

Greece's Elusive Quest for Security Providers: The 'Expectations–Reality Gap'

PANAYOTIS TSAKONAS & ANTONIS TOURNIKIOTIS*

*University of the Aegean, Rhodes & Independent Analyst,
Athens, Greece*

The article analyses Greece's traditional quest for providers of security against the Turkish threat by highlighting the gap between Greece's misguided expectations of turning both the Atlantic Alliance and the developing European defense project into providers of security and real-life cases indicating the inability of those security institutions to meet Greece's expectations. For Greek security analysts and decisionmakers, a series of events has provided ample proof that neither NATO nor the EU can provide Greece with security guarantees. More recently, another series of developments, mostly related to the evolving European security and defense project, was enough to draw Greece into a state of continuous vacillation between widening and bridging the 'expectations–reality gap' described above. Following the 1999 EU summit in Helsinki, Greece initiated a long-term policy of removing the Turkish threat altogether. In the long run, this policy appears as the only sound alternative to Greece's longstanding search for security bulwarks, but in the short run Greece should realize the limits of the EU's involvement in its defense policies.

Introduction

IN DECEMBER 1991, Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis proudly announced that because of Greece's participation in the Western European Union, the military arm of the European Community, 'Greece's borders have now become Europe's borders' and 'Greece's borders will be protected by the European Union'.¹ Ten years later, the government of Constantine Simitis denounced arrangements made by the evolving European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) for not supporting Greece's

¹ See Mitsotakis's remarks to the Greek press when Greece became a full member of the European Union, *Ta Nea*, 12 December 1991 and *Kathimerini*, 12 December 1991.

national interests.² In retrospect, both cases involved an illusion. Europe has never thought in terms of *national* interests if defending those interests entails a *European* military response.

As a small, strategically located and politically conservative country, Greece has sought to add its voice to and to integrate its policies with those of its EU partners and NATO allies, especially against what it perceives to be the country's major security concern, Turkey (Couloumbis & Yannas, 1993: 52). Indeed, Greece has continually tried to encourage both NATO and the EU to become more actively engaged in its defense and to turn them into 'security-providing' organizations.

This article analyses Greece's traditional quest for providers of security against the Turkish threat by highlighting the gap that exists between Greece's misguided expectations and real-life cases. We refer to the gap between Greece's efforts to turn existing Euro-Atlantic institutions – namely NATO and the evolving European defense project of the EU – into security providers and cases indicating the inability of those security institutions to meet Greece's expectations as the 'expectations–reality gap'.

During the Cold War and in the first decade of the post-Cold War era, there occurred a series of events that provided ample proof to Greek security analysts and decisionmakers that neither NATO nor the EU could provide Greece with security guarantees. More recently, another series of developments, mostly related to the evolving European security and defense project, was enough to draw Greece into a state of continuous vacillation between widening and bridging the aforementioned 'expectations–reality gap'. Most importantly, realization of the existence of this 'expectations–reality gap' on the part of Greek decisionmakers and security experts at a critical juncture in Europe's drive to develop an autonomous foreign and security policy will have certain policy implications for Greek security. Indeed, realization of the limits of the involvement of Euro-Atlantic institutions in defending Greece's national interests, to say nothing of its borders, against the Turkish threat would undoubtedly lead to a more effective approach in promoting Greece's national interests.

² Prior to the EU summit at Laeken in December 2001, a government spokesman made clear Greece's objection to the text of the agreement that resulted from US–British–Turkish consultations regarding the EU's Rapid Reaction Force missions action, stating that 'the text should be amended so as to secure fully Greece's national interests'; see *Athens News Agency*, 12 December 2001. More recently, after the EU Council in Brussels on 25 October 2002, the same government spokesman stated that 'an agreement was concluded by the EU members on the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) that fully meets Greece's national interests' (emphasis added); see *Athens News Agency*, 25 October 2002.

The 'Threat from the East'

For at least the past two decades, the belief that Turkey constitutes a potential military threat has been reflected not only in Greek public opinion but also in debates between experts and in Greek security planning.³ It is worth noting that, despite differences in style, both of the major parties in Greece (PASOK and New Democracy) have shown remarkable continuity in agreeing that Turkey is the country's major security concern, while the Greek public appears supportive of successive governments' decisions to keep defense expenditures at a high level, even though this is considered to be responsible for the country's budget deficit as well as a level of social services that is lower than what is considered desirable.⁴

Greek security planners are concerned about Turkey's revisionist aims towards Greece as expressed in official statements, diplomatic initiatives, and military action (including the deployment of its armed forces).⁵ The 1974 Cyprus crisis was regarded as the major turning point in post-World War II Greek security considerations: the Turkish invasion and subsequent occupation of the northern part of Cyprus was for Greece not only a traumatic experience but also the basis for 'new thinking' in terms of security.⁶ Furthermore, Greece's close proximity to Turkey and the fact that it has a much smaller population tend to further increase Greek insecurity. This should come as no surprise, since Turkey has repeatedly rejected Greece's proposal for a bilateral non-use-of-force pact. This refusal has reinforced Greece's perception that, given an opportune moment, Turkey would use military force against a fellow NATO member (Valinakis, 1994: 30).

According to the Greek narrative (constructed through the comments and analyses of various Greek security analysts and policymakers), Turkish 'revisionist actions' include violations of Greek airspace, refusal to submit the delimitation dispute of the Aegean continental shelf to the International Court of Justice, threats of war should Greece extend the territorial waters limit from six to twelve miles (as allowed under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention), and challenges to the Aegean status quo as codified by a

³ A poll conducted in June 1994 provides a typical example. Although Greek public opinion considered the 'issue of Skopje' to be the main foreign policy problem faced by Greece (60.2%), the main threat was still believed to come from Turkey (68.3%). For specifics on the 1994 MRB poll, see Loulis (1995: 121–139).

⁴ As Prime Minister Simitis stressed, 'Greece is neither Ireland nor Portugal. It is the current government, which is implementing the most extensive armaments program in Greece's modern history in order to secure the country's national interests'; see Simitis (2000).

⁵ For further discussion, see Valinakis (1994: 30). It is also characteristic that Turkey's revisionist claims were repeated in both the 1999 and the 2000 white papers of the Turkish armed forces; see Turkish Ministry of National Defense (2000; 2001: 21–22).

⁶ For further discussion, see Valinakis (1994: 27). The Cyprus problem – which emerged in the 1950s and increased with the the Greek–Turkish crises of the 1960s, the Greek junta-sponsored coup of 1974, and the Turkish invasion and continued occupation of the island – has been complicated by a series of Greek–Turkish frictions in the Aegean region. These led to a reorientation of the Greek defense doctrine and the official declaration of the 'threat from the East' as the main security concern for Greece.

number of international treaties (1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty, 1932 Agreement between Turkey and Italy, 1947 Paris Treaty).⁷ The latter issue led to a crisis over the sovereignty status of the Aegean islets of Imia (referred to as 'Kardak' by Turkey) in January 1996 (Syrigos, 1998: 345–350).

In addition, Greek policymakers see Turkey as backing its 'non-friendly' intentions with a significant military buildup. In the late 1980s, Turkey launched an impressive program to modernize its armed forces. In an era in which other European countries have been cutting their defense budgets in an effort to benefit from the 'peace dividend', any sizable increase in military expenditure is an additional cause for concern for Turkey's neighbors, especially Greece.⁸

In the post-Cold War era, Turkey has remained Greece's main security concern and the driving force behind most of its foreign policy initiatives. For example, scarcely a month after the signing of the Madrid Agreement in July 1997, which at first seemed to constitute a major positive development in the normalization of Greek–Turkish relations, Greece was presented with a 'negative list' of Turkish responses. These included Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's statement that the principles of international law cannot be applied to the Aegean Sea,⁹ the 'Integration Agreement' concluded between Turkey and the occupied areas of Cyprus,¹⁰ and the challenge to Greek sovereignty over more than 100 islands and islets in the Aegean Sea, including the island of Gavdos, south of Crete.¹¹

It is worth noting that Greek perceptions of the Turkish threat reflect not fear of an all-out war but rather fear of 'a well concerted strategy of intimidation manifested through a series of low level threats in a number of issue areas' (Arvanitopoulos, 1997: 154). According to Greek security planners and analysts, possible targets of Turkish military action might be the Aegean islands, Greek Thrace (for the 'protection' of the Moslem minority), or Cyprus (with an extension of the occupation zone southwards or even an attempt to control the whole island). It is also possible that there will be concurrent conflicts in more than one theatre. Furthermore, a major Greek concern is the possibility of a Turkish seizure of Greek islands or islets in the

⁷ As former alternate minister of foreign affairs Professor Christos Rozakis (1989: 65) puts it, 'the mechanisms Turkey opts for in order to achieve a tipping of balance [in the southeastern Mediterranean region] start with the use of violence (Cyprus), or the threat of the use of violence (as evidenced by the concentration of troops along the Aegean coasts, or with reference to the *casus belli*, or with the display of power, through the constant violations of Greek air space or the Athens FIR), continue through direct or indirect claims over Greek soil (Turkish officials' declarations challenging Greek sovereignty over the islands) and conclude with more sophisticated, diplomatic forms for changing the status quo'.

⁸ According to Kollias (2001: 109), 'in real terms, Turkey's equipment expenditure has risen by about 345 per cent in the period 1987–2000. The corresponding increase for Greece was about 142 per cent'.

⁹ See interview with Mesut Yilmaz, *Washington Post*, Ankara, 3 August 1997.

¹⁰ Turkey and the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus signed an agreement calling for an association council to work towards the partial economic and defense integration of Turkey with the occupied northern part of the island. The Greek foreign ministry strongly condemned the agreement.

¹¹ See Kurumahmut (1998). On the same line of reasoning, see also Turkish War Academy (1996).

eastern part of the Aegean, as demonstrated by the 'westward' order of battle of the Turkish Armed Forces and the high concentration of first-rate, fully-manned military units on the Aegean coast.¹² Such a move could result, for example, if Greece were to extend its territorial waters from the current six nautical miles to the twelve-mile limit permitted under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention. Turkey has repeatedly stated that it would consider such an act a *casus belli*.¹³ Particularly worrisome for Greek decisionmakers is Turkey's insistence that a number of Greek islands in the Aegean and the Dodecanese be demilitarized, ignoring Greek claims of the right of self-defense against Turkey's First and Fourth (Aegean) armies, special forces units and large landing-craft fleet.

In Search of Security Providers: The 'Expectations–Reality Gap'

The dominant theme in the security studies literature that deals with the alignment policies of states – the 'balance of threat' theory – suggests that states, especially small and weak ones, have two ideal choices when confronted with an external threat: either to *balance against* the threat (in order to deter it from attacking or to defeat it if it does) or to *bandwagon with* the threat (in order either to appease it or to profit from it by sharing in the spoils of its victory) (Walt, 1987: 5). A number of scholars have also attempted to explain the alignment decisions of small and weak states by analyzing issues from a domestic vantage point (Barnett & Levy, 1991: 369–395; Barnett, 1992). This domestic school of alliances highlights the notion that a small state, when confronted with a serious external threat, could decide to rely on a *combination* of internal and external balancing (or bandwagoning), as the classic 'balance of power' theory suggests (Waltz, 1979: 168).

To counterbalance what it perceived as the most serious threat to its security, namely the Turkish threat, Greece has historically relied on a balance of 'internal' (strong armed forces) and 'external' (participation in West European security and political organizations: NATO, the WEU, and the EU) measures. Indeed, since small states have fewer options and less room to maneuver than great powers, Greece has sought to promote its security interests more effectively by integrating its policies with those of its EU partners and NATO allies. As the analysis that follows illustrates, there is an obvious 'expectations–reality gap' in Greece's turn first to NATO and then to European defense organizations to provide this security, as these institutions

¹² Greece's perception of how the threat from the East can be realized is shown in the white papers of the Greek armed forces; see Hellenic Ministry of National Defense (1998: 25–28; 2000: 34–35).

¹³ This became official policy through a resolution of the Turkish National Assembly in June 1995.

have repeatedly demonstrated that they are incapable of meeting Greece's expectations.

The Years of Disillusionment

In its response to the perceived Turkish threat, Greece relied for many years mainly on international law and agreements for deterrence, as well as on the mediating role of the USA, NATO, and the UN. Indeed, both Greece and Turkey have been competing for US attention and have sought to enlist the USA in the role of peacemaker, arbiter, or balancer (Couloumbis, 1983: 133). It is worth noting that, in Greek security thinking, if NATO abstained from involvement in the Greek–Turkish conflict, it would have been considered as impotent, indifferent, or implicitly supportive of the stronger party in the conflict, namely, Turkey (Moustakis & Sheehan, 2000: 99). Moreover, during the Cold War, Greece valued NATO more for its constraint of Turkey than for its contribution to collective security against the Warsaw Pact. In fact, almost since it became a member (along with Turkey) in 1952, Greece has viewed the NATO alliance as a means of balancing Turkey (MacKenzie, 1983: 117).

The Turkish invasion of Cyprus – an island considered by Greece as both an integral part of 'Hellenism' and a part of its territory – in July 1974 led to a major breakthrough in Greek strategic thinking. For the majority of the Greek public, as well as Greek security analysts and policymakers, the fact that 'a NATO member, using NATO weapons, had taken 35,000 troops out of the NATO structure in order to occupy another democratic European country' (Moustakis & Sheehan, 2000: 96) was ample proof of NATO's inability to play the role of guarantor of Greek–Turkish borders in Cyprus.

Since reliance on NATO had proved unfounded and Greece realized that it had no institutional safeguards at its disposal and no commitment from the West 'to bridle Turkish expansionism' (Borowiec, 1983: 29–81), it began to place more emphasis on 'internal' measures, namely, strengthening its armed forces.¹⁴ However, in accordance with its policy of relying on a *combination* of internal and external balancing, Greece soon returned to a policy of Turkish inclusion in, rather than exclusion from, NATO's structure. Indeed, NATO's potential role as a means of minimizing Greek–Turkish confrontation,¹⁵ owing to its interest in consolidating operational normality and cohesion on its southern flank, was precisely the reason for Greece's reintegration into the Atlantic Alliance in October 1980, following its withdrawal in the wake of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus six years earlier. Still, NATO's

¹⁴ According to one analyst, Greece found itself in 1974 both dependent and insecure; see Platias (1989: 91–108).

¹⁵ A recent study on NATO and the Greek–Turkish conflict gives credit to NATO for the fact that the Greek–Turkish dispute has never erupted into a full-scale war; see Krebs (1999).

objectives with regard to its involvement in the Greek–Turkish conflict were viewed by Greek security analysts as inconsistent with Greece's higher expectations to either turn NATO into a security-providing bulwark or to act as a mediator in resolving the Greek–Turkish dispute.¹⁶

Furthermore, NATO's 'failure' to provide Greece with the expected security guarantees intensified the latter's search for an alternative. Since the 1970s, the European Community (EC) had been seen as a possible candidate. In fact, Greece's membership in the EC in the late 1970s, though largely economically motivated, was also meant to bolster the existing Greek government and, most importantly, to strengthen the country's international position, especially its deterrent capability against Turkey.¹⁷ Moreover, protection of its territorial integrity was the reason Greece had applied for admission to the Western European Union (WEU), the defense arm of the EC. The WEU was thus viewed 'as a system of political solidarity capable of activating diplomatic and political levers of pressure to deter Ankara from potential adventures in the Aegean' (Valinakis, 1988: 55). In sum, Greece's participation in the EC was seen both as a deterrent against Turkey and as a means of forestalling potential Greek–Turkish confrontation.

However, clear confirmation that Greece's expectations with respect to the WEU had been misguided came shortly thereafter in the form of the Petersberg Declaration of June 1992. Article 5 of this stated that the WEU would exempt itself from any involvement in a conflict between a WEU member (e.g. Greece) and a NATO member (e.g. Turkey) (Western European Union, 1992). The WEU's position was described by Greek defense analysts and decisionmakers as at best controversial and costly for Greece, and at worst completely offensive to a country that was a full member of the European Community (Valinakis, 1997: 312; Moustakis & Sheehan, 2000: 101).

For Greece in the post–Cold War era, the clinching confirmation of the EU's inability to provide security came in 1996, when a crisis over the islets of Imia in the Aegean brought Greece and Turkey to the brink of war. The Imia crisis not only demonstrated the minimal role that NATO could play in crisis management between Greece and Turkey, it also highlighted the absolute inability of either the EU or the WEU to act as a mediator in a crisis or as a guarantor of borders. Indeed, both security organizations have played a peripheral role compared to the USA, a sovereign country (i.e. not an inter-

¹⁶ As Monteagle Stearns has noted: 'instead of enabling them to reconcile their differences by direct negotiation, their [Greece and Turkey] common alliance with the United States and Western Europe often appears to act as an impediment. Bilateral disputes acquired multilateral dimension'. See Stearns (1992: 5).

¹⁷ In the words of one senior Greek official: 'Turkey would thus think twice to attack an EU member state', see *The Economist*, 26 July 1975 and *The Guardian*, 19 May 1976 (as quoted in Valinakis (1997: 279). See also the speeches of the Premier Constantine Karamanlis, *Kathimerini* (Greek daily), 11 April 1978 and 1 January 1981, as quoted in Valinakis (1997: 283).

national body) viewed by both Greece and Turkey as the most important actor/mediator in the post-Cold War era.¹⁸ It should be noted that, as a result of the Imia crisis, a major effort was again made by Greece at the EU's 1996 Intergovernmental Conference in Amsterdam for the inclusion of a 'clause of solidarity and guarantee of external borders', a request that was again rejected by the WEU.¹⁹

Back and Forth: Bridging and Widening the 'Expectations-Reality Gap'

While Greece's expectations have remained unaltered, since the 1998 Franco-British summit in Saint-Malo it has undergone a period of continuous vacillation between bridging and widening the 'expectations-reality gap' as a result of developments related to the evolving European security and defense project. A series of cases will clearly show how that gap is, in various contexts, being bridged and/or widened.

More specifically, while past events indicated a widening of the gap between what Greece expected from Euro-Atlantic security institutions and what the latter were really capable of offering, certain positive signs concerning the future of the evolving ESDP rekindled Greek expectations about its much-needed security guarantees against the Turkish threat. Greece's interpretation of this evolution was, in fact, a return to the belief that the EU might be the security-providing bulwark the country was seeking to protect its national interests.

Unsurprisingly, from Greece's perspective the most encouraging sign was the WEU's failure to become the EU's military arm, since this has led the EU to adopt a more ambitious project for its own security and defense. By officially acknowledging the convergence of British foreign policy with the policies of other European member-states (mainly France), the Franco-British summit in Saint-Malo in October 1998 represented the first breakthrough towards the development of an autonomous European defense project.²⁰ Following through on the debate that began in Saint-Malo, the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 went on record stating its 'determination to develop an autonomous capacity to take decisions where NATO as a whole is not engaged', committing itself to 'cooperating voluntarily, by 2003,

¹⁸ See Athanassopoulou (1997: 76-101). It is worth noting that NATO's role remained peripheral even with regard to the less demanding task of contributing to the confidence-building enterprise undertaken by the two countries since January 2000 in the context of Greek-Turkish rapprochement. For further discussion, see Tsakonas & Dokos (forthcoming).

¹⁹ According to Prime Minister Simitis, the agreement reached in Amsterdam that foreign policy decisions of strategic importance to the EU would be made unanimously was particularly positive, and 'the references concerning respect of the EU's integrity and external borders and on the development of a mutual policy of solidarity among the member states were also satisfactory'; see *Athens News Agency*, 18 June 1997.

²⁰ See 'Joint Declaration on European Defence', British-French Summit, Saint-Malo, France, 3-4 December 1998; available at <http://www.cesd.org/eu/stmalo.htm> (15 May 2003).

to deploy within sixty (60) days and sustain for at least one year military forces of up to 50,000–60,000 persons capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks' (EU Council, 1999).

It was also at the EU summit in Helsinki that Greece decided to withdraw its veto and grant Turkey EU candidate status. The long-term rationale behind this major shift in Greece's Turkish policy was to integrate Turkey into the European system, where European norms of behavior and certain European-style 'rules of the game' would have to be followed. In attempting to integrate Turkey into Europe, Greece hoped to modify Turkey's narrow nationalistic outlook and enable it to adopt policies based less on geopolitical considerations and more on international law and agreements (Tsakonas, 2001: 1–28). Apparently, the impact of the Turkish candidacy on the 'expectations–reality gap' will remain limited in the short run, as Greek perceptions of the Turkish threat remain unaffected. In the long run, however, Turkey's full integration into the EU will help lessen the 'expectations–reality gap', since the threat from the East will cease to exist. Nevertheless, for the immediate future, Greece's major shift vis-à-vis Turkey will not entail a departure from its longstanding desire that its borders be secured by the EU.

Not long after Helsinki, in October 2000, a series of disagreements over sovereignty issues erupted between Greece and Turkey during the NATO exercise 'Destined Glory' in the Aegean. During this exercise, the question of whether 'the EU should react to actions of third countries [i.e. Turkey] that breach the sovereignty rights of a member-state [i.e. Greece] and, consequently, influence the territory of the European Union' was once again raised by Greece, this time in a different EU forum, the European Parliament. The EU's response, in the words of French Minister of Defense Alain Richard, was that 'the European Union had no interest in dealing with such an issue'.²¹

Although Greece's expectations were not met in practice, its hopes for the ESDP were once again reinforced as the idea of an autonomous European defense system gained momentum both at the Capabilities Commitment Conference (CCC) in November 2000 and at the Nice European Council in December 2000. At the CCC, it became possible for EU member-states to have specific national commitments correspond to the military-capability goals set by the Helsinki European Council, while at Nice permanent political and military structures were for the first time established within the EU (European Council, 2000). The latter was considered to be a substantial contribution to the process of integrating European security and defense and as a 'milestone in relations between the EU and NATO' (Fitchett, 2000).

At the European Council held in Laeken in December 2001, it was apparent that there was no consensus among EU members over the current status of the ESDP's internal integration, as well as disagreement over the nature of

²¹ The question was posed by Alekos Alavanos, a Greek member of the European Parliament, during the meeting of the Security and Defense Committee of the European Parliament; see *Eleftherotipia* (2000).

the relationship the ESDP should develop with the Atlantic Alliance (European Council, 2001). The latter was in fact the reason for a British initiative aiming to find a way out of the deadlock created in EU–NATO relations after a non-EU member (Turkey) decided to block the EU's Rapid Reaction Force's right to use NATO facilities and demanded a say in any EU security operation (*BBC News*, 2001). The agreement that was finally reached between Britain, the USA, and Turkey – known as the 'Ankara Document' (Bekdil & Enginsoy, 2002: 17) – managed to widen Greece's 'expectations–reality gap' by highlighting not only Greece's misguided expectation that its national interests could be defended by a European military organization but also, and most importantly, by bringing home the realization that a European security and defense policy could even evolve to the point of putting an EU member's sovereign rights at risk. Indeed, for Greek decisionmakers and security analysts alike, the Ankara Document, by proposing that 'under no circumstances, nor in any crisis, will the ESDP be used against an Ally', made reference to the obligations of *EU members only*, with no mention whatsoever of obligations of allies that are candidates for EU membership, namely, Turkey.²² With an eye on Cyprus, Greece demanded reciprocal assurances that a NATO nation (i.e. Turkey) would never take action against an EU member-state (i.e. Greece).²³

More recently, certain events once again rekindled Greece's expectations of the evolving European security and defense project. Specifically, Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt's letter of 18 July 2002 to his British and French counterparts regenerated the traditional Greek line of reasoning with regard to the ESDP. Verhofstadt's letter embraced the notion of the need to 'develop the solidarity between the Member States of the European Union, that could be done by means of a mutual security guarantee in the event of an attack calling for a collective response',²⁴ a proposal that went beyond Greece's wildest expectations. Moreover, Verhofstadt's particular proposal – that such a mutual and collective security guarantee could be included in the future constitutional treaty of the European Union – further reinforced Greece's hopes that the evolving ESDP could also be seen by other member-states as a security-providing bulwark.

²² The Ankara Document was interpreted by Greece as an agreement containing a political assurance that no EU force would intervene in 'political disputes' between NATO allies (authors' interviews with officials from the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

²³ At the Brussels European Council of 24–25 October 2002, the Ankara text was replaced by the 'Brussels Document', which stated that 'under no circumstances, nor in any crisis, will ESDP be used against an Ally, on the understanding, reciprocally, that NATO military crisis management will not undertake any action against the EU or its member states'. Greece also secured a written pledge that no action would be undertaken that could violate the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. See European Council, 2002.

²⁴ See Guy Verhofstadt's letter to Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and to S.E.M. Jacques Chirac, Président de la République Française (Brussels, GV/PM/vv 14 1807 02).

The dispute that erupted between Spain and Morocco over the tiny island of Perejil (known as Leila in Morocco) in July 2002 also highlighted the issue of solidarity that – in Greece's view – should be developed between EU member-states. To the surprise of Greece, the inexperienced sense of solidarity among EU member-states on issues of security was epitomized in the case of the Perejil/Leila dispute by the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, who, at the time of the crisis, pointed out that solidarity among EU members should be taken for granted while he called for measures to be taken at the EU level if the two countries did not reach a diplomatic solution.²⁵ In the words of Inal Batu, former Turkish foreign minister and deputy undersecretary during a similar crisis that erupted between Greece and Turkey over the Imia/Kardak islets: 'during the Imia/Kardak crisis the EU did not intervene in the problem, while it was understood that in the case of Perejil/Leila the EU *was trying to show its solidarity with a member state*' [emphasis added] (*Turkish Daily News*, 2002). Most notably, Greece viewed the Perejil/Leila case as a clear indication that the EU is becoming more inclined to adopt an assertive stance on issues regarding the sovereignty rights of member-states.²⁶

Conclusion

Historically, Greece has sought to deal with the discrepancy between its inability to deal alone with the Turkish threat and the presence of such a threat through an intense quest for security-providing hegemons. For as long as Turkey has been perceived as the most imminent threat to Greece's security, there has been a constant effort on the part of successive Greek governments to engage both the Atlantic Alliance and the European Union in Greece's balancing policy. For Greek security analysts and decisionmakers, numerous examples can be advanced – the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the Article 5 exemption in the WEU's Petersberg Declaration, and the rejection of Greece's bid to include a 'clause of solidarity and guarantee of external borders' in the Amsterdam Intergovernmental Conference following the Imia crisis – to illustrate the 'expectations–reality gap' that Greek governments have experienced in their efforts to turn both NATO and the WEU into

²⁵ See 'Statement by Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, on the Situation on the Islet of Perejil', EU Commission Database document IP/02/1088; available at <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh> (15 May 2003).

²⁶ It is characteristic that Greece seized the opportunity to declare its support of the Spanish government as well as to highlight the need for the EU to proclaim its collective support for and solidarity with a member-state when issues related to the protection of external borders and the territorial integrity of a member-state arose; see 'Press release by the spokesman for the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Panos Beglitis, Athens, 18 July 2002'.

security-providing bulwarks. Nonetheless, a series of developments mostly related to the evolving European security and defense project was enough for Greece to enter a period of continuous vacillation that widened (e.g. NATO's exercise 'Destined Glory' and the Ankara Document) and then bridged (e.g. the Saint-Malo summit, the granting of Turkey's EU candidacy at Helsinki, and the solidarity momentum reflected in Verhofstadt's letter and in the Perejil/Leila crisis) the 'expectations-reality gap'.

Although Greece's quest for security providers remains active, since the Helsinki summit of December 1999 Greece has initiated a long-term policy of removing the Turkish threat altogether by bringing Turkey into line with EU norms of behavior and European-style 'rules of the game'. While this major shift in Greece's policy vis-à-vis Turkey is not in the short run expected to entail a departure from Greece's quest for security providers, it still seems to be the only sound alternative to Greece's longstanding search for security bulwarks in the long run. Greece's long-term policy vis-à-vis Turkey should be further coupled with active engagement in any developments of the European security and defense project in a direction that will further promote the issue of solidarity among the members of the European Union. However, in the immediate future, Greece should realize the limits of the EU's involvement in Greece's defense policies and 'lower the bar' of its expectations that the EU's current crisis-management mechanism can safeguard Greece's national interests, to say nothing of its borders.

* Panayotis Tsakonas is Assistant Professor at the Department of Mediterranean Studies, University of the Aegean, Rhodes. Antonis Tournikiotis is an independent analyst, based in Athens. The authors are indebted to the editor of *Security Dialogue* and to three anonymous referees for their substantive comments and suggestions.

References

- Arvanitopoulos, Constantine, 1997. 'Greek Defense Policy and the Doctrine of Extended Deterrence', in Andreas Theofanous & Van Coufoudakis, eds, *Security and Cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean*. Nicosia: InterCollege Press (153-164).
- Athanassopoulou, Ekavi, 1997. 'Blessing in Disguise? The Imia Crisis and Turkish-Greek Relations', *Mediterranean Politics* 2(3): 76-101.
- Barnett, Michael, 1992. *Confronting the Costs of War. Military Power, State and Society in Egypt and Israel*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Barnett, Michael & Jack Levy, 1991. 'Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments', *International Organization* 45(3): 369-395.
- BBC News, 2001. 'Turkey "Deal" on Rapid Reaction Force', 3 December; available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1690050.stm> (15 May 2003).
- Bekdil, Burak & Umit Enginsoy, 2002. 'Turk-Greek Dispute Still Stymies EU Force', *Defense News*, 30 September-2 October: 17.
- Borowiec, Andrew, 1983. *The Mediterranean Feud*. New York: Praeger.

- Couloumbis, Theodore, 1983. *The United States, Greece and Turkey: The Troubled Triangle*. New York: Praeger.
- Couloumbis, Theodore & Prodromos Yannas, 1993. 'Greek Security in a Post-Cold War Setting', in Theodore Couloumbis & Thanos Veremis, eds, *The Southeast European Yearbook 1992*. Athens: Eliamep (51–58).
- Eleftherotipia* (Athens), 2000. 'O Pontios Pilatos kai h Evropaiki Enosi' [Pontius Pilate and the European Union], 25 October.
- European Council, 1999. 'Presidency Conclusions', European Council, Helsinki, 10–11 December 1999; available at <http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/> (15 May 2003).
- European Council, 2000. 'Presidency Conclusions', European Council, Nice, 7–9 December 2000; available at <http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/> (15 May 2003).
- European Council, 2001. 'Presidency Conclusions', European Council, Laeken, 14–15 December 2001; available at <http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/> (15 May 2003).
- European Council, 2002. 'Presidency Conclusions', European Council, Brussels, 24–25 October 2002; available at <http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/delegations/enla/20021126/06.pdf> (15 May 2003).
- Fitchett, Joseph, 2000. 'EU Force Takes Shape with Pledge to Troops', *International Herald Tribune*, 20 November.
- Hellenic Ministry of National Defense, 1998. *1996–97 White Paper of the Hellenic Armed Forces*. Athens: Hellenic Ministry of National Defense.
- Hellenic Ministry of National Defense, 2000. *1998–99 White Paper of the Hellenic Armed Forces*. Athens: Hellenic Ministry of National Defense.
- Kollias, Christos, 2001. 'A Look at the Methodological Issues Involved in the Greek–Turkish Arms Race Hypothesis', *Hellenic Studies* 9(2): 91–114.
- Krebs, Ronald, 1999. 'Perverse Institutionalism: NATO and the Greco-Turkish Conflict', *International Organization*, 53(2): 343–377.
- Kurumahmut, Ali, ed., 1998. *The Fundamental Issue in the Aegean: The Islands of Disputed Sovereignty*. Ankara: Atatürk Foundation for the Study of Culture, Language and History.
- Loulis, Yannis, 1995. 'Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: 1994 as a Turning Point', in Yannis Valinakis & Yannis Nikolaou, eds, *Yearbook of Defense and Foreign Policy 1995*. Athens: Eliamep (121–134).
- MacKenzie, Kenneth, 1983. 'Greece and Turkey: Disarray on NATO's Southern Flank', *Conflict Studies* 154: 117.
- Moustakis, Fotios & Michael Sheehan, 2000. 'Greek Security Policy after the Cold War', *Contemporary Security Policy* 21(3): 95–115.
- Platias, Athanassios, 1989. 'Greece's Strategic Doctrine: In Search of Autonomy and Deterrence', in Dimitri C. Conostas, ed., *The Greek–Turkish Conflict in the 1990s*. London: Macmillan (91–108).
- Rozakis, Christos, 1989. 'Greek–Turkish Relations: The Legal Aspect', in Dimitri Conostas & Charalambos Tsardanidis, eds, *Synchronh Ellinikh Exoterikh Politikih* [Contemporary Greek Foreign Policy]. Athens & Komotini: Sakkoulas (21–68).
- Simitis, Costas, 2000. Prime Minister's address to PASOK Organizational Committee, Athens, 1 December (mimeograph).
- Stearns, Monteagle, 1992. *Entangled Allies: US Policy Towards Greece, Turkey and Cyprus*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations.
- Syrgios, Angelos, 1998. *The Status of the Aegean Sea According to International Law*. Athens & Brussels: Sakkoulas/Bruylant.
- Tsakonas, Panayotis, 2001. 'Turkey's Post-Helsinki Turbulence: Implications for Greece and the Cyprus Issue', *Turkish Studies* 2(2): 1–40.
- Tsakonas, Panayotis & Thanos Dokos, forthcoming. 'Greek–Turkish Relations at the

- Dawn of the Twenty-First Century', in Lenore Martin & Dimitris Keridis, eds, *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Turkish Daily News, 2002. 'Turkey Disturbed by EU Stance on Morocco-Spain Dispute', 17 July.
- Turkish Ministry of National Defense, 2000. *White Paper of the Turkish Armed Forces 1999*. Ankara: Turkish Ministry of National Defense.
- Turkish Ministry of National Defense, 2001. *White Paper of the Turkish Armed Forces 2000*. Ankara: Turkish Ministry of National Defense.
- Turkish War Academy, 1996. *The Geographical, Historical and Legal Status of the Islands and Islets in the Aegean Sea*. Istanbul: Turkish War Academy.
- Valinakis, Yannis, 1988. *Evropaikh Asfaleia kai h Ellada* [The Security of Europe and Greece]. Athens: Foundation of Political Studies and Training.
- Valinakis, Yannis, 1994. *Greece's Security in the Post-Cold War Era*. Ebenhausen/Isartal: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.
- Valinakis, Yannis, 1997. *Me Orama kai Programma; Exoterikh Politikh gia mia Ellada me Aftoepithish* [With Vision and Program: Foreign Policy for a Greece with Self-Confidence]. Thessaloniki: Paratiritis.
- Walt, Stephen, 1987. *The Origins of Alliances*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Waltz, Kenneth, 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Western European Union, 1992. 'Petersberg Declaration', Western European Union, Council of Ministers, Bonn, 19 June 1992; available at <http://www.weu.int/documents/920619peten.pdf> (12 May 2003).