

import (with the latter being described by Prof. van Staden as a "side show"). America's decision to minimize reliance upon the NATO Allies was argued to be a function of 1) the US desire to minimize constraints of coalition warfare as were evident during the 1999 Kosovo campaign, and 2) the conviction in the US that the European Allies fundamentally lacked the capability to play a useful military role. Prof. van Staden detected a trend within the Alliance, whereby it would become more of a "political" and less of a military grouping. One implication of the trend would be to make it easier for Russia to accept the Alliance's enlargement into the Baltic republics.

On the level of the European Union, the "good news" was to be found in the greater unity of purpose displayed by Western Europeans in the current crisis as compared with their disunity a decade ago, when Yugoslavia started to tear itself apart. That said, the responses of major countries in the EU betrayed a growing preference for bilateralism, as one European leader after another demonstrated "unseemly" haste to get to Washington to meet President Bush. The UK's role as linchpin was not something likely to enhance the EU's own influence, nor did Prof. van Staden detect anything in the Afghanistan war as having enhanced the credentials of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), notwithstanding its having been "declared operational" as a result of the current crisis. Still, should the US "backfill" militarily by reducing its presence in the Balkans, the impact may turn out to be positive for the ESDP, forced as the Europeans would be to assume more of the burden of conflict management in the former Yugoslavia. However, Prof. van Staden cautioned against expectations that European countries have become any more willing to take on greater responsibility for their own defence than they were before 11 September.

Prof. van Staden ended by noting that "NATO has been called the big loser of the Afghan War – and rightly so." He detected a widening divide between the US and its European Allies, certainly in the political dimension but also in the military one, where he envisioned the "spectre of military apartheid." The EU members would be well-served, in this new environment, if they avoided the temptation to "kowtow" to America, if they continued to stress the root causes of terrorism, and if they succeeded in developing greater operational capability, whether through spending more on defence or spending more wisely (i.e., avoiding duplication and achieving greater rationalization). He suggested that European publics were unlikely to want to allocate more resources to defence, but did feel greater rationalization could be attained. In his parting shot, he hinted that perhaps Canada might wish to have a role in the elaboration of European security and defence.