

The French-American Relationship, its Impact on the UN and the Reshaping of International Intervention 1990-2011¹

Abstract *The relationship between the US and France has profoundly affected the process of international intervention, use of force and humanitarian actions in the conflicts across the world since 1990. Military interventions and decision making in international affairs has been the result of the balance of powers inside the UN Security Council from the end of the Cold War onwards. From the peak of 9/11 to the low of the Iraq war, the French-American relations have constantly kept the international agenda alive. With the changes in both the US and French administrations in the past 4 years, with the overall EU dynamic, as well as with the developments in MENA (Middle East-North Africa) in recent months, the interaction between those two main actors of the trans-Atlantic partnership, has gained new dimensions. The present paper attempts to analyze the consequences of the French-American relations of the past 2 decades on the UN system and on the legitimacy of international interventions.*

Key words: international intervention, France, US, UNSC (United Nations Security Council), international conflict, decision-making, trans-Atlantic relations

*"To understand Europe you have to be a genius – or French".
Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State (1996-2000)*

"I don't think about the reaction of the Americans before I say things. I just speak my mind -- which is trained in the world's best schools, and refined by a thousand years of French cultural superiority". Jacques Chirac, President of France (1995-2007)

Introduction

Oana-Cristina Popa

Professor at Babeş-Bolyai University
oanapopa@hotmail.com

The question herein discussed is that of the relationship between the US and France within the broader trans-Atlantic partnership, its impact on the UN decision making process and on international inter-

vention in general, over the past 20 years.

The evolution of the French-American relationship after the Cold War, the foreign policy approach of the two countries and their involvement in international conflict managements being looked at through a comparative analysis of a number of conflicts from the Balkan ethnic wars (1991-1999) to Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), ending with the Arab Spring movements (2010-2011).

It remains to be seen if in the 21st century we will witness a more balanced approach in the trans-Atlantic partnership, possibly with France as a European leader, and if this relationship can redefine international interventionism and adapt it to the conditions of the current international environment.

Historical Background

Relationships between the US and France have always been an indicator for international relations as a whole and for contemporary interventionism in particular. Interaction between the two goes back 200 years to the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America and throughout history moved back and forth from harmony and sympathy to rivalry and competition, being oftentimes spiced up with touches of irony².

The two are strongly connected by historical facts. To Americans, Lafayette³ always sounds a War of Independence bell, while Pierre L'Enfant is ever-present in the architecture of the US capital, Washington DC⁴.

The French, in turn will never forget the Normandy landings or the triumphant entry of the American troops in Paris in 1944. It is as if none of the two countries could have existed without the other from the birth of the US onwards.

But beyond those solid ties that run over centuries, the post Cold War era has brought a new (r)evolution in their relationship. This (r)evolution was clearly visible within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the international decision making process. This (r)evolution has influenced the UN in the 21st century in a dramatic manner and consequently, the interventions in international conflicts.

After France's unconditional support towards the US immediately after 9/11 and during the war on terror that was launched in Afghanistan, the Iraq invasion distanced the two countries, which placed themselves on apparently clashing positions.

But, with the change of administrations in both countries in 2007 and 2008, with presidents Sarkozy and Obama in office, we have been witnessing an unprecedented "transfer of power" on the international arena and the start of the "Americanization" of French foreign policy (France's Defence Review).

This culminated nowadays with France taking over leadership in Libya, at a time when the US took a step back on the international front and the UN revived as the supreme institution to legitimize international intervention.

From Bosnia to Iraq. A Timeline of events

The Cold War created a very good balance of powers inside the UNSC when the world was divided between the US and the USSR and the only security threats were the conventional ones, nuclear arms and the rival forces on the two sides of the Berlin Wall. But once the Iron Curtain fell and the USSR disintegrated, new unconventional threats to security mounted. Alongside, the UN also went through an identity crisis (M.J. Anstee)

In Europe and inside the then European Community (EC), France and Germany represented the core members of the future European Union (EU), having the ambition to create the "United States of Europe" on the old continent. The historic reconciliation between France and Germany and the French-German partnership were given as examples all over the newly liberated Eastern Europe. But the future had other unexpected plans.

The ethnic and religious conflicts in the Balkans (1991-1999) and the genocide in Rwanda (1994) were already leaving a mark on the decade that had just begun. The international community was faced with new challenges it did not have the experience to manage. But, as in other crucial moments in history, the balance of powers and their interests were primarily important (Glenny, 2001)

United Europe's frailty was soon to be tested and the non-involvement of the US on the old continent along with the UN's lack of power to act under the new climate had serious consequences on European stability and security (W. Wagner).

As soon as the USSR disappeared, France developed the ambition to become the new European power pole of the trans-Atlantic bridge. The absence of Germany from the "big 5" in the UNSC and the privileged relationship between Washington and London, described oftentimes in the years to come by the French as submissive on London's part, brought about the need for an actor to represent the European point of view worldwide. Paris wanted to be it. Although not a member in the military structures of NATO, France tried to influence the Alliance's enlargement to the East, oftentimes forwarding opposing views with those of the US, but wishing at the same time to be an equal dialogue partner in the trans-Atlantic relationship⁵.

At home, France influenced the transformation and the expansion of the EU and strongly supported a common foreign and security policy (CFSP). France was also known to be a great supporter of the UN and insisted that all international interventions be legitimate and carried out with UN resolutions.

On the other side of the "pond", the US was the only remaining superpower, the "hero" that ended the Cold War and soon to be the "world's policeman". Its economy and the military were rapidly expanding. Nevertheless, the US needed Europe and its allies, France included. The US was encouraging EU enlargement, as well as a common European defense structure. But things were being complicated by the fact that the majority of EU members were also NATO members and there was no consensus among EU member states. At the same time, the US gained influence in the UNSC and oftentimes pushed decision through power politics rather than partnerships.

The massacres in Rwanda (1994, with over 800,000 deaths) and Bosnia (Srebrenica, 1995, with over 8000 deaths) proved the UN's incapacity and ridiculed its function, sometimes unrightfully. The UN Charter, chapters 6 and 7 were not sufficient to use force in order to stop the killings⁶. The mandates under which the UN peacekeepers, known as the "blue helmets", were deployed, did not allow them to use force in order to settle disputes. In fact they could only use force if fired upon⁷.

Thus, the UN and the states participating in these operations were becoming silent witnesses to genocide. Their only weapon was rhetoric and verbal condemnation, thus hiding their incapacity to act (M.J. Anstee).

Another problem the UN faced in the 90s in mandating peace-keeping operations was the (un)balance of powers in the UNSC. Therefore, almost inevitably, Russia would veto, China abstain, the US and Great Britain stand together, and France too weak to determine any of them to do otherwise.

Also, things started heating up inside the EU. This became very clear in the attempts to mandate military interventions in the Balkans. The difficulty of the decision making process in trying to stop violence in Bosnia (1992-1995) and Kosovo (1998-1999) led to belated actions and loss of human lives.

That is why it is almost unanimously accepted that the involvement of the US in Bosnia, by taking over leadership in the military campaign against the Bosnian Serb targets and in negotiation the Dayton Peace Accords (1995), although criticized by many, was the only viable option to end the war. The US managed to give an impulse to the UN that mandated the first ground operation in the Balkans after the Second World War, IFOR (International Force, which later became SFOR, Stabilization Force). The Americans also managed to convince the world through the voice of its chief negotiator Richard Holbrooke that using tactical force was necessary to stop the violence (Holbrooke, 1999). Although a shocker at first, the strategy worked and under US leadership the darkest chapter in postwar Europe ended (A.M. Slaughter). The US was the champion, the "world's gendarme" and once again the savior of Europe. France and Germany, together with their European colleagues admitted they were not ready to act as one in defense and security matters. Europe had a long way to go picking up the pieces after Bosnia.

The rest of the decade was marked by American leadership. Only 4 years after Dayton, another intervention required US assistance, the one in Kosovo (1999). Again, the absence of European cohesion, the incapacity of Europeans to reach an agreement, differences between France, Germany and Great Britain deepened by conflicting positions of Italy, Greece or Spain, that voiced their own opinions on the Balkans, made it impossible to reach a decision on how to establish peace in the region. The bombings of March 1999 on Yugoslavia which were aimed at Serb targets in both Kosovo and Serbia were coordinated by NATO under US leadership and represented the first illegitimate international intervention as it did not have green light from the UNSC. Nevertheless, 3 months later, after 10 weeks of military air raids, as a result of defeating the Yugoslav Federation, a new UN resolution was obtained following the Military Accord of Kumanovo (FYROM). The resolution endorsed a new peacekeeping ground force under NATO command (KFOR), which thus blessed post factum the previous military air campaign.

The success in Bosnia represented for the Clinton administration an opportunity to highlight American power worldwide and served as an excellent asset in the 1996 presidential campaign, which placed Clinton for another 4 years in the White House. Clinton remained in high esteem in the European capitals. The Europeans saw in him a true dialogue partner who contributed significantly to the strengthening of the trans-Atlantic partnership, a leader who shared and consulted with the allies regardless of their capacity to intervene militarily. To France, the Clinton administration remains the most "European" of the past 20 years.

Once George W. Bush became president in 2000, the American foreign policy swiftly changed. The French-American relation would also change and the first fault lines were to appear in the trans-Atlantic relation (Franco-American Relations).

The idea of pre-emptive war became the foreign policy guideline of the first Bush administration. After the success in the Balkans it was time for new interventions and to export democracy to new territories. The topics of the hour were at the time the strengthening of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan -- a reason of anxiety for Washington, an increase in terrorist alert worldwide and the controversial relations of the Bush family with the Saudis. This was the moment when the most dramatic and shocking event of all took place: the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

All of Europe, y compris France, sided with the Americans in a show-off of solidarity never before seen. It was Europe's time to stand by its ally. The Bush administration had the

sympathy and support of the entire democratic world. Punishing the guilty was everyone's task. When the war on terror was launched, France was the first European country to offer sharing its own experience in counterterrorism. Inside ISAF, which was mandated by unanimity in the UNSC, France was present alongside Germany and the UK, the latter taking over leadership under NATO command⁹. But the "honeymoon" would not last (Franco-American Relations).

President Bush was already talking about Iraq and the problems caused by Saddam Hussein, when 9/11 took place. But the attacks delayed his plans for a while. The fight against terrorism and al-Qaida was a good opportunity to re-launch the topic in mid 2002 when the American intent to get involved in Iraq became reality. George W. Bush had his father's example. George Bush won the first Gulf War in 1991 and his son wanted to follow in his footsteps and somehow finish what his father had started (Haass, 2009). But his plan clashed into a wall of resistance on behalf of the European allies, especially France and Germany. As opposed to Afghanistan, they considered the situation to be completely different and an intervention in Iraq in their view was unfounded, unnecessary, unjustified and above all illegitimate. They were determined to stop it at all costs in the UNSC. They succeeded, but the US ignored the opposition in the UN and along with the UK and a few others launched a "coalition of the willing" and marched into Iraq (A.M. Slaughter).

The trans-Atlantic relation suffered its most serious divide in 50 years, the UN became again a blocked institution and the relations between the US and France narrowed down to a war of words. In the end, the Iraq war proved to be useless, unnecessary and with huge human and material costs (Haass, 2009).

Meanwhile, the growing disapproval of the Bush administration among the American public over the Iraq war and the slow progress in Afghanistan eroded the image of the Republicans as a whole. America had stretched militarily more than it could afford and without the support of the Europeans the weak links were becoming more obvious. The readiness of the European allies in front of the US diminished and France became the ideological enemy in the trans-Atlantic relation.

Although America was clearly a victim at 9/11, it did not play its cards well in the years that followed. The war on terror lasted far too long, with modest results. The serious loss of lives in Afghanistan and Iraq, both civilian and military, the controversy over the Guantanamo prison and the torture scandals the US army in Iraq was involved in, brought about heavy criticism from both inside and outside the US and seriously eroded the Bush administration. But change was on the way again.

In 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy wins the presidential elections in France. His foreign policy campaign topics were to revive the trans-Atlantic relation and to reposition France among the leaders of the democratic world. One of Sarkozy's first decisions was to reintegrate France in the military structures of NATO (The Economist, June 19th 2008).

Some French analysts consider that all this would have worked better for Sarkozy if Bush would have stayed on (M.H. Van Herpen). But having in view that in Washington big changes were about to happen and worldwide new challenges appeared, the French-American relation was slowly taking a new turn.

Obama was aware that he had inherited huge problems in the foreign policy area and that he could not handle them alone, without European support. That was one of the reasons that already in the campaign, as well as immediately after the inauguration, he went to Berlin and Paris to repair damages.

The US was involved in two complicated wars abroad. The majority of the Europeans had either pulled out, or had plans to do so. As far as the UN was concerned, Bush ignored the institution, which often displeased the Europeans. More so, he was accused that he totally disregarded it after he appointed John Bolton as his ambassador to the UN, following some allegedly aggressive remarks about the UN on his behalf¹⁰. But no good or bad came out of it, as the institution continued to remain blocked in the UNSC from the Iraq war onwards by the constant veto threat of one or the other of its members.

A new dialogue and revised partnership were about to emerge between France and the US with Obama and Sarkozy. These were going to redefine once more the trans-Atlantic partnership and the dynamics inside the UN.

For Europe it was clear from the very beginning that Sarkozy wanted to emulate elements from American politics (S. Meunier). The French president was known to be a great admirer of the US and that he wished to raise his internal approval rate through external actions which could show France's might and leadership on the world stage.

The financial crisis which exploded in the second half of 2008 kept the public opinion busy for most of 2009 with its eyes on the US. Although the crisis was softer in Europe, the business and political circles here remained much more preoccupied with its effects than with foreign policy.

But, the end of 2010 was going to bring unexpected surprises in international politics through the events triggered in Tunisia, which then swept through the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and took the EU, France and the US by surprise.

Redefining Interventionism

By comparison with what was about to follow in Libya and Syria, Tunisia and Egypt had a relatively smoother transition after the fall of dictators¹². The internal violence that escalated in Libya in the spring of 2011 has brought into light the need to take firm and quick decisions inside the UN regarding the use of force for humanitarian purposes. With the US overstretched in 2 military campaigns (Afghanistan and Iraq) and unable to lead another international action, with a very short window of opportunity and huge humanitarian stakes (as Ghadafi was attacking unarmed civilians) France stepped in and took over the negotiations in the UNCS for a resolution to authorize the use of force¹³. Although the Americans were as involved as always in the planning and the development of the resolution and the campaign itself, they strongly wanted to avoid a "new Rwanda" in North Africa (A.M. Slaughter). They were grateful to France for taking over leadership and for their success in negotiating the resolution. Even Italy, extremely reserved at first vis-à-vis a military intervention due to its traditional relations with Ghadafi's Libya, and Germany likewise reserved for reasons of domestic politics (regional pre-election), ended up denouncing the Libyan dictator or declaring that they were ready to join the operation through non-military means. Thus, in the initial absence of a European consensus, under French leadership, the void was filled and no delays or further compromise were needed. A prompt response from the international community came rapidly in Libya (S. Patrick) .

Another conflict that tested international intervention, the power of the UN, but most of all France's global influence in the spring of 2011 was the one in Ivory Coast. Beyond the intervention itself to topple president Laurent Gbagbo who refused to concede power

following elections, the novelty consisted in the direct involvement of the peacekeeping forces in airstrikes launched due to the violation of the UNSC resolution in place on the ground. More so, the UN, through the voice of its Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, requested France to intervene in the resolution of the conflict in the Ivory Coast, relying on the French troops already positioned on the ground (P. Rater).

Analysts believe that by taking over leadership in Libya and the Ivory Coast, France managed to come to life from its inertia and absence which described its attitudes over Tunisia and Egypt. It also fundamentally changed its image after the firm opposition of president Chirac to the American intervention in Iraq in the spring of 2003 (P. Rater)

Tunisia and Egypt inspired the entire region and a great part of the Arab world to break the barriers of fear and unleashed a pragmatic optimism that change was indeed possible (K. Almond).

What Libya in turn inspired was the strengthening of the UN in managing international conflicts. Even if the setting up of a new doctrine for international intervention is still awaited, a new type of international intervention is gaining ground (R.E. Hunter); a type of intervention in which the US is no absolute leader anymore and France appears as a new point of influence.

The idea of a new doctrine regarding interventionism is not entirely new. Robert E. Hunter makes reference to it by reminding us that in the fall of 2005 at the UN headquarters in New York, on the occasion of the annual General Assembly, a call to support a new doctrine called Responsibility to Protect took place. The idea behind it was the protection of civilian population in front of atrocities committed by their own leaders and was initially promoted by Bernard Kouchner, until recently French foreign minister. Then, in January 2009, the UN Secretary General released a document referring to the implementation of the doctrine R2P¹⁴. Although not yet finalized, R2P could for sure be considered to have been applied to Libya and its civilian population (R.E. Hunter).

Today, some of its elements take shape along with the interventions in Libya and the Ivory Coast. The idea according to which civil wars are just an "internal affair" and that states are entirely responsible for what is taking place inside their borders¹⁵ is starting to become passé. Although intervention in internal civil conflicts has been rare and late (Rwanda and Bosnia remain "dazzling" examples in this regard), it seems that there is a model taking shape those days in what "protective interventionism" is concerned. According to Hunter this model has a few features which both the US and its European allies seem to be taking into account. Among those, the presence of civilian casualties, danger of war crimes against civilians, danger of genocide, desirably the existence of a UN resolution to legitimize intervention, the existence of at least one state to take over leadership, the conflict must take place in EU's and NATO's vital space. The involvement of other states or regional organizations in the area (The Arab League, The Union of African States) may offer a larger support and a greater justification for the intervention (S. Patrick). It would also be desirable that the conflict does not create interference between the humanitarian purpose of the intervention and other vital interests (political, economic or strategic).

Far from being perfect, those principles may, in time, lay the foundation for future interventions similar to those in Bosnia, Kosovo, or more recently Libya. The problem may be that sometimes the need for stability is greater than the achievement of justice. In Bahrain, for example, the US and its allies chose stability and non-involvement, as opposed to Libya, where they chose military protective action.

Another missing element of the doctrine is that of an exit strategy. In Libya, for instance, there seems to be no such thing as there is no medium term plan to end the air campaign or start the post-conflict peace building process, facts which may overshadow the good intentions of the intervention (R.E. Hunter).

Along with those discussions, comes the one of separating the US and the EU in carrying out the interventions, the so called "labor division". The US through its Vice President, Joseph Biden, said that NATO can "manage Libya" without the US (AFP, April 19, 2011), more so that Washington has already handed over the command of the operation to the Alliance a few days after the commencing of the air strikes.

On the other hand, Libya could have been a very good test for ESDP16, but despite France's leading role in the front line and the promotion of independent European interventions, the EU continues to be divided. That is why UN resolutions remain essential in mandating international operations.

Interventionism whereto?

The difference between the UN in the 90s and today are huge. In the past the organization played oftentimes a symbolic role in managing international crisis. Today, it seems the UN is being restored to being the supreme body to authorize international intervention. The main difference is that it has moved from passive to active and it seems that international legislation is finally applied.

But behind those changes there is also the work of the trans-Atlantic partnership and of a much improved French-American relationship which has evolved spectacularly. Today, we see a significant shift from the "freedom fries" 17 moment to a mature collaboration and bilateral dialogue. We are also witnessing the beginning of a new labor division inside NATO between the Americans and the Europeans in what interventions are concerned. American leadership has not disappeared, but responsibilities are shared much clearly (as with France in Libya). More so, due to the bad image the US has in the Middle East and the Arab world in general, France offers a great "make-up". The EU remains divided and still unable to speak with one voice, as well as with a relatively modest profile in foreign and defense policy despite some obvious progress at the legislative level (such as the European External Action Service). Germany remains the economic engine of the EU, but still hesitant when it comes to world affairs, where it is still struggling to define a role for itself after many years of caution¹⁸. In light of the newly strengthened French-American relation, on the European side of the trans-Atlantic relation one can notice a slow shift from the Franco-German traditional nucleus to a Franco-British one.

As far as Sarkozy's is concerned, he has been accused of "Americanizing" French foreign policy (M.H. Van Herpen). His international standpoint looks extremely similar to that of Bill Clinton in 1995, or George W. Bush's in 2003. In those cases, both American presidents were in the last year of their first mandate and speculated on successes in foreign policy (especially through military interventions) to help them make a go for a second term in the White House, on the background of a drop in polls at home. At the end of the day, Bosnia proved a success for Clinton, while Iraq took a heavy toll on the Republicans, despite Bush's victory in 2004. But regardless of the calculations, the idea that foreign policy can help in the internal election process remains. Sarkozy, who according to French analysts, delivered much less than he promised in the elections (M.H. Van

Herpen), and who is nowadays witnessing a dramatic drop in the polls, is trying to use France's leading role abroad to boost his numbers. The interventions in Libya and the Ivory Coast may have served him as means for domestic political ends (The French White Paper on Defense and National Security). One thing is for sure though, it is the first time in 20 years when France is taking over the management of 2 major international crises in front of the US, although they are being seconded closely by the Americans.

Across the Atlantic, Obama finds himself in an exactly opposite situation. As well in a pre-election year, he must on the other hand play foreign intervention as low as possible (C. Gventner Ward). The American public is tired of exhausting military interventions abroad in conflicts they feel they have nothing to do with. Even being second in Libya, Obama was heavily criticized by the Republican majority in Congress, the same majority that approved the Iraq intervention in 2003. That is why, Obama does not need to try to obtain a new "success story" externally. Actually, the total absence of one may serve him best.

The question that arises though is "what do all those things mean for the UN in this new decade of the 21st century"? A drop in the pressure the US puts on the UNSC may be an opportunity for the institution to revive, work consistently for the implementation of international legislation and manage successfully international crises (S. Patrick).

An increase in France's role worldwide may in turn offer a trans-Atlantic balance and a true feeling that the US is not going it alone in NATO, the UN and other international fore.

In addition, France's bilateral relations with Russia and China may have a benefic effect on the decision making process at the international level, as it was seen with the intervention in Libya when France secured the adoption of the UN resolution.

The UN may thus re-establish itself as the credible player to legitimize the functioning of international justice wherever and whenever needed.

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² For example: The verbal exchanges between Dominique de Villepin, French foreign minister in 2003, and Colin Powell, US Secretary of State, on the eve of the Iraq war in the UNSC, when Powell was sent by the Bush administration to present evidence for the existence of WMD and the link between the Saddam regime and al-Qaida as means for justifying an American intervention; the comment of Jacques Chirac, French president, in early 2003 when he said as an indirect reply to Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defense, regarding the laudable support of the states of "new Europe", that those countries missed a good opportunity to keep quiet. "Old Europe" at the time (mainly France) was considered hostile by the US for its opposition and refusal to act. In February 2003, French President Chirac warned in particular Romania and Bulgaria, who were negotiating membership to the EU, that they behaved irresponsibly when they signed the support letter for the US to go to war in Iraq, having in view that their position regarding membership was delicate as it was. „If they wish to reduce their chances to join Europe, they couldn't have chosen a better way" said the French President, *Curierul National*, Anul 8, nr. 3652, 19.02.2003

³ Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834), French aristocrat and military officer who fought in the American War

of Independence. His name is linked to numerous towns and monuments in the US

4 Pierre Charles L'Enfant (1754-1825), French born American architect and civil engineer best known for designing the street layout in Washington DC, but also for his involvement in the American War of Independence where he served under the command of General Lafayette.

5 In 1997 at the NATO Summit in Madrid, France fought until the last minute for Romania and Slovenia to be accepted by the Alliance, despite the already made decision of Washington not to accept more than 3 members in the first wave. Finally the enlargement took place on America's terms.

6 The International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda (ICTY and ICTR) ruled that genocide took place in both cases.

7 The UN Charter, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml>.

8 Resolution UNSC 1244 of June 10, 1999 mandated the entrance of KFOR in the province of Kosovo, thus legitimizing the air campaign of March earlier the same year, <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/ug90610a.htm>

9 Resolution UNSC 1386 of December 2001 mandated ISAF to enter Afghanistan <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sc7248.doc.htm>

10 John Bolton, the US permanent representative to the UN appointed in 2005, declared once, before holding this position, that "There is no such thing as the United Nations. There is only the international community, which can only be led by the only remaining superpower, which is the United States." He also said: "If the UN Secretariat building in New York lost ten storeys, it wouldn't make a bit of difference.", *The Sunday Times*, March 8, 2005, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article421888.ece

11 Middle East and North Africa, geographical abbreviation in relation to the „Arab spring“

12 The popular protests that started in Tunisia at the end of 2010 and in Egypt at the beginning of 2011 have been followed by transitional regime changes and modest steps towards free elections.

13 Resolution UNSC 1973 of March 17, 2011, regarding a military intervention in Libya, contains in the title the following wording: „taking all necessary measures for protecting civilians“. It was one of the quickest resolutions adopted and implemented in the history of the UN, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc10200.doc.htm>

14 R2P is short for Responsibility to Protect.

15 Reference to the Westphalia doctrine according to which civil wars are entirely managed by the state, with no basis for external intervention, national sovereignty being absolute.

16 European Security and Defense Policy

17 „French fries“ were temporarily banned in the US in 2003, following France's opposition to the Iraq war, and replaced with "freedom fries".

18 Germany's abstention in the UNSC on the Libya air intervention show a cautious attitude on the international arena on the country's behalf

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