute to the UN's peace-building work, our Swedish UN-policy is strengthened through our EU efforts."*[140]

In a way, Sweden saw the EU's security and defence policy and the ambition of a collective security as a method of confirming its strong support to the UN and work for peace, disarmament and human rights. However, one can also argue that the Swedish advancement to military-political collaboration within the EU was an attempt to alter its self-image to only concentrate its efforts on crisis management (soft-power) to engage in more demanding military operations (hard-power).[141]

Moreover, since the Cold War ended the relations with Russia have improved, although new problems appeared. Russia has felt that Sweden intrude in its interest, among other things because Sweden strongly supported the Baltic States' decision to joining NATO and the EU, and its effort to cooperate and affect politics in former Soviet states.[142]

3.4.5 Summary

The Cold War's "fear of the Russian" was diminished. In its place was a new thought of preventing conflicts and crisis in Sweden's vicinity, or beyond, to secure Swedish and European stability *"by taking action in some other part of the world – in the Balkans or in central Africa.*

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[139] Nordlund, P., Åkerström, J., (2012-10), p.10f
[140] Defence Minister Laila Freivalds, speech at the Swedish UN Association's seminar regarding the EU's role in the world and the relationship between EU and UN, (2004-04-14), http://www.regeringen.se/pub/road/Classic/article/13/jsp/Render.jsp?m=print&d=1279&nocache=true&a=35386 (2013-04-30)
[141] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.72
[142] Oldberg, I., "Sweden" p.123-130 in Lobjakas, A., Mölder, M. (ed.), *EU-Russia Watch 2012,* University of Tartu, Centre for EU-Russia Studies (2012), p.123f

Even local conflicts a long way away from our neighbouring region may affect us. Sweden cannot be an island, isolated from conflicts in the rest of the world."[143].

Furthermore, the government bill 2004/05:5 reasoned that the increasingly positive security development in Sweden's vicinity implies further reduction of troop units and and increased participation in international operations[144], and proclaimed that:

> *"It is hard to imagine that Sweden would be neutral in the event of an armed attack on another EU country. It is equally difficult to imagine that other EU countries would not act in the same way. Today's threats to international peace and Swedish security is best averted in community and cooperation with other countries ... Effective multilateral cooperation is a main principle in Swedish security policy"*[145]

This was a milestone for Sweden, especially its armed forces, as the pendulum had swung to practically only focusing on international military commitments in comparison to its former politics of semi-isolation and neutrality.

Moreover, after the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan several members and partners of NATO have shifted towards closer relations with the EU, especially the relatively small Nordic states, which more and more see NATO as an instrument applicable through a EU framework and perspective.[146]

Finally, despite the criticism of the Battle Group concept, it has after all succeeding in contributing to and precipitating the transformation of European armed forces to becoming more flexible, mobile, and with the capability of taking on more complex missions.[147]

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[143] von Sydow, B., *Sweden's security in the 21st century,* Stockholm: Ministry of defence (1999), p.22
[144] Government bill 2004/05:5, *Our future defence – a summary,* Stockholm: Ministry of defence (2004), p.11
[145] Government bill 2004/05:5, *Vårt framtida försvar,* Stockholm: Ministry of defence (2004), p.23
[146] SIPRI, Bailes, A. J. K. et al (ed.), (2006), p.74
[147] Lindström, G. (2007), p.63f

3.5 Phase 4: 2005-2012

This period's main events were the war in Afghanistan, budget austerity after the financial crisis, and enhanced cooperation between EU member states and the EU's growing role as a global actor. Furthermore, in 2006 (to at least 2014) a right-wing coalition called "the Alliances" came to power[148]. The shift from a left-wing to a right-wing government would once again have significant impact on Sweden's security and defence policy.

3.5.1 Strategy of Solidarity

The term "solidarity" is emphasized in the defence reform bill 2008/09:140, both because of the Lisbon treaty and the Declaration of Solidarity. Once again Sweden underlined its strong support for the UN as the main organisation for maintaining international peace and security, and by participating in peace support operations led by the EU, the UN and NATO fulfilling and confirming that statement.[149]

> *Sweden's security is built in collaboration with others. We contribute to our own and others' security as members of the EU, the UN and as a partner country to NATO. Others also contribute to our security. We are economically and politically integrated in the EU. The EU pursues a common foreign, security and defence policy. The Declaration of Solidarity is a result and a codification of recent years security and defence policy development."*[150]

The Lisbon Treaty, ratified in 2009 (and renaming the ESDP to the Common Security and Defence Policy, CSDP), aims to make it easier for the EU member states work more closely together in military matters in a *"permanent structures cooperation"*[151] (partly aiming to facilitate the Battle Group concept). In addition, the treaty included a solidarity clause stipulating that member states are to support each other in the event of *"a terrorist attack or victim of a natural or man-made disaster with all relevant means, including military ones*"[152].

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[148] Government Offices of Sweden, *Sveriges regeringar under 100 år,* http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/4393 (2013-05-02)
[149] Governmnet bill 2008/09:140, *Ett användbart försvar,* Stockholm: Ministry of Defence (2009), p.9
[150] Defence Minister Sten Tolgfors, speech at the Society and Defence national conference, (2010-01-17), http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/9497/a/138094 (2013-05-02)
[151] Grevi, G. et al. (2009), p.63
[152] Ibid.

The term "support" can, as the Swedish Defence Minister said in 2010, imply quite a range of issues such as *"political and diplomatic actions ... and crisis management with military dimensions"*[153]

However, because that the EU does not have its own armed forces and most of the EU member states are members of NATO (thus committed to protecting each other in the first hand), and the vagueness in the Lisbon treaty's solidarity clause regarding what kind of support is to be provided if a EU member state was to be involved in a conflict, *"the EU's ability to react quickly to a serious security-political crisis in its own area or outside it is modest"*[154]. Furthermore, due to the high number of NATO affiliated EU member states, and the EU's lack of military structure, many states oppose the idea of having duplicate military organisations. This might decrease the EU's military-political influence – such tendencies became apparent during the Libya crisis in 2011 (even though the CSDP mainly focused on crisis management operations, not fighting wars). [155]

Additionally, the Nordic nations united in 2009 in a comprehensive cooperation that merged former collaborations into today's NORDEFCO.[156] Its objectives, in short, are to strive for a common defence framework and facilitate cost-efficiency in defence related issues, such as cooperation on multinational operations (e.g. training and logistics), and on development and acquisition of materiel.[157] Moreover, the Nordic Declaration of Solidarity, which compromises EU member states together with Norway and Iceland, implies that:

> *"It is impossible to see military conflicts in our neighbourhood that would affect one country alone. Sweden will not remain passive if a disaster or an attack should afflict another member state or Nordic country. We expect that these countries act in the same manner if Sweden is affected. Sweden should therefore be able both to give and to receive military assistance."*[158]

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[153] Defence Minister Sten Tolgfors, speech at the Society and Defence national conference, (2010-01-17), http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/9497/a/138094 (2013-05-02)
[154] Forss, S., et al., *The Development of Russia Military Policy and Finland*, Department of Strategic and Defence Studies: National Defence University Helsinki, vol.2 no.49 (2013), p.53
[155] Ibid.
[156] NORDEFCO, *The basics about NORDEFCO,* http://www.nordefco.org/The-basics-about-NORDEFCO (2013-04-16)
[157] NORDEFCO, *Memorandum of understanding,* (2009-11) http://www.nordefco.org/Files/nordefco-mou.pdf (2013-04-16)
[158] Hugemark, B., *Friends in Need: Towards a Swedish Strategy of Solidarity with her Neighbours,* Stockholm: The Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences (2012), p.1

However, since each country decides *"upon the quantity and quality of the aid"*[159] (similar to the Lisbon treaty), Finland has questioned Sweden's diminishing military capacity and in turn its ability to provide appropriate assistance.[160]

3.5.2 The Nordic Battle Group (NBG)

Sweden has been the lead nation for setting up one of the EU Battle Groups twice, in 2008 and 2011. The Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO) has produced review reports for both NBG08 and NBG11. The latter describes NBG08 as *"one of the most challenging tasks that the Armed Forces have had since the Cold War"*[161], and that it greatly influenced the structure of the organisation and the personnel provision system. [162] Problems such as strategic transports later on resulted in Sweden joining NATO's Strategic Airlift Capability in 2009.[163]

Finally, the main problems during NBG11 were the (at the time) inadequate IT-system that was being implemented in the armed forces at the moment, and more precisely knowledge on how to use it, as well as certain ambiguity about soldiers benefits and salaries, resulting in additional and extensive administrative work.[164] Certainly an eye-opener for what the future would hold regarding employed soldiers.

3.5.3 International Operations

In the same way as how Sweden wavered on how it would back up its verbal support with concrete actions during the Gulf War, so did the Swedish politicians hesitate somewhat about involvement (at least for a longer period) in Afghanistan. In 2001 Sweden participated with 45 officers and soldiers from the Swedish Special Forces to the UN authorised multinational security force for a maximum of six months. Because Sweden provided aid to Afghanistan (since 1982) the primary reason for joining the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was to protect the Afghan population and safeguard Swedish subsidies.[165] The mandate was later prolonged several times and in 2008 Sweden had 500 troops in the northern part of Afghanistan.

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[159] Forss, S., et al., (2013), p.53
[160] Ibid.
[161] Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO) RIR 2012:11, *The Nordic Battlegroup 2011,* http://www.riksrevisionen.se/sv/rapporter/Rapporter/EFF/2012/Den-nordiska-stridsgruppen--Nordic-Battlegroup-2011/ (2012-12-03), p.13
[162] Ibid.
[163] Government bill 2007/08:56, *Multilateralt samarbete om strategiska flygtransporter,* (2008-03-13), http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/10/10/57/bf982097.pdf (2013-05-03), p.3
[164] SNAO RIR 2012:11, *The Nordic Battlegroup 2011,* http://www.riksrevisionen.se/sv/rapporter/Rapporter/EFF/2012/Den-nordiska-stridsgruppen--Nordic-Battlegroup-2011/ (2012-12-03), p.109
[165] Government proposition 2001/02:60, *Svenskt deltagande i en multinationell säkerhetsstyrka i Afghanistan*, (2001-12-20), p. 5f

The government continued to state that Swedish participation was of a humanitarian nature even though Swedish troops were increasingly involved in battle.[166]

In 2011 UN resolution 1973 was passed with the objective to establish a no-fly zone over Libya to protect the civilian population (Operation Unified Protector, OUP). Sweden participated with parts of its air force to conduct reconnaissance and gather intelligences, but without (Swedish) authorization to open fire on ground targets even though the UN resolution approved such attacks.[167] This deviation was necessary in order to gain wide support for the operation in the Swedish Parliament, mainly from the social democrats.[168] The left-wing party was against the military operation and instead wanted the funding to go to increasing the humanitarian aid.

3.5.4 End of Conscription

Many European states had abolished conscription, or introduced a mixed system of conscription and employed personnel, around the middle of the 1990s. Sweden underwent the same transition in 2010. Why was Sweden was one of the last European states to abolished conscription in 2010 in favour of voluntary enlistment?

One perspective is that Sweden's neutrality and its conscription were (and perhaps to some extent still are) deeply rooted in the minds of the population, meaning that politicians have avoided touching upon defence related issues, especially the abolishment of conscription. But as the armed forces have been reduced, so has the troop size and with it the public knowledge of the defence. As presented by the Board of Psychological Defence in 2001, the support for the draft has declined from 1995 when almost half of the questionnaire participants were positive towards conscription and that it would continue to be a civic obligation, to 1999 when barely a third of them had the same opinion.[169] Another perspective is that Sweden has had a long history of social democratic governances, which saw conscription as a way of increasing the public knowledge of the armed forces, as being a citizen's duty, and as securing the personnel for both the officers' programme and to the units with employed personnel on international operations.[170]

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[166] Josephi, N., "Bakgrund Afghanistan: Svensk trupp på plats sedan 2001", *Sveriges Radio,* (2010-11-24), http://sverigesradio.se/sida/gruppsida.aspx?programid=3304&grupp=6240&artikel=4202005 (2013-05-06)
[167] Government bill 2010:11:UFö4, *Fortsatt svenskt deltagande i den internationella militära insatsen i Libyen,* (2011-06-16), http://data.riksdagen.se/fil/D7A8D37F-8353-4A77-8971-D41A4D1BD811 (2013-05-06), p.13
[168] TT (News agency), "Gripenplan får ej bomba markmål", *Svenska Dagbladet,* (2011-03-29), http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/gripenplan-far-inte-bomba-markmal_6048739.svd (2013-05-06)
[169] Lindmark, G., Stütz, G., *Folket, försvaret och framtiden,* Stockholm: Ministry of Defence (2001), p.2
[170] Karlsson, A., ordförande (s) försvarsutskottet, *Låt fler göra värnplikten*, (2008-08-11), http://www.socialdemokraterna.se/Var-politik/featureartiklar/Arkiv/Lat-fler-gora-varnplikten/ (2013-05-02)

Nevertheless, when the Defence Commission in 2009 suggested replacing conscription with voluntary enlistment, the negative response from the population was strong.[171] Hence, the government's unwillingness to designate the new system a professional army consisting of contracted soldiers, instead the concept of fairness was expressed because what was compulsory was now voluntary.[172]

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the SWAF have undergone a substantial downsizing, and since 2004 essentially only focused on international operations.

> *"The organisation virtually halved and all units of national defence except the Home Guard were abolished for budgetary reasons ... the key here was to build an expeditionary ability based on standing units. From this perspective conscription appeared to be more of a hindrance than an asset"*[173].

When the "Alliance", consisting of conservative and right-wing parties, won the general election in 2006 they introduced a defence reform to transform the Armed Forces and make conscription dormant. Therefore, in 2009 the Swedish Parliament took the decision to reform the Armed Forces provision of personnel and voted 153 in favour and 150 against abolishing conscription.[174, 175]

3.5.5 Swedish Security and Defence Policy

The objectives of Sweden's security are[176]:

- To safeguard the population's life and health
- To safeguard the functioning of society
- To protect Swedish ability to maintain values as democracy, rule of law, human rights and freedoms.

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[171] Holmström, M., "Svenskarna vill ha kvar lumpen", *Svenska Dagbladet,* (2009-03-22), http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/svenskarna-vill-ha-kvar-lumpen_2631899.svd (2013-05-03)
[172] Agrell, W. (prof. of Intelligence Analysis, Lund University), "Sverige mer sårbart utan värnplikt", *Svenska Dagbladet,* (2011-07-01) http://www.svd.se/opinion/brannpunkt/sverige-mer-sarbart-utan-varnplikt_6286942.svd (2013-05-03)
[173] Ibid.
[174] von Sydow, B. (former Speaker of the Swedish Parliament) et al., "Slopa inte värnplikten", *Svenska Dagbladet,* (2010-06-29), http://www.svd.se/opinion/brannpunkt/slopa-inte-varnplikten_4925961.svd (2013-05-03)
[175] Widegren, C. (Member of Parliament, Conservative party), "Sveriges försvar central för Moderaterna och Alliansregeringen", (2013-02-01), *Newsmill,* http://www.newsmill.se/artikel/2013/02/01/sveriges-f-rsvar-centralt-f-r-moderaterna-och-alliansregeringen (2013-05-03)
[176] Government bill 2008/09:140. p.14

The Swedish security policy *"ultimately intends to ensure political independence and autonomy. The protection of our country's sovereignty is a prerequisite for Sweden to achieve the objectives of our security."*[177] Also, the Swedish security policy implies that Sweden must not only focus on protecting the state itself, but contribute to peace and security accordingly to the UN's and the EU's security strategy with both military and non-military means. By working closely with the EU and its member states, the UN, NATO, and with the Nordic nations, Sweden attempts to increase its diplomatic influence on world politics and believes that cooperation with these actors leads to increased global security and conflict prevention.[178]

Additionally, the objectives of the defence policy are:[179]

- To uphold Sweden's sovereignty, protect sovereign rights and national interests
- To prevent and manage conflict and war
- To protect society and its functionality in the form of aid to civilian authorities.

From 2010 the aims for the armed forces are to *"individually and together with others within and outside of the country, defend Sweden and further our security"*[180], and that Sweden ought to increase its participation in international operations and have as well the ability of rapid response for both short and long term operations.[181] The change from the "old" armed forces that was based on conscription and mobilisation, to having units with high availability and short response time with the capability to carry out a range of operations, *"as well as the world's knowledge of this, acts as a conflict prevention, conflict dampening and war deterrent."*[182].

3.5.6 Security in the Foreseeable Future

Because of geostrategic changes and an uncertainty about the consequences of recent years' events, together with the extensive transformation of the Swedish Armed Force's personnel provision and materiel modernisations, Sweden is faced with the challenges of living up to its security and defence objectives since there are indications that the security environment in Sweden's vicinity might tense up.[183]

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[177] Government bill 2008/09:140. p.14
[178] Ibid., p.15f
[179] Ibid., p.33
[180] Ibid., p.37
[181] Ibid., p.38f
[182] Ibid., p.33
[183] Malminen, J., Winnerstig, M. (ed.), "FOI:s underlag till AG Säkpol 2012, FOI-2012-841", Stockholm: FOI, Swedish Defence Research Agency, (2012-08-30), http://www.folkochforsvar.se/index.php/debatt_reader/items/jas-foersvarspolitiken-och-omvaerldsanalysen.html?file=tl_files/FoF/Bildarkiv/Redaktionellt/AG%20Saekpol2012%20-%20FOIs%20underlag%20-%20Bilaga%201.pdf (2013-05-03), p.5

Tendencies of retrogression of the concept of security are being observed, such as the increasingly austere Russian rhetoric and the melting ice in the Arctic with the ensuing opportunity of finding natural resources. Russia has increased its presence in the Arctic considerably since 2007 when President Putin ordered an increased international presence in the area[184]. At the moment, the Russian Armed Forces are undergoing a massive modernisation, expecting an increase of defence expenditure to almost four per cent of the GDP in 2014.

Moreover, the Georgian War in 2008 made it clear that in spite of increasing security collaboration since the Cold War ended, interstate-conflicts are likely to continue to be a part of the security environment in the future.[185] According to Wilhelm Agrell (professor and well-known peace and conflict researcher) the Georgian War was a failure for the EU common security policy:

> *"The war did not fit at all into the picture of the EU's and the eastern border area's mutual and stabilizing relationships [...]. The EU's primary or rather only foreign political capability – soft power – turned out to be merely a stage setting which the Russians punctured unscrupulously."*[186]

Furthermore, after the Georgian War President Medvedev addressed his concern over NATO's expansion:

> *"We were able to calm down some of our neighbours by showing them how they should behave with regard to Russia and small adjacent states. For some of our partners, including NATO, it was a signal that they must think about the geopolitical stability before making a decision to expand the alliance. I see this as the main lessons of what happened in 2008."*[187]

Furthermore, the willingness and public support of intervening in other (dictatorial or failing) states have abated, and concerns regarding what consequences the Arab Spring might have on Europe's security (civil wars, creation of new states and the rise of new intergovernmental

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[184] Pettersen, T., "More Russian military aircraft outside Norway", *Barrents Observer,* (2013-01-13), http://barentsobserver.com/en/security/2013/01/more-russian-military-aircraft-outside-norway-03-01 (2013-05-03)
[185] Malminen, J., Winnerstig, M. (ed.), (2012-08-30), p.5
[186] Forss, S., et al., (2013), p.60
[187] Ibid.

disagreements and conflicts) have led to a refocus from multilateral to bi- and unilateral relations.[188]

> *"The order of the international system has again become more fluid and difficult to analyse. This has led to an emerging re-prioritisation of the great powers' interests and focus because of their relative influence in the world has been affected. Some see themselves forced to defend their position while others seek greater influence. The increased uncertainty about the future geostrategic developments means that the risks of military equipment including acquisition of weapons of mass destruction has accelerated."*[189]

An example of such development is the increasingly authoritarian Russian leadership with the re-election of Vladimir Putin as President in 2012, and the restructuring of the military to a having a higher level of readiness, mobility, and increased naval and air landing/assault capabilities. Capabilities that do not quite correlate with its military doctrine which is strongly focused on territorial defence – *"A possible future Chinese threat, for example would probably not require any major naval landing capability"*[190].[191] Furthermore, in 2009 Russia's Armed Forces were legally allowed to operate abroad in order to protect regions that are in Russia's interests.

> *"These regions are situated in countries with which we share special historical relations and are bound together as friends and good neighbors. ... Protecting the lives and dignity of our citizens, wherever they may be, is an unquestionable priority for our country. Our foreign policy decisions will be based on this need. We will also protect the interests of our business community abroad. It should be clear to all that we will respond to any aggressive acts committed against us."*[192]

3.5.7 Summary

In comparison with the first phase 1990 to 1995 Sweden has a significantly different security and defence policy today regarding objectives, threats and structure of the armed forces; emphasizing collaboration rather than isolation, being militarily non-aligned (together with the Declaration of Solidarity and involvement in the EU and PfP) instead of being neutral, as well as transforming

[188] Malminen, J., Winnerstig, M. (ed.), (2012-08-30), p.5
[189] Ibid.
[190] Forss, S., (2013), p.62
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid., p.10

the Armed Forces from a national defence to international operations. Furthermore, public support for NATO membership is still low and such an alliance would increase the risk of a conflict in Sweden's vicinity, more precisely with the already somewhat tense relationship with Russia (in view of the Georgia War in 2008 and the Nord Stream gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea and economic zone of Sweden and Finland[193]).

[193] Oldberg, I., "Sweden" p.123-130 in Lobjakas, A., Mölder, M. (ed.), (2012), p.123f

4. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results obtained from the analysis and answers the research questions accordingly to the thesis theory model and framework.

4.1 Research Question 1

Which factors, relating to the evolution of Sweden's state identity, have affected the transformation of Swedish Security and Defence Policy since the end of the Cold War?

4.1.1 Internal Structure

Internal structure: domestic actors and the nation's shared knowledge and culture – a product of the nation's historical-political culture, affecting its current politics.

Possibly the factor with the most effect within this dimension is the Swedish neutrality dating back to the 1800s and the isolation in international relation it resulted in. With this approach Sweden aimed to place itself outside of conflicts trying not to be involved. Neutrality was (is?) deeply rooted in the minds of Swedes, the social democrats and left-wing parties being the most supportive, while the position held by the conservative and right-wing parties was not as fixed. The recurrent re-definition of neutrality and the gradual and indistinct changing of Sweden's Security and Defence Policy to the present-day has been rather unclear for the public, specifically when the term neutrality still exists as an option (at least on paper).

Furthermore, Sweden has had a long history of social democratic governments and has strongly supported democratisation, human rights, and the UN (particularly during Prime Minister Olof Palme's reign in the 1980s). Although all Swedish parties support these matters, the left-wing has particularly been rooting for the use of soft-power solutions, while the right-wing has been more pro using hard-power resources; latest noticed during the Libya intervention in 2010 (OUP) when the right-led Parliament had to compromise with the left (not allowing ground attacks) in order to meet NATO's request for Swedish participation.

Simultaneously with the debate regarding Sweden's participation in the OUP in Libya, the question of a NATO-membership was once again raised from the right-wing parties, which always had supported such an affiliation. The social democrats and left-wing party strongly opposed the proposition, as did the public. Nevertheless, there are signs of gradually abrogating Swedish military non-alignment because of the increasingly closer military cooperation with the Nordic countries (NORDEFCO, and the Declaration of Solidarity), NATO (participating in almost all NATO-led operations and being the only PfP nation in Libya) as well as the

increasingly deeper cooperation within the EU. It is plausible that Sweden will be a part of a military alliance in the future, however, the idea of being independent and its previous politic of isolation is a fixed one; consequently, NATO membership does not correlate with the Swedish identity, nor does the current public and politicians support such affiliation today.

Nevertheless, because of recent events around Sweden's borders and the financially restrained Armed Forces (and the public's questioning of its capabilities), the opinion in favour of a NATO membership is slowly increasing. A recent opinion poll indicates that public support for a NATO membership has increased from 23% in 2011 to 32% in 2013 with 40% of the respondents against a partnership.[194]

Similarly, conscription has been a part of the Swedish identity. It was in a way embedded in the Swedish soul, and acted to foster the drafted youths. As mentioned, the right-wing government quite hasty replaced conscription with a volunteer system (in 2009-2010). The population was opposed to ending Sweden's long era of conscription, as were the left-wing parties. Consequently, when looking at the voting outcome (153 in favour-150 against) and the general opinion, the decision did not enjoy a wide support in Parliament or from the population. Perhaps this is why the government avoided to calling it a professional army with contracted soldiers (which struck a discordant note) and instead emphasised voluntarism, gender-equality and how out-dated the concept of conscription was in today's world, with different kinds of threats, conflicts and tasks for the armed forces than during the Cold War.

Finally, the fall of the Soviet Union meant that the main threat against Sweden disappeared and that one could not perceive a direct military threat to the nation in the foreseeable future. Thus, a reduction of the armed forces followed and in turn decreased public knowledge of the military and defence related issues. Furthermore, because of the current state identity of pursuing peace, stability and democratisation (soft-power) and not experiencing the consequences of war since the 1800s, the public was a bit surprised and perplexed when Swedish soldiers were killed in international operations. Generally, there is a slightly naive belief that conflict merely should be resolved by diplomatic negotiations and that military involvement is acting counteracting that goal (especially if it means sending Swedish soldiers to war-like conditions). Likewise, the public view and understanding of the Armed Forces are somewhat out-dated since the last large conscription batch focused on territorial defence against the eastern threat, thus the public's

[194] Hennel, L., "Svenskarna har mjuknat i Natofrågan", *Svenska Dagbladet,* (2013-05-17), http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/svenskarna-har-mjuknat-i-natofragan_8175788.svd (2013-05-19)

understanding of the armed forces tasks and purpose are insufficient (such as why Sweden is in Afghanistan), which in turn presumable have affected Sweden's politics and state identity. Hence, there is hesitation when of sending troops on international operations, specifically NATO-led ones and mainly using hard-power resources. Whether this depends on the distrust of the US and NATO, or if the old concept of security and thought of isolation and neutrality still prevail, is hard to tell.

4.1.2 External Structure

External structure: international actors and their culture and norms, such as other states, international organisations and institutions.

The memberships in the EU and the PfP have quite distinctly influenced Swedish security policy. One can identify that the gradually shift from neutrality to the declaration of solidarity corresponds with the gradually increased collaboration and incorporation of the EU in security and defence policy – as a way of securing Swedish interests through a collective security community. For example, it was not long after the Lisbon treaty and its solidarity clause was ratified, that the Nordic countries agreed on their own declaration of solidarity.

Therefore, the attitude towards the EU in 1992 compared with 2012 is quite different. First seeing the EU as an economic forum and not appreciating the concept of a collective security, to stating that security is built together in solidarity and frequently mentioning the EU (in the Security and Defence Policy) as a way of succeeding in this. To substantiate this intention, Sweden has been the lead nation on setting up the EU Battle Group in 2008 and 2011, which promoted the transformation of the armed forces to attaining a higher level of readiness and interoperability with its supporting nations. Because the Expeditionary Air Wing in NBG11 was on stand-by, Sweden could at short notice assist NATO in Libya in 2011.

Moreover, the PfP membership is not *as* emphasised to be a crucial part of Swedish security. But instead as an instrument to keep up with the military development and acquire better interoperability (through standardisation and exercises with NATO) to facilitate multilateral operations. The SWAF have gained much knowledge and improved their capabilities through the PfP membership and have proved themselves competent in an international comparison during OUP in Libya, which furthered relations with the US and NATO. As an example of the close relation to NATO (and an example of its increased role in the global security), in 2009 Sweden's participation in international exercises had almost exclusively been conducted with the US or a NATO allied, and the number of Swedish military personnel in UN-led operations had dropped

from 2000 persons during the Cold War to 30 persons, while more than 600 persons were under NATO command.[195] Furthermore, NATO has several times hinted that Sweden ought to become a full-worthy member, which (as already mentioned) probably is not a plausible option in the foreseeable future.

4.1.3 The Image of Others

The image of others: the collective perception of a state's self-image is either negative or positive depending on the relationship to its external actors – Sweden sees itself from the perception of other states, how they interpret and percieve Sweden's actions and behaviour.

While a conservative government came to power in 1991 and Sweden joined the PfP in 1994, and the EU in 1995, a change in rhetoric was noticeable compared to previous left-wing governments during the Cold War. Indeed, Sweden's self-imposed global conscience was still intact, though with a toned down attitude and other ways were found to pursue Sweden's state interests and ability to influencing world politics through its new affiliations.

Even though the policy of neutrality was practically abandoned when Sweden joined the EU, the image others have that Sweden is neutral remains to the present day. This is possibly a result of Sweden's long history of neutrality and almost 200 years of peace, and because of the gradually non-distinct shift from neutrality to solidarity. Something that might have been difficult to perceive and understand by other states, especially since the neutrality option still formally exists (aiming for neutrality in the event of war). As long as the perceptions from other states (the image of others) corresponds (and confirms) with Sweden's behaviour and actions (state identity and policymaking) – thus, creating a mutual understanding of Sweden's standpoint and way of conduct – the neutrality option (with its embedded values and interests) will continue to exist. This interaction between the internal and external structure will be further discussed in the next subchapter.

To exemplify: because of Sweden's military non-alignment, Russia does not see Sweden as a threat to its interests. However, Russia (and the rest of the world) might interpret the removal of the neutrality option as a step closer to a NATO membership, thus changing Sweden's self-image and relationship to its external actors and "un-stabilising" its preconceived behavioural pattern, values, interests, and its role in world politics. If the neutrality option disappeared, it is possible that Russia would feel increasingly surrounded by NATO countries, which in turn probably would affect both the Baltic countries' and Finland's security and defence policies.

[195] Burke, A., *Från Neutralitet till NATO,* (2012-09), http://www.nnn.se/nordic/americult/nato/steg.pdf (2013-04-23), p.68

4.1.4 State Identity

State identity: The state's identity is based upon the perception from both internal and external structures, it is the core of the nations shared knowledge, norms, and values, which affects its actions. These social structures only exist in process and actions – neither in material resources nor in the minds of internal or external actors – but in the interaction between internal and external actors, shaping states identities and behaviour.

State identity is essential to how the state behaves and acts. For example, if Sweden were to have nuclear weapons it would be less threatening to the world than North Korea's (alleged) nuclear weapons. Why is that? Because Sweden is so to say "connected", collaborating with the rest of the world and its actions reflect and prove this, it creates a sort of predictability and stability for other states – basically, they know Sweden's standpoint and its normal behaviour, thus, they know Sweden's state identity.

> *"In dealing with globalized insecurity, it matters less and less where a country sits on the map. What matters more is its mental map – its willingness to engage, together with others, to make a difference'."*[196]

Nevertheless, state identities change. Sweden's state identity has transformed relatively with the change in internal and external structures, and together with the effects its actions and defence policy have had; from advocating the use of "soft-power" to an increase use of "hard-power" resources after the experiences in the Balkan Wars and when the situation in Afghanistan deteriorated (especially after Sweden suffered its first wounded and casualties).

Furthermore, even though the neutrality options might not be viable, Swedish values and interests, which were strongly associated with its former neutral position, continue to exist in the interaction between Sweden and other states.

In conclusion, Sweden's state identity seems to have been more affected by external than internal actors' shared knowledge and ideas. The external structure advocates greater collaboration and participation from Sweden, while the internal structure tends to have a divergent attitude and clings to its culture and political history. Having in mind that neutrality was never stated in the Swedish constitution but rather lived and consolidated through the Swedish Security and Defence Policy and the internal structure's shared knowledge – it relied on the image of others and the interaction there between to confirm and strengthen its state identity and neutrality option.

[196] Ingram, A., Dodds, K., (2009), p.188f

4.1.5 State Interest

State interest: closely linked and shaped by the state identity. Every state has its own specific interest and motives depending on cultural and historical factors.

On the whole, Sweden's interests have not changed to any appreciable extent during this period and there are no signs that they are going to radically change in the foreseeable future. What has changed, however, is in which way Sweden pursues its interests and security.

The increased international and multilateral operations have been enriched by Sweden's pursuit of its interests, such as gender equality, humanitarian subsidies, human rights, and environmental issues. Furthermore, Sweden seeks greater collaboration in order to meet today's cross-boundary threats and conflicts, by deeper European cooperation in security and trade related issues and building solidarity between other countries – facilitating a collective security and what Wendt called the "collective self-esteem". The latter implies that Sweden seeks acceptance, appreciation, and legitimisation of its existence, behaviour, and policy through the eyes of other states.

4.1.6 State Action and Security and Defence Policy

State action and Security and Defence policy: the product of the state identity and its interests.

According to the Haag convention from 1907, neutrality implies impartiality in order to not favour one party of the conflict. Probably, the politics a nation pursues during peace must affect its options during wartime. To maintain the credibility of neutrality a nation must considers its actions and commitments during peacetime in order to convince others that one can go through with its policy also in the event of war – such as when Sweden was self-sufficient on defence materiel after WW2 and during the Cold War.

The deeply rooted neutrality first constrained Sweden's willingness to join the EU and was hesitant towards the EU's common security and defence policy, at least politically. In practice, this was too important to dismiss, risking forfeiting political and diplomatic influence by not participating. Therefore, Sweden has been a strong contributor to EU-led operations and increasingly internalised the EU's role in its own security and defence policy. Some might argue that Sweden being lead-nation on setting up the BG (NBG08, NBG11 and probably NBG15) is a way of gaining influence in the EU, possibly even more since it did not adopt the Euro in 2003. Others might argue that the EU correlates better with Sweden's identity and interests than the US/NATO.

With Sweden's increasing international commitments, such as its membership in the EU, NORDEFCO and PfP, the policy of neutrality became somewhat superannuated. When joining the EU, the policy of neutrality was abolished, and the term militarily non-aligned took its place (in 1992) and was later supplemented with the declaration of solidarity (in 2009). Today Sweden is militarily non-aligned *aiming* for neutrality in the event of war and emphasising security by collaboration and solidarity between the Nordic nations as well as through the Lisbon treaty. However, one should not overestimate the Declaration of Solidarity because it does not guarantee any safeguards. It is almost as if Sweden sees the EU and Nordic solidarity clause as "the white knight" and "golden mean", meaning that it corresponds and strengthens the Security and Defence Policy of military non-alignment together with building security through collaboration.

However, it might seem to be contradictory to be both militarily non-aligned and a member of the EU, NORDEFCO and PfP, and at the same time aim at neutrality in the event of war in Sweden's vicinity. One might dogmatically argue that Sweden has actually never been completely neutral (concessions during the great wars, and its biased position during the Cold War); then again, this is perhaps an unattainable objective in practice, especially in today's globalised world.

Indeed, nowadays the policy emphasises solidarity and it is highly unlikely that Sweden would remain passive in the event of a conflict in its vicinity. Then why does the "neutrality option" still remain to the present day considering its obvious inconsequentiality? Perhaps the more relevant question is *when* Sweden would proclaim itself neutral? Have in mind that conflicts and war seldom arise without increased tensions and indications of what might be approaching. One explanation is that by removing the term neutrality it might be perceived as a step closer towards NATO, which is something both the public (although, decreasingly), the political left and Russia opposes. Additionally, considering how well it has served Sweden and the population's strong relation to neutrality (based more on ideological than rational reasons), and being a core part of the Swedish political culture and identity, politicians might find it hard to abandon it. Somehow the definition of Swedish neutrality is also interlinked with its long history of supporting the UN and disarmament and how it acted as a steppingstone for Sweden's self-imposed role as a global moral guardian and opportunity/possibility to influence world politics.

Consequently, from neutrality, non-alignment, and non-participation in military alliances, to the declaration of solidarity – the Swedish Security and Defence Policy has been on quite a journey

since the Cold War and is, therefore, slightly suffering from its rapid change, resulting in a flexibility in interpretation and poor anchoring and understanding among the public.

4.2 Research Question 2

Does the transformation of Sweden's Security and Defence Policy since the 1990s correlate with Wyss's reform-phases?

On the whole, the framework is applicable to the transformation of Swedish policymaking and state identity with some minor exceptions. Much like other European states, Sweden realised that it could not cope with both having a strong territorial defence and increasingly participating in international operations. Therefore, since the fall of the Soviet Union diminished the risk of a direct military threat in the foreseeable future, Sweden reduced its territorial defence capability and concentrated on developing its expeditionary ability and capabilities for participating on international operations.

However, even though the focus shifted to military operations abroad, the main task of defending the nation and supporting the society still remained. Implying that the national defence was directorial and harmonised with the capabilities the Armed Forces were to have on international operations because of limitations in resources (both personnel and materiel). As mentioned in the analysis, the Prime Minister in 1993 observed some difficulties with having a conscript Armed Forces, together with the will (from internal and external actors) to increase Sweden's participation in international operations. This resulted in a major transformation of the Swedish Security and Defence Policy, and the restructuring of the Armed Forces to modular units capable of accomplishing tasks on national territory and abroad with other nations.

To recapitulate, the military transformation in Europe since the Cold War is perhaps most noticeable by the changeover from conscription to armed forces consisting of employed personnel and participating in multinational operations abroad. Generally speaking the Swedish transformation correlates with that of other European countries, even though it has been slightly behind considering Sweden's geostrategic position together with the deliberation between the "internal" and "external structure", and the "image of others" on how Sweden's state identity, and in turn its Security and Defence Policy, was to be defined.

In addition, due to the "policy of adaption" of trying to adjust the armed forces of the current and future security environment, together with lack of a long-term defence planning since the beginning of the 1900s, Sweden has been militarily underprepared for two world wars. During

the interwar period Sweden (like many European nations) believed that the world would not suffer another world war, and therefore began disarming. When signs of insecurity and tensions emerged once again, Sweden stood passive until war broke out and it was almost too late to rearm. It was not until after WW2 that Sweden had Armed Forces and a defence planning that lived up to the security and defence policy's objectives. Today, more precisely since the mid-1990s, Sweden is once again reducing its defence expenditure. Due to these budget cuts, acquisition of materiel has been postponed leading to ad-hoc solutions and rapid acquisition of defence materiel when the situation (in Afghanistan) desperately calls for it (e.g. armoured vehicles "BAE Systems RG32" and helicopters for medical evacuation, "Sikorsky UH-60 Blackhawk").

Indeed, in today's world it would be extremely unlikely that European states would declare war on each other, instead they act as a collective security community trying to secure their vicinity from affecting European stability, and collaborating in peace support operations around the world (for altruistic or egotistical reasons). However, as we know from history and recent events in North Africa and the Georgian War, conflicts can arise quickly without much pre-warning. The question is whether Sweden will be prepared for such a conflict in its vicinity, or if it will meet the same destiny (or worse) as during the great wars?

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to identify factors that have affected the transformation of Sweden's security and defence policy between 1990-2012. The author has identified the following aspects as being some of the most important ones:

- The deeply rooted Swedish neutrality (which was more ideological than rational and saved the nation from being directly involved in two world wars) has somewhat been a symbol for Sweden's political culture, values, and interests of détente, disarmament, democratisation and human rights (strong supporter of the UN), therefore, not corresponding with the on-going security and military transformation in Europe resulting in gradually abandoning neutrality in practice but theoretically maintaining a neutrality option in the event of war – leading to a slightly ambiguous and unclear policy.
- Even though decisions on security and defence related issues historically have been passed with wide support in the Parliament, it is clear that the shift from long periods of social democratic and left-wing governments to conservative and right-wing governments have resulted in quite a noticeable change for the Swedish Security and Defence Policy and the SWAF.
- The new concept of security, the EU Lisbon treaty, the Declaration of Solidarity, as well as an increased participation in international operations led by NATO and/or the UN, has widened Sweden's security scope and changed the structure and training of the SWAF.
- The EU's Battle Group concept, as well as the PfP membership and the advancements towards NATO have facilitated the SWAF's interoperability (materiel and training), structure, and increased military capabilities.
- The war in Afghanistan resulted in a shift from soft-power to hard-power means.
- Because of the Georgian war, the financial crisis, and increased tension between Russia and Sweden, as well as between Russia and its surrounding NATO countries, tendencies of a renationalisation are noticeable. Additionally, with what might be a deteriorating security environment, public support for a NATO-membership has increased together with the decreased importance of the Swedish neutrality.
- A changing of roles between internal and external actors as the most influential/affecting factor has been observed 1990-2012. From having internal actors greatly influencing and affecting its security policy and development in Sweden's vicinity – to external actors to a large extent influencing and affecting Sweden's security policymaking and stability in Europe.

6. Reflection

We are experiencing an ideological battle in the financial world between authoritative state capitalism and the neoliberal western democracies in the race for power and global resources. The financial crisis has created a bipartite situation; on the one hand an incentive for greater cooperation and potentiation within the defence sector (e.g. acquisition of materiel, sharing and pooling), on the other hand a renationalisation of state interests when nations cannot afford, or cannot justify, the expenditure of participating in large international operations. The financial crisis in the Eurozone has also led to increased tension between nations that need bailouts and those who foot the bill.

While the Swedish security and defence policy, and in turn the Armed Forces, have undergone an extensive transformation since 1990, the insufficient public knowledge and interest in security related issues is troubling since the internal structure is a strong affecting factor on Sweden's state identity (especially politicians who are part of and elected by the population). However, at the beginning of 2010 and the years to come, something changed that awoke the slumbering public's interests in defence related questions, possibly not experienced since the Cold War.

First, the death of two officers from the Royal Guard killed by an insurgent in an Afghan police uniform, acted as a wake-up call when the public (and politicians) realized the full extent of Sweden's participation and situation in Afghanistan.

Second, in the spring of 2010 a debate blossomed regarding the future of the Armed Forces and the end of an era of conscription. Even though the debate did not fully commence until a few weeks prior the decision (perhaps due to the rapid turnaround time when the right-wing parties won the parliament election in 2006) it resulted in a ripple effect still noticeable today.

Third, the hosting of a NATO exercise in northern Scandinavia, divided the parties on the importance of cooperating with the US and NATO and the risk of worsening relations with Russia, which is undergoing a considerable modernisation of its armed forces at the moment.

Fourth, at the beginning of 2013 the Supreme Commander of the Swedish Armed Forces proclaimed that Sweden only could defend itself for a week on a limited area, and that without further means, parts of the Navy or Air Force had to be reduced in order to maintain Sweden's international commitments and modernisations of materiel. This statement triggered a massive

debate and acted as an outlet for the dissatisfaction that been smouldering in the organisation for some time.

Finally, Russia's increased presence in the Arctic, the large-scale exercises in the Baltic Sea (mock-invasion exercises) and recently when two Russian bombers escorted by four Su-27 fighter aircrafts conducted a mock attack on Sweden (30-40 km from the Swedish border) in the night of Good Friday in 2013, further fuelled the defence debate. Without any reaction by the Swedish Air Force "quick reaction alert" (QRA), two Danish F-16 fighter jets based in Lithuania went up to monitor the Russian aircrafts instead. The incident was (as every time the QRA is used) classified but was later revealed by a major Swedish newspaper.[197] It turned out that the QRA lacked resources to be on standby around-the-clock, and had been so for quite some time. Politicians tried to play-down the event, although this eye-opener about our deficient QRA and weak defence capability flooded blogs and the media. However, NATO nations around the Baltic Sea expressed their apprehension and surprise about the event.

> *"It involved a neutral country but also a country that is our close partner in defence … these incidents cause unnecessary alarm in Europe"*[198].

This citation labelling Sweden as being neutral was either a slip of the tongue, or proof that not only domestic but also international actors have problems interpreting Sweden's security and defence policy.

Furthermore, the motivation of Russia's action is unknown, but one might assume that NATO expansion and Russia's desire to reclaim part of its Cold War authority are plausible factors (through increased military presence in the Arctic and Baltic Sea).

Moreover, Sweden is no exception to the general European trend in decreased defence expenditure. Since the Russian threat disappeared after the Cold War, Sweden has done several cutbacks on its armed forces, from spending 2,5% (1998) to 1,2% (2012) of the GDP on its military[199]. Simultaneously, the Russian defence expenditure has increased to over 3% of the

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[197] Holmström. M., "Ryskt flyg övade anfall mot Sverige", *Svenska Dagbladet,* (2013-04-22), http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/ryskt-flyg-ovade-anfall-mot-sverige_8108894.svd (2013-05-12)
[198] Benitez, J., "Poland criticizes Russia's mock attack on Sweden", *NATO Source Alliance News blog,* (2013-04-23), http://www.acus.org/natosource/poland-criticizes-russias-mock-attack-sweden (2013-05-12)
[199] O'Dwyer, G., "Sweden military spending to rise?", *Defense News,* (2013-02-01), http://www.defensenews.com/article/20130201/DEFREG01/302010015/Sweden-8217-s-Military-Spending-Rise- (2013-05-12)

GDP (2012) and is expected to rise even further[200]. Together with President Putin's pursuit of re-establishing Russia as a great power together with a massive rearmament, even though this mostly implies modernising its out-of-date materiel, calls for some concern. Therefore, several Swedish defence politicians and analysts worry that the cutbacks have gone too far and recommend an increase in military spending and troop volume because of the current and future (possibly deteriorating) security environment.

> *"Like many other nations, Sweden has slashed its defence budget and this has apparently led to a situation where its very symbolic first line of defence is operational only from 9 to 5, leaving it unable to react to safeguard its borders 24/7. This inability is due to recent weak defence ministers who have been hampered by a strong finance minister, all serving under a prime minister who has not shown any noticeable interest in regional security. Opponents to this ignorance have been met with accusations labelling them as 'Cold War dinosaurs….' ... Today is 2013. The security situation in Europe can no longer be viewed through the prism of legacy from 1992."*[201]

Furthermore, in spite of working closely with NATO and the EU, Sweden does not have any formal security safeguards. As recently as the Society and Defence conference in 2013[202], the NATO General Secretary stated that a non-member like Sweden should not rely on or expect support from NATO in the event of war[203]. This is probably why Sweden is strongly rooting for strengthening the EU military-political resources, influence, and global security actor. However, such a development is going to take considerable time (if it is at all possible). The lacking public support for NATO membership and the EU's insufficient military capability might explain Sweden's initiative of increasing defence collaboration between the Nordic countries, working as a bridge between Sweden, the EU, and NATO.

However, no matter the perspective and irrespectively of not being formally in an alliance, Sweden is involved in a security collective. Especially if a conflict were to emerge around the Baltic Sea, considering the Declaration of Solidarity, Lisbon treaty (and its theoretical possibility

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[200] Cooper, J., *Military expenditure in the Russian Federation during the years 2012 to 2015: a research note,* University of Birmingham: Centre for Russian and East European Studies (2012-10-09), http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/publications/unpubl_milex/military-expenditure-in-the-russian-federation-2012-2015 (2013-05-12)
[201] Benitez, J., "Is part-time national defence good enough for Europe?", *NATO Source alliance blog,* (2013-04-25), http://www.acus.org/natosource/part-time-national-defense-good-enough-europe (2013-05-12)
[202] Society and Defence – The Annual National Conference on Swedish security and defence related issues.
[203] TT (News Agency), "Sverige kan inte räkna med NATO", *Svenska Dagbladet,* (2013-01-14), http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/sverige-kan-inte-rakna-med-nato_7824364.svd (2013-05-12)

of a EU military alliance), as well as the Baltic NATO countries. Sweden's strategic position would be of great importance to other actors' ability to give support in the event of a conflict around the Baltic Sea, therefore, Sweden would most likely directly or indirectly be involved from the very beginning. Especially considering the Declaration of Solidarity, if Sweden would not live up to its word, it would suffer immense political and diplomatic consequences. Vice versa, if Sweden were to be attacked, NATO would probably indirectly be involved through the Lisbon treaty and Declaration of Solidarity, considering that many of the surrounding countries are NATO members. Nonetheless, NATO countries would most likely support each other before assisting another non-NATO country, especially if they have nothing to gain from such cooperation (strategic positions or military capabilities).

> *"From what I have seen of our Russian friends and Allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness."*[204]
>
> – Winston Churchill

6.1 Suggestion for Further Research

It would be interesting to study how a Swedish membership in NATO would affect the Swedish "state identity" and "image of others". How would this affect the relationship with Russia and in turn if/how this would implicate Finland's Security and Defence policy? Would a military alliance through the EU be more acceptable than if Sweden was to partner up with NATO?

[204] The History Guide, *Winston Churchill's 'Iron Curtain Speech'*, http://www.historyguide.org/europe/churchill.html (2013-05-12)

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