

country holding the Union presidency. This has been alleviated somewhat by the development of the "troika" system whereby the incumbent presidency is assisted by the previous and successor presidencies, but for third parties the absence of a consistent and adequately staffed point of contact is a problem. The CFSP Secretariat within the Council Secretariat is too small and the role of the Commission in assisting the presidency, although recognized in the Treaty on European Union, remains in practice highly circumscribed. The inadequacy of present arrangements for representation has been widely if not universally recognized by the member states, and one item on the agenda of the current IGC concerns the possibility of appointing a CFSP High Representative to act under a specific mandate from the European Council or Council of Ministers. Whether this suggestion will be accepted is unclear, but it can be predicted with confidence that the CFSP will receive enhanced organizational and institutional support.

### **The Agenda of the IGC & the CFSP:**

Section III of the Presidential draft of proposed revisions to the Treaty on European Union presented to the Dublin European Council in December 1996 spells out the issues facing the IGC with respect to the CFSP. The overall objective, to which every member state subscribes, is to make the external policies of the Union "more coherent, effective and visible." Where differences arise is over how this is to be best achieved. An analysis of these differences is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is possible to indicate the areas in which change in support of this agreed objective is likely to occur. It should be noted that whatever changes are introduced will not necessarily provide any guidance as to what common policies will be adopted, nor will they necessarily increase the probability of securing agreement on a common foreign policy of broader scope. While the majority of European governments are interested in improving the effectiveness of the CFSP process, this in itself will not overcome the fact that on most salient issues confronting the membership there is a wide divergence of opinion on how they should be handled and very different national interests in play.

1] It is recognized that in practice in many cases the distinction between the CFSP and the other external policies of the E.U. is impossible to sustain. The association of the Commission with the CFSP is likely to be strengthened while at the same not compromising, in treaty language at least, the essential intergovernmental character of the CFSP pillar.

2] There appears to be substantial support for strengthening the Council Secretariat with respect to its functions regarding the CFSP. In particular, the role of the Secretary General of the Council Secretariat is likely to be strengthened. If this occurs, then the Secretary General will acquire a much higher political profile than presently has been the case.