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Julia Klohs and Arne Niemann

Abstract

This study compares the US and EU security strategies of the first decade of the 21st century. Our paper focuses on whether the security strategies of both entities are converging or diverging. We argue that the literature has so far failed to compare US and EU security strategies across time, a gap that we seek to close. The paper applies a qualitative-explorative design. Our empirical (discourse and content) analysis is conducted with the data analysis software Atlas.ti. The main finding of our paper is that the US and EU security strategies are very similar in terms of overall objectives, values and declared threats. When it comes to approaching these threats, one still notices substantial differences. Overall, we conclude that the two security strategies have been converging over time.

Keywords: discourse analysis; European Union (EU); European Security Strategy (ESS); security; transatlantic relations; United States (US); US National Security Strategy (NSS); qualitative content analysis.

1. Introduction

Arguably the best reference for the strategic thinking of a country – or supranational organisation for that matter – is its security strategy. Both the US and the EU have formulated their broad foreign and security policy guidelines in official documents. Although security strategies are neither legally nor politically binding, they can be regarded as the guiding framework for all the external actions of the US and the EU (Skiba 2004: 3). Commonly, a security strategy determines an entity's objectives, priorities and means by referring to the broader domestic, regional and global context in the political, economic and military spheres (cf. Toje 2010: 176-177). While the US government has been obliged to issue a national security strategy since the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act – foremost in order to communicate its vision to Congress, and thus legitimise its requests for resources – the EU's first security strategy "only" dates back to 2003. At the time, the EU's division over whether to join the US-led military operation in Iraq was an important incident in an ongoing process of developing a common European security and defence policy, which demonstrated the need for a common EU strategy.

The issuance of the first European Security Strategy (ESS) has attained substantial academic attention (Haine 2004; Quille 2004; Toje 2005; Whitman 2006). Scholars also quickly began to compare the security strategies of the US and the EU – the two most representative "pillars" of the transatlantic partnership (e.g. Brimmer 2004; Riemer and Hauser 2004; Rickli 2004; Skiba 2004; Berenskoetter 2005; Gersdorf 2005). Interestingly, the studies comparing the US National Security Strategy (NSS) 2002 with the ESS came at a time when a much noted book suggested that American and Europeans should be symbolically set on different planets when it comes to major strategic and international issues (Kagan 2004). Although there is quite some work comparing individual strategies with each other, a systematic comparison between US and EU security strategies across time is still lacking, an issue that we seek to address in this study. Tied to this task is our main research question of whether (and to what extent) the security strategies between the two entities are either converging or diverging. As an intermediate step towards this research question, we seek to analyse the similarities and differences between the various security strategies. Our individual results concerning the similarities and differences are essential to make inferences with regard to the larger question of convergence or divergence between the US and EU security strategies. Even prior to that, we discuss what may be sensible criteria for comparing security strategies in the first place.

With regard to the US documents we analyse the NSS 2002, the NSS 2006 – both devised under the Presidency of Bush Jr. – and the current NSS 2010 issued by the Obama administration. On the EU side, apart from the ESS 2003, there have been attempts to issue a new EU strategy, but instead it came up with a Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy (RI-ESS) in 2008 that will also be examined. Our empirical (discourse and content) analysis of these documents has been conducted with the data analysis software Atlas.ti.

The paper is structured as follows: The next section provides a brief overview of the evolving transatlantic security structure. The second section discusses the literature on US and EU security strategies. The third section specifies our research design and operationalisation. The paper will proceed with the empirical analysis of the US and EU security strategies in sections four (similarities) and five (differences). Finally, we draw conclusions from our findings.

2. The evolving transatlantic security structure

This section elaborates the changes within the transatlantic security structure, resulting from the end of the Cold War, 9/11 and a rising Europeanisation of security policy. The transatlantic relationship can theoretically be linked to the relationship between the US and the EU, the US and select European countries, or between NATO and the EU. This can be traced throughout history

and has to do with both one's perspective and perception of the USA's counterparts and also the recognition of the EU as an actor.[1]

While some have argued that "in the first two decades of the post-Cold War era, transatlantic relations have remained remarkably unaffected by the changes in the international system" (Toje 2009: 1), there are indications for change. First, after the demise of the Soviet Union, policy analysts have predicted a century of new, complex and very dangerous threats. Indeed, after coping with the East-West conflict, the world faces new threats, such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and failed states. "September 11 has become a symbol and metaphor for the new perils looming on the horizon" (Asmus and Pollack 2002: 4). These attacks on US ground together with the attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) forced the US and EU to rethink the purpose and direction of the transatlantic security relationship.

Second, following the terror attacks of September 11, the US "war on terror" under the Presidency of George W. Bush led to a temporary deterioration of the transatlantic relationship, caused mainly by conflicting views concerning the intervention in Iraq (e.g. Daalder 2003; Pond 2004). "The run-up to the 2003 Iraq war (…) became embroiled in what would become the biggest crisis across the Atlantic since the end of the Cold War" (Toje 2008a: 115). This diplomatic-political crisis over the war in Iraq not only caused transatlantic, but also intra-European disputes, as some EU member states were willing to join an US-led invasion of Iraq, while others were decidedly against the war. The transatlantic relationship suffered heavily during Bush's first term and improved slightly during his second term.

Third, the question about the EU as a coherent security policy actor leads us to another aspect of change in the transatlantic security architecture. For decades European security policy was entirely based on NATO, and for the US, NATO represented the primary institution for interacting with Europe (Zaborowski 2011: 106). Since the Treaty of Maastricht we can witness increasing integration in the area of security policy in the EU towards a Common Foreign and Security Policy (Dover 2010: 240). From the late 1990s the security and defence dimension of this policy was substantially strengthened, starting with the Anglo-French meeting in St. Malo in 1998. Subsequently, the EU began to equip its European Security and Defence Policy (ESPD) with military tools and established for instance the European Rapid Reaction Force and the European Battle Groups (Menon 2009). From 2003 to 2014, the EU undertook about 30 missions under the umbrella of the ESDP, with tasks and missions ranging from the support of security sector reform to ensuring compliance with peace agreements. In 2003, the EU took a remarkable step by devising the European Security Strategy (ESS), "the first official EU document dedicated to formulating a common security strategy among member-states" (Berenskoetter 2005: 72). The Treaty of Lisbon marks another important step in the development of this policy with further institutionalisation taking place, for example through the enhanced role of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (now with important agenda-setting powers) and the creation of a EU diplomatic service, the European External Action Service (Duke 2009; Vanhoonacker and Reslow 2010). The growing Europeanisation of security policy also, to some extent, seems to have affected the transatlantic security architecture, with some analysts contemplating the ESDP's potential ability to compete with NATO in the European security space (cf. Varwick 2006; Diedrichs 2005).

A final aspect worth mentioning in the context of the evolving transatlantic security structure is the rise of the BRICS and especially China, and the perception that the Asia-Pacific region has become the key driver of international politics. This has given rise to the suggestion that the US may increasingly turn eastwards, culminating in a "Pacific century" of US foreign policy (Clinton 2011). While there has been some concern with regard to this prospect in Europe, the EU itself has increasingly engaged in so-called strategic partnerships with countries like China, India,

[1] For further reading on the question of the EU actorness see: Sjöstedt (1977); Jupille and Caporaso (1998); Bretherton and Vogler (2006); Niemann and Bretherton (2013), Huigens and Niemann (2011); Groen and Niemann (2013).

South Korea, Brazil and South Africa (Renard 2011). To what extent these developments will have an impact on transatlantic (security) relations remains to be seen.

3. US and EU security strategies: state of research

This section summarises the current state of research regarding US and EU security strategies. It is notable that beyond references to the work of Kagan (2004), the vast majority of work is neither theoretically nor methodologically driven, but rather descriptive.[2] Subsequently, the findings in the literature with regard to the various security strategies are outlined, starting with the comparison of the NSS 2002 and ESS 2003.

NSS 2002 – ESS 2003

Most of the literature dealing with security strategies compares the NSS 2002 and the ESS 2003. This is reasonable, since the latter constitutes the first ever European security strategy, while the NSS 2002 is seen as the answer to the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Berenskoetter 2005: 73). The tenor in scholarly debate differs remarkably from Kagan's assumptions also due to the fact that most scholars do not exclusively focus on military and power issues (e.g. Sieg 2005). The main criteria used in this comparison are: values and objectives; threat perception; priorities; means; context; security concept; responsibility; world view and history.

Most commentators see the strategies as surprisingly close to each other. Especially in terms of *values*, *objectives* and *threat* assessment, scholars identified a large agreement. Yet the strategies differ strongly in their *means*. Scholars identified a very similar appraisal of aspects in both strategies, such as peace, human rights, democracy and a free market (Krause 2005: 47-59; Rickli 2004: 56). Additionally, the majority of scholars on both sides of the Atlantic agree that the strategies share a similar threat assessment (Riemer and Hauser 2004: 60).[3]

Other authors differentiate more by taking into consideration the importance given to each threat in the documents. In this regard, they assert a differing intensity of threats in the NSS 2002 and ESS 2003. Biscop, for instance, states that "[t]he same threats may have been identified, but the intensity of the threat perception is certainly different" (Biscop 2005: 110; cf. Berenskoetter 2005: 88-89; Skiba 2004: 10). Meanwhile, there is agreement that the US and EU have very diverse methods of achieving their objectives. "The NSS stresses the significance of hard power and military solutions, based on the option of acting unilaterally and pre-emptively if necessary" (Gersdorf 2005: 23). Whereas the ESS reflects a comprehensive approach focusing on a broad set of instruments and applies a preventive and multilateral approach, it points out the significance of international institutions, especially the United Nations. It also tends to stress soft power solutions that integrate diplomatic, economic and military resources (ibid.: 23-24; Diedrichs 2005: 62).[4]

These issues lead the analysis directly to another crucial feature, namely the *context*. To conduct an adequate analysis, the vague tone of the ESS or its lack in military capabilities needs to be seen in its specific European context. Above all the political and institutional context, within

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2 A couple of scholars conducted a qualitative analysis for their comparison of the security strategies (Skiba 2004; Riemer and Hauser 2004), led/inspired by Philipp Mayring's qualitative content analysis.

3 See also: Brimmer (2004: 33), Diedrichs (2005: 62), Gegout (2005: 8), Gersdorf (2005: 14) and Rickli (2004: 59).

4 See also: Riemer/Hauser (2004: 60-62), Brimmer (2004: 34-35), Rickli (2004: 57-59), Biscop (2005: 109-110), Skiba (2004: 17-18), Berenskoetter 2005 (88-89) and Quille (2004: 422-424).

which security strategies are devised, is often neglected by authors.[5] Thus, a careful review of the literature reveals a use of different comparative criteria and definitions which leads automatically to different outcomes. By leaving out the priorities given to each threat or the context of each strategy scholars reach differing conclusions.

NSS 2006 – ESS 2003 and RI-ESS 2008

There are far fewer publications dealing with the second NSS of the Bush Jr. administration from 2006 and the ESS 2003 and/or RI-ESS 2008. No decisively novel criteria were added to the comparison of these two documents. Apart from stressing the substantial consensus with regard to basic policy objectives, values, and threat perceptions between the documents, authors also account for substantial differences concerning security policy priorities and the means to implement them. Here scholars again make reference to Robert Kagan, mainly highlighting the similarities to his claims, for example concerning the very considerable difference between the US and the EU in terms of defence budgets as a reflection of different priority settings (e.g. Varwick 2006: 4-5).

NSS 2006 – RI-ESS 2008

Biscop and Serfaty compare the NSS 2006 with the RI-ESS 2008. In terms of similarities they assert similar *values* and *objectives* (Biscop/Serfaty 2009: 7). However, as in prior comparisons of the NSS 2002 and the ESS 2003, Biscop and Serfaty discover diverse *priorities*, *geographical orientations* and differences over the use of force (ibid.: 11-13).

NSS 2010 – ESS 2003 and RI-ESS 2008

There is only one paper comparing the NSS 2010 and ESS 2003 (plus RI-ESS 2008). However, this already short study also includes NATO's and Russia's latest strategy documents and primarily refers to the ESS 2003, while referencing the RI-ESS 2008 only once. Hedborg applies three criteria for her comparison: *values/objectives*, *threat* perception and the *definition of power*. She claims that both strategies differ in their *values* and *objectives*, while ascertaining a similar *threat* perception. She concludes her brief and descriptive (rather than analytical) comparison by suggesting that "the four strategies compared in this paper are at the same time very different and very much the same" (Hedborg 2012: 13).

Overall, there are some shortcomings in the literature. One has to be very careful with presumed similarities or differences in the strategies due to different research approaches. For instance, the criteria *values*, *objectives* and *threat* perception have revealed that similarities may only be superficial and that a deeper analysis brings out subtle, but relevant differences, as one can see by additionally analysing the *priority* given to each *threat*. In addition, there are unclear statements as to whether the EU or Europe is meant or whether Europe serves as an equivalent for the EU (cf. Kagan 2004). A coherent study comparing the three recent US NSS' with the ESS 2003 and the RI-ESS 2008 does not exist. Furthermore, the literature lacks a coherent research

[5] Notable exceptions are (Biscop (2005), Skiba (2004), Sieg (2005), Quille (2004), Berenskoetter (2005), and Gersdorf (2005). The latter two particularly emphasise that the NSS is seen as the answer to the terror attacks of September 11 and the situations in Afghanistan and Iraq, whereas the ESS is a united document by the member states after the crisis over Iraq, in order to foster its role as a global player in security and foreign policy circumstances (Berenskoetter 2005: 73; Gersdorf 2005: 10). These authors take, for instance, the different institutional setting into consideration.

approach that would allow discovering a possible shift from the first NSS 2002 to the current NSS 2010 with the European documents. It is difficult to postulate a divergence or convergence of the strategies by consulting studies from different authors using different criteria, focuses and methods. In sum, a considerable amount of literature remains largely descriptive and/or lacks a clear theoretical and methodological conceptualisation. This paper seeks to contribute towards closing this research gap.

4. Research design

Our analysis is not restricted through the frame of a (rigid) theory, in order to ensure an open-minded investigation of this unexplored field. Since the focus is on the official discourse expressed in formal documents, a discourse analysis will be conducted with the aid of a qualitative content analysis. The discourse analytical tool chosen, which combines both strands of discourse analysis and content analysis, is a computer software called Atlas.ti. A computer-assisted analysis with Atlas.ti allows for both conducting and documenting the category system applied to the texts as well as a transparent and systematic qualitative research approach.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse is generally described as written or oral communication sequences and practices associated with a particular object (Keller et al. 2011: 11; Burnham et al. 2008: 250). In a more demonstrative /vivid manner, discourses have been described as frames or institutions (here broadly defined) in their own right that shape actors' "boundaries of the possible" (Jachtenfuchs 1997: 47) and "guide political action by denoting appropriate or plausible behaviour in light of an agreed environment" (Rosamond 2000: 120). Discourse analysis points to the existence of hegemonic conceptions, elements which have acquired the status of knowledge, for which reason they are located largely outside the realm of the contestable. Language here constitutes the central element through which the dominant (policy) frames[6] are generated.

It has been noted that "discourses do not exist 'out there' in the world; rather, they are structures that are actualized in their regular use by people of discursively ordered relationships" (Milliken 1999: 231). The terms assigned to specific issues concentrate the attention on certain elements and lead to the neglect of others. Frameworks of meanings are established through the selection of certain words over others. Put differently, "discursive interventions contribute towards establishing a particular structure of meaning-in-use which works as a cognitive roadmap […]." Such structures create pressure for adaptation on all actors involved (Wiener 2004: 201). Discourses thus "work to define and to enable, and also to silence and to exclude, for example, by limiting and restricting authorities and experts to some groups, but not others, endorsing a certain common sense, but making other modes of categorizing and judging meaningless, impracticable, inadequate or otherwise disqualified" (Milliken 1999: 229). The discourse hence interprets events happening in the real world and thus provides a structure within which actors formulate their preferences and develop their positions.

Systematic discourse analyses have so far been absent from the study of security strategies, and qualitative content analyses have also been rare. However, as Dunn and Mauer (2006) have pointed out, discourse analytical approaches can be highly beneficial for studying security strategies. There is no common understanding in International Relations concerning the best method of studying discourse (Milliken 1999: 226). Nevertheless one can make use of the

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6 "A frame is a perspective from which an amorphous, ill-defined problematic situation can be made sense and acted upon." Policy frames are shared understandings concerning a given issue, which reflect actors' perceptions and definitions of the issue (Rein and Schön 1991, 264).

discourse analytical toolbox in order to examine the possible convergence or divergence of EU and US security strategies. This toolbox contains the search for frequencies and regularities of statements that occur in the documents.[7] It contains the search for significant change of central words, leading terms and keywords in the discourse. Over time it will be interesting to probe the intended purpose and use of such catch phrases in the documents. Through this complex linguistic bottom-up process one can approach discursive structures, which reveal patterns and regularities, namely the shape of the discourse (Niehr/Böke 2008: 362-365).

A systematic analysis of discourse usually involves a standardisation of the evaluation through a category system. However, one needs to be very careful with the category system, because subtle distinctions on a discursive dimension could be left undetected in a rough grid. This would in turn not meet up with the assumptions made by an open and dynamic discourse analysis perspective. Therefore, a flexible and interpretative category system is used, which is able to draw fine connection lines between the categories as well. This discourse analytical category system will be presented below (Schwab-Trapp 2008: 173).

In sum, through conducting a discourse analysis of US and EU security strategy documents from different time frames we seek to uncover, describe and make comprehensible (neglected) trends in order to systematically analyse the similarities and differences in the security strategies and to zoom in on the question of convergence or divergence in transatlantic security policy.

Qualitative Content Analysis

In order to conduct a discourse analysis embodied in texts, complementary instruments are recommended. A qualitative content analysis represents a useful analytical tool for such a purpose (e.g. Baumann 2006). In comparison to discourse analysis, a qualitative content analysis presumes persistence in meaning that can be traced back to occurrences of terms. Yet the discourse analytical meaning and value of a text is only recognisable when it is seen as part of a whole social process. Hence, a discourse analytical approach cannot be restricted to a pure content analysis of data (Waldschmidt 2008: 157-158).

Content analysis can be compatible and complementary for a discourse analysis as one moves from a pure quantitative approach of counting to a more complex and flexible approach, which allows for change of meaning and involves the context. The creation of a codebook will not follow the traditional content analysis that works with analytical categories and the research material appropriated to them. Instead, the discourse analytical approach will be pursued and explorative categories will be created, since a-priori created categories may fail to cope with the richness and shifts in the security documents under investigation (cf. Hardy et al. 2004: 20-21).

Atlas.ti

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software does not perform qualitative analyses, but rather helps to structure and organise data (Diaz-Bone/Schneider 2008: 491-492). Additionally, a well-done computer-aided qualitative data analysis raises the validity of the work (Friese 2012: 1). Atlas.ti has been chosen because it enables elementary characteristics of openness and flexibility (Diaz-Bone/Schneider 2008: 501-503). This is suitable for our research purpose as it allows us to code and recode in a dynamic way during the research process and assures a high degree of transparency (as well as replicability) concerning our research findings.

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[7] This facet is recommended in Foucault's discourse analytical toolbox. However, the study will not strictly follow the concept of any one particular author. Moreover, it is particularly hard to pursue Foucault's execution on discourse analysis, largely because he excludes the author and context of the discourse analytical material which is out of keeping with our purpose and approach (cf. Martschukat 2008: 73-74).

Operationalisation

The empirical research material embraces three US and two EU documents within the time frame from 2002 until 2010.The central point of a qualitative content analysis is the formation of categories. The category system, i.e. the codebook, reflects the combination of a discourse analytical approach with a qualitative content analysis. At the same time, further modification during the research process remains an open possibility. The codebook is both conceptually-guided and deductive – drawing from existent categories derived from reviewing the relevant literature – and also inductive, i.e. empirically-guided and reflecting the particular research objectives. In a pre-test we probed whether the categories and coding scheme work in terms of reliability, validity, exclusiveness[8] and completeness (cf. Brosius et al. 2009: 168-170). Overall, 158 pages were coded (US documents: 132 pages, EU documents: 26 pages). The following codebook is applied to Atlas.ti in order analyse the documents guided by the categories covered.

Table 1: Codebook

Source	Categories	Description	Anchor example
literature review (individually *modified* for this paper)	***Values***	what is declared as a relevant or desirable value	"America must stand firmly for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits of the absolute power of the state; free speech" (NSS 2002: 3).
	Objectives	what is declared as an objective	"The aim of this strategy is to help make the world not just safer but better" (NSS 2002: 1).
	Threats	what is declared as a threat	"Many of the problems we face – from the threat of pandemic disease, to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to terrorism, to human trafficking, to natural disasters – reach across borders" (NSS 2006: preamble).
	Priorities	which priority is given to threats and challenges	"Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is potentially the greatest threat to our security" (ESS 2003: 3).
	Means	which means are mentioned to address objectives, threats and challenges	"Dealing with terrorism may require a mixture of intelligence, police, judicial, military and other means" (ESS 2003: 7).

[8] The criterion of exclusiveness of the categories has to some extent been relativised after the pre-test, as distinct categories did not prove practical and realistic in the given context.

	security concept	references to a narrow (politico-military dimension) or broad (politico-military-economic-societal-environmental dimension) concept	"Security and development nexus" (RI-ESS 2008: 8).
	world view	references to a perception of the world	"We live in a world that holds brighter prospects but also greater threats than we have known" (ESS 2003: 6).
own work	***Approach***	How can the set of declared means be categorised; what kind of overall *approach* is used	"The United States must reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend our nation and our interests, yet we will also seek to adhere to standards that govern the use of force" (NSS 2010: 22).
	Challenges	what is declared as a challenge	"Challenges like climate change, pandemic disease, and resource scarcity demand new innovation" (NSS 2010: 30).
	possible partner	references to already existent or desirable partners	"The transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a formidable force for good in the world" (ESS 2003: 13).

Source: own work

4. Similarities between the US and EU security strategies

In order to examine the overarching question concerning the convergence and divergence of the security strategies, we have structured our analysis so as to carve out the similarities and differences between the strategies across time, beginning with the earlier documents and then working through to the recent documents. Within each of the sub-sections on "similarities" and "differences" we have thus structured our analysis along three distinct time frames: (1) time period 2002-2005: comparison of the US NSS 2002 and ESS 2003; (2) time period 2006-2009: comparison of the US NSS 2006 and ESS 2003 and RI 2008; (3) time period 2010-2013: comparison of the US NSS 2010 and ESS 2003 and RI 2008.

4.1. Period 2002-2005

NSS 2002 – ESS 2003

The empirical analysis has shown that the NSS 2002 and ESS 2003 are very similar in their overall *objectives, values* and *threat perception*. Subsequently, each category will be examined and documented with evidence from the data. In terms of *objectives* the NSS 2002 declares: "The aim of the strategy is to help make the world not just safer but better" (NSS 2002: 1). This general aim of the NSS 2002 is also similarly visible already in the title of the ESS "A secure Europe in a better world" (ESS 2003). The emphasis on a not only safer, but also better world is a significant connection made in both security strategies. For any further analysis it is fundamental to comprehend the mutual starting position of both strategies. Both the US and EU security strategies emphasise political, economic and social matters in order to make the world *better*. Complementarily, both strategies address traditional defence matters in order to make the world *safer.* Hence, the EU claims: "the best protection for our security is a world of well-governed democratic states" (ESS 2003: 10). Also similarly announced in the NSS: "Our goals on the path of progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity" (NSS 2002: 1).

While analysing and coding the strategies, the interrelation between *objectives* and *values* is significant. The analysis showed that both strategies mainly strive for value-oriented goals. This finding goes along with the conviction that only a *better* world can become a *safer* world as outlined above. Thus, the protection of human rights and spread of democracy are not only objectives, but also *means* in the security strategies related to *values* (ESS 2003: 10; NSS 2002: preamble). Although this pattern "to defend its security and to promote values" (ESS 2003: 6) linked to its *objectives* can be found in both strategies, the tone and frequency differs remarkably. The handling of values in the NSS has, contrary to the ESS, a very normative, missionary and universal approach: "These values of freedom are right and true for every person, and every society" (NSS 2002: preamble). Yet both employ positive value-loaded concepts, which become obvious by mentioning terms like democracy, peace, freedom, prosperity, human rights throughout the strategies.

The perception of *threats* is also similar in both strategies. The most important similarity in perceiving the security environment lies in the understanding that "[t]oday, the distinction between domestic and foreign affairs is diminishing" (NSS 2002: 31). This is analogously stated in the ESS: "The post Cold War environment is one of increasingly open borders in which the internal and external aspects of security are indissolubly linked" (ESS 2003: 2). Terrorism and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are central in both strategies. The ESS mentions terrorism first on its list of threats, followed by WMD, although they are not elaborated in as much detail as in the NSS 2002 (ESS 2003: 3). The NSS states: "The gravest danger to freedom lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology" (NSS 2002: 13). Similarly the ESS indicates: "The most frightening scenario is one in which terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction" (ESS 2003: 4). Hence, the classification of terrorism as a threat, the significance and priority given to it and its connection to WMD is similar. Furthermore, the ESS adds regional conflicts, state failure and organised crime, such as drugs and human trafficking, to its key threats (ESS 2003: 4). The NSS also dedicates a whole chapter (IV) to regional conflicts, which are seen as a danger for human dignity (NSS 2002: 9). However, while the ESS in this context speaks about *failed states*, the NSS 2002 deals with *rogue states*.

4.2. Period: 2006-2009

Between 2006 and 2009 both the US and EU have published a new strategy document. In 2006 the former Bush administration issued its second NSS and in 2008 the EU released the RI-ESS 2008.

NSS 2006 – ESS 2003

As in the comparison between the NSS 2002 and the ESS 2003, our analysis revealed the same categories (*objectives, values,* and *threats*) as similar between the NSS 2006 and ESS, with one

important addition: *challenges*. As already stated in the prior comparison, both the US and the EU stand for general *values*, like freedom, peace and democracy. A pattern, which illustrated a strong interrelation between *values* and *objectives*, was diagnosed in the previous comparison. One could state that this pattern showed an emphasis on value-oriented objectives. This exact pattern was also detected in the NSS 2006. This particular pattern became even more pronounced compared to the NSS 2002. Additionally, analysis of the strategies produced a striking finding on a linguistic dimension: freedom and democracy are mentioned significantly more often than already in the NSS 2002. The US shows itself to be well aware of the power of words and ideas, even more than in the prior NSS, as illustrated in the following instance: "[f]rom the beginning, the War on Terror has been both a battle of arms and a battle of ideas. […] In the long run, winning the war in terror means winning the battle of ideas" (NSS 2006: 9).

The merge of external and internal aspects is also characteristic for the mutual *threat* perception in the US and EU security strategies, which became even more similar with the NSS 2006's explicit addition of *challenges* to its general concept. Globalisation and its ensuing challenges are a central part of the ESS 2003. However, globalisation was not even mentioned once in the NSS 2002. The ESS listed poverty, disease, hunger, malnutrition, AIDS, pandemics, resources and energy dependence as its challenges (ESS 2003: 2-3). Indeed, these aspects have also been mentioned in the NSS 2002, but not declared as threats and only presented as associated variables in the context of developing countries or the economy (NSS 2002: 17-25). The NSS 2006, in turn, lists these aspects in one sentence alongside other well-known threats already in its preamble. "Many of the problems we face – from the threat of pandemic disease, to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to terrorism, to human trafficking, to natural disasters" (NSS 2006: preamble).

Furthermore, the Bush administration declares: "The proliferation of nuclear weapons poses the greatest threat to our national security" (NSS 2006: 19). In comparison, the NSS 2002 phrased it this way: "The gravest danger our nation faces lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology" (NSS 2002: preamble). This reformulation can be interpreted as both a similarity and a difference to the ESS 2003. On the one hand, the new formulation is closer to the ESS, which states "Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is potentially the greatest threat to our security" (ESS 2003: 3). Yet the difference between the ESS 2003 and NSS 2006 regarding WMD becomes clear through the word *potentially* in the ESS. Still, the dominant position of WMD is common to both strategies.

NSS 2006 – RI-ESS 2008

In comparing the Bush administration's second security strategy with the RI-ESS 2008, the same similarities found in all previous comparisons are again identified: *values*, *objectives* and *threat* perception. The prior comparison between the NSS 2006 and ESS 2003 showed one further similar category: namely, *challenges*. Yet the RI-ESS changed particularly in terms of threats and challenges. Although one can still identify a fairly similar list of threats, one could say that there is a slight trend of divergence regarding threat perception.

In terms of proliferation of WMD, which is described as the "greatest threat to our national security" in the NSS 2006 (NSS 2006: 19) the RI-ESS converges with the US perception. While proliferation of WMD was listed as number two in the section of threats in the ESS 2003 (after terrorism), the RI-ESS mentions proliferation of WMD prior to terrorism. In addition, proliferation of WMD was defined as "potentially the greatest threat to our security" in the ESS 2003 (ESS 2003: 3). The RI-ESS announces that the "risk has increased in the last five years" (RI-ESS 2008: 3).

The upgrade in importance of WMD proliferation entails a downgrading of terrorism in the RI-ESS. Terrorism was listed in the first place of key threats and elaborated on separately in the ESS 2003 (ESS 2003: 3), while the RI-ESS mentions it after the proliferation of WMD in a combined section with organised crime (RI-ESS 2008: 4). This change could be seen as typical of a general European shift in perception of terrorism as a form of organised crime rather than a

military issue. The boundary between war and crime vanishes, particularly in the case of international terrorism (Varwick 2009: 6-7). This perception also entails a change in *means*, which are even more diverse and broader than in the ESS 2003. Additionally, the RI-ESS replaced regional conflicts and state failure, which are listed as key threats in the ESS 2003 (ESS 2003: 4), with cyber security, energy security and climate change (RI-ESS 2008: 5-6).

Overall, the inclusion of post-modern threats is common to both strategies. This extended list of threats by both sides is significant. Both the NSS 2006 and RI-ESS refer to pandemics, human and drug trafficking, environment and energy as security matters. Yet the emphasis on and explicit reference to issues like climate change, internet and energy as security matters are much higher in the RI-ESS than in the NSS 2006. The RI-ESS also addresses current issues like piracy and financial crisis. The NSS 2006 refers to piracy only once and similarly describes it as a new dimension of crime (NSS 2006: 43). On the contrary, the RI-ESS emphasises piracy and mentions in this context its "first maritime ESDP mission, to deter piracy off the Somali coast" (RI-ESS 2008: 8), which illustrates how seriously the EU takes this new security matter. All in all, the RI-ESS 2008 carved out the interconnection and significance particularly of these new threats and its security policy connotations much better and more explicitly than the NSS 2006.

4.3. Period: 2010-2013

NSS 10 - ESS 03 and RI-ESS 08

Analysing and coding the latest NSS issued by the current Obama administration was considerably more difficult than the two prior NSS due to a language which had dramatically changed. While the language in the NSS 2002 and 2006 was precise and direct, sometimes even provocative, the language and style of the NSS 2010 is soft and appeasing, thus converging in language with the European documents. The results of the coding process revealed that the NSS 2010 and ESS 2003 (respectively the RI-ESS 2008) are similar in their *values*, *objectives*, *threats*, *challenges*, *means*, *world view*, and *security concept*. Compared to the prior analyses, the US and EU are converging and have more things in common. In terms of *means*, *world view*, and *security concept* the two entities differed until the NSS 2010.

Values have been identified as similar in all previous comparisons, but now they are even more similar. This can be explained in terms of language, approach and significance. The EU introduced a new all-encompassing concept to its RI-ESS in 2008, in which the concept of human security is featured prominently. This security concept extends the traditional understanding of security to sectors like environment, food, health and the community (RI-ESS 2008: 2; cf. Biscop 2005: 5). One can notice this new dominant pattern in the context of almost each category. This new concept in the RI-ESS can be perceived as an advancement of the overall objective of not only a *safer*, but also a *better* world. Moreover, the European document places additional emphasis on civil society and universalism of certain values by suggesting that "we need to continue mainstreaming human rights issues in all activities in this field, including ESDP missions, through a people-based approach coherent with the concept of human security" (RI-ESS 2008: 10). The Obama administration echoes this dominant European discourse and addresses civil society to a considerable degree in its new strategy, too. This significant new pattern in the NSS 2010 is also linked to values and refers often to the domestic dimension. The supplementation of the dominant domestic dimension, which can be seen in all further categories as well, goes even further by including civil society as resources and means in pursuing US interests, such as the promotion of values, because "we have seen that the best ambassadors for American values and interests are the American people – our businesses, nongovernmental organizations, scientists, athletes, artists, military service members, and students" (NSS 2010: 12).

Another distinguishing feature of the current NSS in comparison to its predecessors is the interrelation of values and the use of force, for instance in the context of counterterrorism: "To effectively detain, interrogate, and prosecute terrorists, we need durable legal approaches consistent with our security and our values" (NSS 2010: 21). Generally, the ESS was already

described in the previous comparisons as a comprehensive civilian concept. In terms of international order, the EU states clearly that "the development of a stronger international society, well-functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order is our objective" (ESS 2003: 9). A "rule-based international order" was one of the keywords of the ESS, which the NSS 2010 picked up on: "we must pursue a rules-based international system that can advance our own interests by serving mutual interests" (NSS 2010: 12). The description or term of a "rules-based international system" respectively "order" cannot be found in the two previous NSS. This convergence can be regarded as more than just identified similarities within some single categories. Similarities in the context of fundamental patterns lead to convergence on a discursive dimension. Both strategies are similarly oriented on individuals. This means a dramatic shift from traditional state-centred security concepts.

In the following, the further identified similar categories of *threats* and *challenges* will be examined. As already observed in all prior comparisons, both identify similar issues as threats to their security. While the ESS 2003 lists challenges and threats separately, which was not continued in the RI-ESS 2008, the NSS 2010 merges those categories, too. A changed perception of threat environment is common and fundamental to both strategies, and is the first indicator of a converging *security concept*. The EU claims: "In an era of globalization, distant threats may be as much a concern as those that are near at hand (…) The new threats are dynamic" (ESS 2003: 6). The NSS 2010 also recognises a new complexity and dynamic of threats and challenges in a new era: "At the dawn of the 21st century, the United States of America faces a broad and complex array of challenges to our national security" … "from international terrorism and the spread of deadly technologies, to economic upheaval and a changing climate" (NSS 2010: 1; preamble). In view of the above, the threat perception is clearly converging. Both the EU and the US are slightly downplaying hard security threats posed by terrorism and extending its focus to post-modern threats, while putting relatively substantial emphasis on other aspects, such as climate change, energy and the internet, as security threats.

In terms of terrorism the Obama administration has somewhat altered the US perception. First, the Obama administration stresses that terrorism or violent extremism is only one among full range of threats (NSS 2010: 8). This downgrading of terrorism compared to its status in the NSS 2002 and 2006 converges in turn with the RI-ESS. Second, while avoiding one of the keywords of the prior NSS, namely the "War on Terror", which neither is part of the ESS nor the RI-ESS, the US approaches the EU formulation, but slightly changes it by leaving out a relevant word. While the EU refers to "violent religious extremism", the US picked up on that only partially by using the term "violent extremism" to speak about terrorism. Additionally, the US reformulates the previous vocabulary and states that "we are fighting a war against a far-reaching network of hatred and violence" (NSS 2010: 4), or in an even more striking departure from its predecessor, by describing the fight against terrorism as a "global campaign against al-Qa'ida and its terrorist affiliates" (NSS 2010: 19). Third, the US is converging with the EU by taking into consideration internal terrorism, too. While the NSS 2002 and 2006 presented terrorism as an external threat, the NSS 2010 similarly to the ESS 2003 recognises internal aspects and thus again presents the new domestic dimension applied to the strategy throughout the document: "Several recent incidences of violent extremists in the United States who are committed to fighting here and abroad have underscored the threat to the United States and our interests posed by individuals radicalized at home" (NSS 2010: 19).

In addition, the EU converges with the US perception by (re-)emphasising the risk posed by WMD (RI-ESS 2008: 3). In continuity to its predecessor, the current US government states: "The gravest danger to the American people and global security continues to come from weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons" (NSS 2010: 8). Another convergence on a discursive level is observable by a further change in vocabulary in the current NSS. One of the key words and distinctive feature of the ESS and NSS 2002 as well as the NSS 2006 was the reference to "rogue states", while the EU referred to them as "failed states". The Obama administration avoids this term and also speaks about "failed" or "failing states" (NSS 2010: 8, 11, 13).

For the first time the category *means* is identified as a similarity between the two strategies. While the previous comparisons have shown a divergence between the European civilian approach emphasising its broad toolbox, the US concept also mentioned its broad set of

instruments, but less on the civilian dimension and less comprehensive in total. The current NSS emphasises the civilian dimension (and the need to rely on means beyond the military) to a (significantly) greater extent: "Our Armed Forces will always be a cornerstone of our security, but they must be complemented. Our security also depends upon diplomats (…) development experts who can strengthen governance and support human dignity; and intelligence and law enforcement (…)" (NSS 2010: preamble). The central statement regarding means in the ESS, illustrating the broad toolbox and civilian characteristics, suggests that "each situation requires coherent use of our instruments, including political, diplomatic, development, humanitarian, crisis response, economic and trade co-operation, and civilian and military crisis management. We should also expand our dialogue and mediation capacities" (RI-ESS 2008: 9). Hence, both the US and the EU acknowledge the need for military force in some cases. The Obama administration is much more sensitive in terms of the use of force and the emphasis on the insufficiency of military means, compared to the prior NSS.

Another change of vocabulary in the current NSS is the substitution of the term *preemption* with *prevention.* This change demonstrates a renunciation of previous US security strategies and a move toward the European strategy. Hence, the current US government avoided this negatively connoted key word of the previous NSS. At the same time, they converged with the EU, which always used the term *prevention* in place of *preemption*. However, the EU refers to preventive action only in the context of civilian conflict management, as the following instance shows: "This implies that we should be ready to act before a crisis occurs. Conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early" (ESS 2003: 7). Although the EU admits that "preventing threats from becoming sources of conflict early on must be at the heart of our approach" (RI-ESS 2008: 9), they do not refer to military means, but rather "peace-building and long-term poverty reduction are essential to this" (RI-ESS 2008: 9).

Since the RI-ESS and the NSS 2010 stress the phenomenon of a changing world even more than the prior documents and make this a significant underlying pattern for other categories, such as for the *security concept* and *threat* perception, both are converging. The current US administration's awareness of the changing world was even more central here than in the prior NSS. As already examined in the section of similarities of the NSS 2010 and ESS 2003, one of the key words of the NSS 2010 is renewal. Renewal of leadership and national renewal are central objectives in the NSS 2010. Accordingly, "change" is a dominant pattern, which is mostly linked to *world view*. Hence, the Obama administration often states that "we live in a time of sweeping change" (NSS 2010: preamble). The EU stated in 2008 similarly: "But the world around us is changing fast, with evolving threats and shifting powers" (RI-ESS 2008).

As an interim conclusion, what can be noted is that certain values have been identified as similar between the US and EU security strategies in each comparison, namely *values*, *objectives* and *threats*. In addition, the analysis revealed an increase of identified similarities over time. The highest amount of similar categories was detected in the comparison of the latest security strategies. While the first comparison between the NSS 2002 and the ESS 2003 revealed three similar categories (*values, objectives and threats*), the comparison between the NSS 2010 and the ESS 2003/RI-ESS 2008 showed seven similar categories (*values*, *objectives*, *threats*, *means*, *security concept*, *world view* and *challenges*). The first NSS 2010 by a new US administration shows the greatest inclusion of EU characteristics in its document. Some central aspects, such as *prevention* instead of *pre-emption*, even demonstrate a renunciation of previous US security strategies and move toward European strategies. Furthermore, the NSS 2010 echoes some dominant EU discourses, such as an overall comprehensive approach, prevention and the dominant perception of change in the world.

5.Differences between the US and EU security strategies

5.1. Period: 2002-2005

NSS 2002 – ESS 2003

The analysis revealed the following categories as different between the NSS 2002 and ESS 2003: *priorities*, *means*, *world view*, *approach*, *security concept*, *challenges* and *possible partner*.

Concerning their *threat* perception, the two strategies do perceive the security environment similarly and identify similar threats, but the *priority* dedicated to each threat differs remarkably. Both the intensity as well as the examination of terrorism and WMD differs in both strategies. The NSS does not share the ESS' emphasis on organised crime as a key threat. Moreover, challenges such as globalisation, poverty, disease, hunger, malnutrition, AIDS, pandemics, natural resources and energy dependence are covered in the ESS 2003 (ESS 2003: 2-3). While the NSS does not even mention the term globalisation, it covers poverty, environment, energy security and health issues briefly in the context of economy and development (NSS 2002: 18-22).

When it comes to tackling these challenges and approaching threats, both strategies show notably diverse *security concepts*. The ESS links its security concept to new dimensions, such as development, by stating that "security is a precondition of development" (ESS 2003: 2). Contrary to the NSS, which seeks to mainly transform its defence based on a changed security environment, the ESS directly applies a broader concept of security and proclaims that "in contrast to the massive visible threat in the Cold War, none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means" (ESS 2003: 7). Although the NSS often describes its strategy as comprehensive, it seems relatively limited, mainly in military terms: "To defeat this threat [terrorism] we must make use of every tool in our arsenal –military power, better homeland defenses, law enforcement, intelligence, and vigorous efforts to cut off terrorist financing" (NSS 2002: preamble).

At first glance, both strategies may not be that different in terms of the means for addressing threats and challenges, but they substantially differ regarding the characteristics of these means, namely the *approach*. First, while the NSS approach can be characterised as "unilateral" and "pre-emptive", the ESS approach can be portrayed as "multilateral" and "preventive".[9]

US leadership may also be carried out unilaterally, if necessary: "In exercising our leadership, we will respect the values, judgment, and interests of our friends and partners. Still, we will be prepared to act apart when our interests and unique responsibilities require" (NSS 2002: 31). This path also includes pre-emptive procedures: "as a matter of common sense and self-defense, America will act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed" (NSS 2002: preamble). Pre-emption is fundamental and a recurring theme in the NSS: "we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting pre-emptively against such terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country" (NSS 2002: 6). "Pre-emption" cannot be found in the ESS, but "prevention". Yet contrary to the NSS, preventive actions are mainly meant in non-military ways in the ESS, as illustrated in this statement: "we should be ready to act before a crisis occurs. Conflict prevention and threat prevention cannot start too early" (ESS 2003: 7).

A unilateral and pre-emptive approach naturally grants international law and international organisations only a limited role in the NSS: "The United States is committed to lasting institutions like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Organization of American States, and NATO as well as other long-standing alliances. Coalitions of the willing can augment these permanent institutions" (NSS 2002: preamble). Contrary to the EU, which proclaims the goal of "strengthening the United Nations" (ESS 2003: 9) the US simply wants it to "last". And if the UN or other international organisations do not work for US purposes, specific "coalitions of the willing" are to be formed.

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[9] *Preemption* and *prevention* "have been periodically used interchangeably, the terms are actually two distinct strategic concepts (…) the specific dichotomy between the two is based in the relative timing of their application and the immediacy of the perceived threat" (Warren 2012: 8). Hence, preemption is a wider concept, which can have an earlier starting point. While prevention addresses an immediate threat, e.g. a hostile invasion, preemption addresses potential threats (Just 2005: 5).

Regarding the category *possible partners* both the NSS and ESS mention numerous *actors*. However, the EU values the importance of international organisations more, as already examined above (ESS 2003: 9-10). The US and the EU's perception of the other, and particularly the question whether the US perceives the EU as a partner in security matters at all, is highly relevant concerning the state of the transatlantic security relationship. The EU is only mentioned twice in the strategy. For the first time the EU is mentioned on page 18 as an important actor in global economy (NSS 2002: 18). Then quite extensively in the context of NATO and again as a trading partner: "Europe is also the seat of two of the strongest and most able international institutions in the world: the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which has, since its inception, been the fulcrum of transatlantic and inter-European security, and the European Union (EU), our partner in opening world trade" (NSS 2002: 25). Hence, the EU is viewed primarily in the context of the world economy, and the perception of the US-EU security policy is seen predominantly in the context of NATO (Varwick 2006: 2-5). At the same time, the NSS emphasised NATO as the central institution for transatlantic security policy (NSS 2002: 25-26): "we welcome our European allies' efforts to forge a greater foreign policy and defense identity with the EU, and commit ourselves to close consultations to ensure that these developments work with NATO" (NSS 2002: 26). European security policy is thus only supported in the NATO framework.

A completely different perception of the counterpart can be observed in the ESS, in which the US is very present and central, mentioned as early as the first page (ESS 2003: 1). The ESS highly values the transatlantic relationship as "one of the core elements of the international system is the transatlantic relationship. This is not only in our bilateral interest but strengthens the international community as a whole" (ESS 2003: 9). The ESS picks up on the interconnection with NATO as well: "The EU-NATO permanent arrangements, in particular Berlin Plus, enhance the operational capability of the EU and provide the framework for the strategic partnership between the two organisations in crisis management" (ESS 2003: 12). It seems like the EU is well aware if its lacking capabilities and its need for support in that respect (cf. Dembinski 2005: 61-76).

5.2. Period 2006-2009

NSS 2006 – ESS 2003

The differences between the NSS 2006 and ESS 2003 are similar to the prior comparison: *priorities*, *means*, *security concept*, *approach*, *geographical orientation* and *possible partner*. Although the NSS 2006 and ESS 2003 may have converged in a few aspects, overall a substantial gap remains. This can be illustrated through the first two sentences of the US strategy: "America is at war. This is a wartime national security strategy" (NSS 2006: preamble). This is not compatible with the self-understanding of the ESS 2003. By contrast, the ESS 2003 starts with: "Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free" (ESS 2003: 1).

In *approaching* threats and challenges differing aspects are noticeable. The rather comprehensive, civilian and multilateral European approach contrasts with the rather military, pre-emptive and somewhat unilateral US approach as already elaborated in the prior comparison. Already the preamble provides the reader with a general idea of the US approach: "we must maintain and expand our national strength so we can deal with threats and challenges before they can damage our people or our interests. We must maintain a military without peer – yet our strength is not founded on force of arms alone. It also rests on economic prosperity and a vibrant democracy" (NSS 2006: preamble). This quotation illustrates the broad approach the US pursues, but at the same time, by naming pre-emption and military means first, it symbolises the US focus on armed forces. However, the document emphasises in a few places that the US prefers "that non-military actions succeed" (NSS 2006: 18) and emphasises the preference of acting together with others. Yet taking the context into consideration, one can observe that multilateral efforts are primarily seen in the frame of economy, development, technology, pandemics, values and so forth (NSS 2006: 6+21+29). Yet, when it comes to the central threat of the document, namely terrorists equipped with WMD, the US still advocates multilateral efforts due to the global nature of the threat, but also clearly announces to proceed unilaterally and pre-emptively if necessary:

"under long-standing principles of self-defense, we do not rule out the use of force before attacks occur, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack" (NSS 2006: 23).

Though both the EU and US refer often to multilateral approaches, they clearly have diverse interpretations of multilateralism as already seen in the prior comparison with the NSS 2002. While the EU is committed to put international efforts in the frame of international organisations, such as the UN (ESS 2003: 9), the US applies a wider concept of multilateralism, which is also given in individually and ad hoc created coalitions of states.

NSS 2006 – RI-ESS 2008

The differences between the NSS 2006 and RI-ESS 2008 are similar to the prior comparison: *priorities*, *means*, *security concept*, *approach*, *geographical orientation*, *challenges* and *possible partner*.

The threats and challenges identified in both documents seem to have moved closer. For example, through adding globalisation to its security strategy in 2006 the US converged in terms of challenges with the EU, which already addressed globalisation and its consequences in the ESS 2003. Yet, while the NSS 2006 definitely converged in terms of challenges like pandemics, human and drug trafficking and environmental issues with the ESS 2003, the following EU strategy seems to have moved on two years later (NSS 2006: 47-48). The RI-ESS 2008 also addresses global warming, energy security and the financial crisis (RI-ESS 2008: 1). These challenges are not covered in the NSS 2006.

Perhaps more important than the identified threats and challenges are the differing *priorities* given to them: terrorism is a prime example, which receives unequal attention in the NSS 2006 and RI-2008. While terrorism is still one of the central issues in the NSS 2006 and dealt with in a separate chapter (NSS 2006: 8-14), the RI-ESS relegated terrorism to a lower level of importance compared to the ESS 2003 (RI-ESS 2008: 4). Further issues such as energy security and piracy are also good examples of a diverse threat perception in both strategies, as already indicated in the part on similarities of the strategies. In addition, cyber security is taken seriously by the EU and newly added in the list of threats in the RI-ESS: "attacks against private or government IT systems in EU Member States have given this a new dimension, as a potential new economic, political and military weapon" (RI-ESS 2008: 5). In contrast, the NNS 2006 only marginally acknowledges this new threat (NSS 2006: 44).

In terms of *means* one can observe convergence regarding one particular aspect. The NSS 2006 was the first strategy, which introduced short- and long-term measures. Subsequently, the RI-ESS also divides its means in this way. It seems that this is more than just a superficial or editorial convergence, but has actual implications for the modalities: "In the short run, the fight involves using military force and other instruments of national power to kill or capture the terrorists (…) In the long run, winning the war on terror means winning the battle of ideas" (NSS 2006: 9). This example also shows the order of means the US is willing to apply to fight terrorism. In order to tackle threats the EU seeks to address the causes: "peace-building and long-term poverty reduction are essential to this. Each situation requires coherent use of our instruments, including political, diplomatic, development, humanitarian, crisis response, economic and trade-cooperation, and civilian and military crisis management" (RI-ESS 2008: 9). However, overall the means of both strategies have become more diverse, because the RI-ESS presents an even broader tool box than the ESS 2003. The EU emphasises its broad set of instruments, which was widened particularly through adding the concept of human security to its means: "Drawing on a unique range of instruments (…) we have worked to build human security, by reducing poverty and inequality, promoting good governance and human rights, assisting development, and addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity" (RI-ESS 2008:2).

In terms of *approach* one can again detect a huge difference. While the US still emphasises pre-emption, including military pre-emptive strikes (NSS 2006: 18) - the RI-ESS continues to use the term prevention, which refers to non-military multilateral approach (RI-ESS 2008: 3). In addition, while both documents suggest that they are based on a "comprehensive" (security)

approach, the NSS 2006 remains narrower than its European counterpart (NSS 2006: 18). All in all, the EU emphasises its broad set of instruments, which was widened particularly through adding the concept of human security to its means: "We have worked to build human security, by reducing poverty and inequality, promoting good governance and human rights, assisting development, and addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity. The EU remains the biggest donor to countries in need. Long-term engagement is required for lasting stabilization" (RI-ESS 2008:2). This leads to the category of *security concept*. Human security was not mentioned in any of the prior European and US documents. Through the concept of human security in the RI-ESS both security concepts appear even more diverse.

5.3. Period 2010-2013

NSS 2010 – ESS 2003 and RI-ESS 2008

The differences between the NSS 2010 and ESS 2003 respectively the RI-ESS 2008 are *priorities*, *approach* and *possible partners.* For the first time *means and security concept* no longer constitute differences.

In terms of *prioritising* threats and challenges, issues such as the economic crisis, piracy and al-Qa'ida are perceived differently in the strategies. The economic crisis is not only one of the central threats, but very dominant and related to a lot of other fundamental aspects of the NSS 2010, such as leadership. On the contrary, the economic crisis is neither listed as a key threat nor extensively elaborated on in the RI-ESS, which can be largely attributed to the fact that it was devised about two years prior. Al-Qa'ida is still very central in the NSS and even elaborated on in a separate section. However, al-Qa'ida is less central than in the prior NSS of 2002 and 2006. Piracy is an aspect of the current security environment that is also perceived differently. While the EU defines piracy "as a new dimension of organized crime" (RI-ESS 2008: 8), piracy is not defined as a threat to national security in the NSS 2010.

Although both strategies show for the first time a similar concept of means as well as security concept, the *approach* still differs, although there are fewer differences within this category than in the prior comparisons. The remaining differences include the following: first, there is still a gap between the two strategies in terms of the level of multilateralism. The NSS (2010: 22) suggests that the US "must reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend our nation and our interests […]". Second, there is a change of vocabulary in the current NSS where the term "pre-emptively" is substituted with "prevent" (thus converging towards the EU terminology).

As for *possible partnerships*, as already seen in the prior comparisons the US traditionally pursues a very broad global approach and addresses each part of the world. The EU also follows a global path, already due to the global nature of its listed threats, but the emphasis is still quite different. The EU does not address all parts of the world and not that extensively, but rather emphasises its regional-continental area, which is demonstrated in a separate chapter of security policy limited to EU's neighbourhood (ESS 2003: 7+8). However, the EU seems to have broadened its geographical orientation in the RI-ESS 2008. For instance, the EU rephrased its chapter from *Building Security in our Neighbourhood* in the ESS to *Building Stability in Europe and beyond* in the RI-ESS. In fact, the circle of regions and countries of importance to the EU has increased in the RI-ESS (RI-ESS 2008: 1+2). As one can see in the following instance in the context of piracy, which is not mentioned in the NSS 2010: "Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (…) Somali coast" (RI-ESS 2008: 8) are regions affected by piracy and therefore highly important for the EU.

6. Conclusions

The central research objective of this study has been an analysis of a possible convergence or divergence in US and EU security strategies. For this purpose, the official US and EU security

strategies of the first decade of the 21st century were compared in terms of their similarities and differences. Overall, our analysis suggests that the similarities have increased and the respective security strategies have converged over time. The following table summarises the similarities and differences found in each time period, in each particular comparison within each category.

Table 2: Similarities and differences across security strategies

	Time periods			
Categories	**2002-2005**	**2006-2009**		**2010-2013**
	NSS 2003-ESS2003	*NSS 2006-ESS 2003*	*NSS 2006-RI 2008*	*NSS 2010-ESS 2003+ RI 08*
Values	+	+	+	+
Objectives	+	+	+	+
Threats	+	+	+	+
Priorities	-	-	-	-
Means	-	-	-	+
Security concept	-	-	-	+
World view	-	-	-	+
Approach	-	-	-	-
Challenges	-	+	-	+
Partnerships	-	-	-	-

"+" similarity "-" difference

Source: own work

The table shows that *values*, *objectives* and *threats* are similar throughout all applied documents. In term of *values* and *objectives* this is not surprising, because traditionally these are enduring "national" interests and do not change significantly with new governments.[10] In addition, the broader political context is likely to be conducive: these are security strategies of democratic entities in the Western hemisphere. The remaining discrepancies regarding *priorities*, *approach* and possible or already existent *partnerships* demonstrates that overall the US and EU security strategies are (still) characterised by substantial differences, particularly when it comes to addressing conflicts.

However, on the whole the amount of differences between the US and EU security strategies has gradually shrunk over time. While the first comparison between the NSS 2002 and ESS 2003 revealed seven diverse categories, the comparison between the latest security strategies showed three diverse categories. At the same time, the similarities have gradually increased. Whereas the first comparison of the NSS 2002 and ESS 2003 detected only three similar categories, the comparison of the latest documents identified seven similar categories. Given this clear trend and

[10] This, of course, differs in the case of the ESS, which is the first strategy of the EU, a rather different polity from that of a nation state.

also in view of the contextual analysis in section 4, we can conclude that the two security strategies have been converging over time.[11]

Our analysis is certainly not in keeping with the central thesis suggested by Kagan (2004), i.e. that Americans and Europeans, metaphorically speaking, live on different planets. On the contrary, it seems that the differences are getting smaller, at least at the level of security strategy. Section 4 demonstrated that the US and EU share substantial common ground, such as *values*, *objectives* and *threats* throughout. However, they disagree on how to approach these issues.

Without insinuating deliberate replication of, or a causal link between, the changes in the respective documents, it seems that each document has mirrored aspects from a prior strategy document of the respective other entity. For instance, the first strategy by the EU reflected the threat-oriented character of the NSS 2002 and also focuses on threats posed by terrorism and WMD. In addition, the ESS does not incorporate the central aspect of pre-emption to its strategy, but the idea of acting before a crisis occurs is echoed in the ESS. The NSS 2006 reflects one of the most crucial aspects of the ESS, namely globalisation. This addition has a significant impact on several categories, such as *threats* and *challenges*, as a result of which the NSS 2006 converged with the ESS 2003 and shows more overall similarities. After that, the EU reflects one relevant aspect of the NSS 2006 in its new strategy document of 2008: energy security. The NSS 2010 by a new US administration displays the greatest inclusion of EU characteristics to its document. Some central aspects, such as prevention instead of pre-emption, even demonstrate a renunciation of previous US security strategies and approaching the European strategies. Furthermore, the NSS 2010 followed the typical European focus on terrorism, which is regarded not only as an external threat, as defined by the Bush administration, but also considered as an internal threat, which could have its origins at home. Also, the terrorism-crime nexus, which the EU first announced in the RI-ESS 2008, was echoed by the NSS 2010. Additionally, the Obama administration picked up some of the EU themes, such as climate change, cyber security and a new sensitivity for private data. Neither the RI-ESS nor the NSS 2010 are threat-driven strategies, but rather emphasise their broad understanding of security in new post-modern challenges and threats. The NSS 2010 converged with the ESS in its overall civilian and comprehensive approach.

How can the relationship between the US and EU security policy be described given the NSS and ESS? In other words, what conclusions can be drawn concerning the development of the transatlantic security relationship in view of the analysis of the NSS and ESS? This question is difficult to answer conclusively in view of the analysed material. However, one important indicator for approaching this question is the analysis of *other partners* in the documents. The US is highlighted as an outstanding partner for the EU in both EU strategy documents. The EU gained more attention in the US security policy from strategy to strategy. However, while both the NSS and the ESS highlight the importance of the transatlantic relationship throughout the document, the EU-US relationship is remarkably more valued and highlighted in the European strategies than in the US strategies. In addition, the EU is still not perceived as a serious security policy actor for addressing global threats, but rather as a partner for civilian missions. Yet it needs to be considered that the US stresses the significance of its overall relationship to Europe, not explicitly in terms of the EU as an actor, but also in terms of bilateral relationships with individual European countries. The overall trend of convergence between the two strategies also seems to be a promising basis for the transatlantic security relationship in the future. Having said that, both the US and EU extended their circles of mentioned and desired partnerships considerably in their current strategies, which in turn de-emphasises the transatlantic relationship. The suggestion by some authors that the US will shift its focus from Europe to Asia (e.g. Steinberg et al. 2012) cannot be fully confirmed at the level of security strategy, because there is more a general shift to (and new emphasis on) emerging powers in general in the NSS 2010.

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[11] At least one important caveat remains in our analysis. The conclusion of converging US and EU security policy visions is challenged due to the temporal shift of the strategies. A security strategy, released simultaneously by both sides under the same circumstances, would have allowed for better comparison.

While the US government is obliged to issue a new security strategy regularly, the EU lacks a new security strategy. Such strategy would be desirable. In view of its sovereign debt crisis, the EU should review how it seeks to balance its objectives and means given tighter budgets. In addition, the US and EU should consider issuing a new broader transatlantic declaration/agreement. While the Transatlantic Declaration (1990) and New Transatlantic Agenda (1995) are already rather dated, important international developments have taken place in the meantime, including the ascent of Islamic terrorism, the rise of the BRICS, a major economic crisis, and deteriorating relations between Russia and the West. Also new dimensions have been added to, and directly impacted on, the transatlantic partnership, such as the rift over the Iraq campaign, the launch of the Euro, the emancipation of the ESDP and the EU's increased international actorness more generally. Furthermore, the documents analysed in this study reflect the substantial overlap in terms of preferences and the need for joint action by the transatlantic partners given new and common global challenges.

The above analysis brought up some starting points for further research. Above all, it would be interesting to analyse whether and how converging US and EU security strategies translate into converging policy practice on the ground. In addition, it will be interesting to investigate how the next US security strategy, which is due in 2015, compares to the security strategies of the first decade of the 21st century that have been analysed in this study.

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