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**Still a physician rather than a judge?
The post-Cold War foreign and security policy of Finland**

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Abstract

This article seeks to explain some of the key changes in Finnish foreign and security policy since the end of the Cold War. Finland's peace policy during the Cold War built on a self-image of a neutral bridge-builder between East and West, that is a 'peacekeeping superpower' and a 'physician not judge' in world politics. Since that Finland's neutrality has been replaced with a peculiar combination of military non-alignment and commitment to the European Union's common security and defence policy. A change has taken place from traditional peacekeeping to military crisis management led by the EU and NATO. Lately, Finland has started to build a profile in the field of peace mediation. This article argues that these changes have been enabled by a recalibrated understanding of small stateness, as Finnish identity has been adjusted from small-state neutrality towards 'member-state alignment' and 'small-EU-member-stateness'. Consequently, the Finnish physician approach has been reconstructed for the post-Cold War world.

KEYWORDS: Finland, Foreign policy, Europeanization, Peacekeeping, Peace mediation

Introduction

Defence Minister Enestam: *"Finland is no longer a neutral country, but politically allied and militarily non-aligned."*
Interjection by MP Korkeaoja: *"That is somewhat semantics!"*
Interjection by MP Elo: *"That is semantics!"*
Defence Minister: *"That is not semantics, that is a fact."*
(5.9.2001, preliminary debate on the Government Report 2/2001 *Finland's Security and Defence Policy.*)

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War generated a situation of strong uncertainty where the previous foundations of Finnish foreign and security policy had to be rethought. The starting point was the fact that neutrality between the Western and Eastern blocs was no longer possible, as these blocs had ceased to exist. Since then, the diminishing relevance of neutrality has played an important role in the domestic discourse. This has paved the way for three changes in Finland's foreign and security policy, which this article seeks to make sense of. First, neutrality has been replaced with a peculiar combination of military non-alignment and commitment to the European

Union's common security and defence policy, including participation in EU battle groups and military crisis management operations.

Second, a corresponding change has taken place from United Nations-mandated traditional *peacekeeping* to participation in *military crisis management* operations led by the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Finnish peacekeeping legislation has been amended four times since the EU accession in 1995 and currently refers to crisis management, instead of peacekeeping in its title. Also, present-day legislation enables participation in operations led by other organisations than the United Nations (UN), and the restrictions concerning the rules of engagement and need of UN mandate and have been loosened.

Third, in the wake of former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari's 2008 Nobel Peace Prize, Finland has developed a profile in the field of peace mediation. As of yet, mediation has not been institutionalised, and it has not become an established part of national foreign policy. Rather, it rests on the activism of certain prominent private persons. However, a process of designing and developing Finnish mediation capacities has recently begun and such efforts played an important role in the country's bid to become a member of the UN Security Council 2013-2014.

This article seeks to explain these changes in Finnish foreign and security policy since the end of the Cold War. Its main argument is that these changes have been enabled by a recalibrated understanding of small stateness, as Finnish identity has been adjusted from small-state neutrality towards 'member-state alignment' and 'small-EU-member-stateness'. The changes have also been fostered by a reconceptualization of neutrality, as EU accession in 1995 has made neutrality an increasingly ill-fitted instrument to promote Finland's national interests. However, despite the adaptation, some elements of Finland's bridge-building function – Kekkonen's metaphor that Finland acts as "a physician, rather than a judge" – have been preserved.¹ This concerns in particular Finland's recent involvement in international peace mediation.

This article builds on two major theoretical assumptions. First, it assumes that there is a significant connection between national foreign and security policy and state identity. The key concepts of national foreign and security policy serve as the vehicles of identity production², which reflect juxtapositions between 'selves' and 'others', through which national and state identities are produced. Consequently, foreign and security policy tells us how the state in question positions itself in the international system. Here, the study connects to a theoretical tradition in IR, which sees state identity as contained and reproduced through foreign policy. Foreign policy is thus a practice that defines and

¹ President Kekkonen once famously stated that Finland should work rather as a physician or doctor than a judge in the world politics characterised by the East-West confrontation. This buzzword has experienced a renaissance in the current Finnish foreign policy debate, despite the fact that neutrality has been cast aside in the official foreign policy and replaced with minimalist reading of military non-alignment and full commitment to ESDP (see e.g. Government Report 6/2004, Palosaari 2011).

² Wæver argues that since identity is a relational concept, that it is produced through juxtapositions between selves and others it is possible to identify "specific concepts which historically have come to take on particular importance as 'vehicles' of identity production" (Wæver 2002, 24).

manifests the difference between self and other by making certain objects ‘foreign’ (Campbell 1992, Wallace 1991, Aggestam 2004).

Second, the article assumes that European integration has played a central role in the change of key national foreign and security policy concepts. The literature on ‘Europeanization’ argues that EU-membership has an impact on national foreign policies, although this impact varies in different member states. Europeanization takes place not chiefly by complying to EU decisions, but primarily by ‘softer’ means such as learning and socialisation, i.e. mechanisms related to identity reconstruction (Checkel 2001, Tonra 2001, Wong 2007, Bulmer & Radaelli 2005). Consequently, Europeanization studies on foreign and security policy tend to rest on a constructivist world view and on sociological institutionalism. This tendency has been visible in the studies on the Europeanization of Finland’s foreign policy (see e.g. Rieker 2006, Jokela 2010, Palosaari 2011). Moreover, many foreign policy studies going beyond Europeanization have focused on Finland’s self-perception and adaptation to different geopolitical contexts (Harle and Moisio 2000, Browning 2008, see also Aaltola 2011 on flexible small state foreign policy based on “agility” and conceptual innovations).

This article draws on primary material consisting first of all of official documentation after 1995: Government Reports (white books) on security and defence policy and related speeches by key decision-makers as well as legislative amendments or new laws concerning foreign and security policy. Government material also stems also from national preparation for EU intergovernmental conferences as well as from reactions to CFSP and ESDP development. Secondly, to give a richer picture of the national discourse, the official documentation on foreign and security policy is supplemented with the related parliamentary debate, and statements and reports of Parliaments Committees. Indeed, the Finnish Parliament features lively political debates – documented word by word – between Ministers and parliamentarians, and between opposition and government party members. These debates bring to the fore contrasting perceptions and ideas regarding, for instance, peace promotion. The parliamentary political discussion thus gives insight into the process, in which national dominant discourse on foreign and security policy is formed, and Finnish state identity is reproduced.³

The theoretical approach of the article highlights the link between foreign and security policy and state identity. State identity is contained and reproduced through foreign and security policy. A key methodological implication is that it is possible to track down specific concepts in the foreign and security policy discourse⁴ that serve as the vehicles of state identity production. The way to study and operationalize state identity change is

³ The quotes in this article serve as examples of the dominating way of thinking and broader changes in argumentation and in common understandings. Thus it is not a question of in-depth textual analysis of individual speeches and words or argumentative structures used therein. All the speeches referenced against the names of MPs can be found on the on-line databank of the Finnish Parliament by the title of the debate and the date, both given in the footnotes.

⁴ Discourse is understood here as a macro concept: the focus is on broadly based discourses which are identified in relevant texts, such as nation-states’ official documents and the speeches of its leaders (Wæver 2002, also Rieker 2004, 371). Discourse can be defined as a limited range of possible statements promoting a limited range of meanings which are formed and changed in social interaction. (Larsen 2004, 65).

to analyse these concepts and their change, as well as how they appear in the political argumentation on national foreign and security policy.⁵

On the basis of this material, the analysis will show that the key concepts of Finnish foreign and security policy have undergone a considerable change after the Cold War. Furthermore, the analysis uncovers a changed discourse on Finnish peacekeeping policy and a reconstructed small state conception behind it.⁶ As the quote from the parliamentary debate in the beginning of this article suggests, the meanings attached to key Finnish foreign and security policy concepts such as neutrality and military non-alignment have changed.

This article is structured as follows. Part I discusses the Finnish policy during the Cold War. Part II focuses on the changes in the Finnish peacekeeping after the Cold War. Part III looks at the impact of the EU's common foreign and security policy on Finland. Finally, Part IV discusses Finland's current efforts in peace mediation.

Part I: Bridge-building and conventional peacekeeping during the Cold War

This section outlines Finland's peace policy during the Cold War. Finnish participation in UN peacekeeping operations became an integral part of Finnish neutrality policy and contributed to a self-image of a 'peacekeeping superpower'. Additionally, Finland searched for opportunities for confidence- and security-building measures and bridge-building between the Cold War superpowers. Yet, the special relationship with the Soviet Union limited the room for manoeuvre in Finnish foreign policy.

After the Second World War Finland did not join any military alliance, but agreed to the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) with the Soviet Union in 1948. Finland also declined the Western invitation to join the American aid programme Marshall Plan, in order to avoid arousing Soviet suspicions. The FCMA Treaty was a political agreement with military content: it contained a clause on Soviet assistance should Finland be exposed to military attack from a foreign power. On the other hand, the treaty took into account Finland's desire to stay outside great power conflicts. (Möller and Bjereld 2010, 373; Rieker 2006, 95.)

Finland was accepted as a member of the UN in 1955. Since then, conventional peacekeeping as part of UN operations have been a central component of Finland's foreign and security policy. Indeed, peacekeeping has been perceived as an important factor in Finnish identity, as during the Cold War it served as a way to reconfirm

⁵ See Palosaari 2011 for a theoretical discussion on foreign policy and state identity reconstruction.

⁶ According to Wivel, small state security identity usually portrays the small state as promoting a multilateral and non-military approach to security policy based on ideals of conflict resolution, peaceful coexistence and just world order (Wivel 2005, 395-396). Small states are traditionally seen as the main beneficiaries, and thus also supporters, or international institutions because they regulate the use of force and reduce the importance of power asymmetries (*ibid.*, 395-396, Antola 2002, 74-75). In Finnish domestic politics, small stateness has traditionally implied a generally accepted claim for consensus in national foreign and security policy-making and for acknowledging the importance of geopolitics (Palosaari 2011).

Finland's policy of neutrality. In the context of the FCMA Treaty with the Soviet Union, these forms of peace engagements played an important role in Finland's efforts to stay true to its neutrality policy. They also helped to build a self-image of a neutral bridge-builder between East and West, that is, a 'peacekeeping superpower' and a 'physician not judge' in world politics.

Therefore, in the UN, Finland avoided taking a stand on issues that were directly linked to the power struggle between the Eastern and Western bloc. Finland's first involvement in peacekeeping in United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I) from 1956 to 1957 was made possible by the absence of a political clash between the Soviet Union and United States regarding the Suez conflict. In the Western perceptions, Finland's freedom of movement in foreign policy was generally considered more or less restricted due the Soviet Union and FCMA Treaty. The policy of neutrality must be seen in the context of this relationship. It was a pragmatic choice aimed at sending a message to the West that Finland is "an independent democracy, not a Soviet satellite" (Jakobson 1998, 74). Finland's participation in peacekeeping was from the outset linked to improving its image in the West (Kronlund and Valla 1996, 444–446; Möller and Bjereld 2010, 374; Rieker 2006, 95).

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed the gradual development of the Finnish policy of active, peaceful neutrality aimed at avoiding actions that might have irritated the Soviet Union. This resulted in increasing involvement in peacekeeping. Following the model of other Nordic countries, the planning of a more permanent peacekeeping system including a stand-by force began. With the UN operations in Cyprus and Middle East, peacekeeping evolved into a part of Finland's foreign policy profile. Bit by bit, UN peacekeeping also started to be seen as a part of the *raison d'être* of the national defence forces on the domestic level (Kronlund and Valla 1996, 447–448, 453; Rieker 2006, 96). Finnish peacekeeping also served as a way to counter the international accusations concerning 'Finlandization'.⁷

During the Cold War the Nordic countries and various forms of Nordic cooperation provided an international forum on which Finland could safely act without risking its neutrality. Supporting the UN development goals and acting together with the other Nordic countries in the UN served as a way to gain recognition for Finland's neutrality. UN peacekeeping was also considered to strengthen Finland's status in the Nordic group (Vesa 2012, 6). Close association with the Nordic countries helped to counterbalance the relationship with the Soviet Union. Despite the different security policies of the Nordic countries (Norway, Denmark and Iceland being NATO members), Nordic identity reinforced Finland's international status as part of the democratic and Western Nordic group (Forsberg and Vaahtoranta 1993, 238).

In addition, the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) served as welcome international recognition of 'active neutrality' and enhanced Finland's ability to

⁷ The concept referred to a "process by which a democratic nation living in the shadow of a militarily powerful state gradually submits to the political domination of its neighbour and finally loses its internal freedom" (Jakobson 1998, 85). See also Mouritzen 1988 and Hanhimäki 1997.

maintain a genuinely neutral position. The bridge-building policies culminated in the European security conference in Helsinki in 1975 and the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. Together with successful peacekeeping operations, these events supported the emergence of neutrality as part of Finnish identity. The policies aimed at establishing some diplomatic distance from the Soviet Union and at sending a message to the West that Finland could not be considered a member of the Eastern bloc (Möller and Bjereld 2010, 376; Väyrynen 1987, Hakovirta 1988). The meeting of the presidents Gorbachev and Bush in Helsinki in 1990 to discuss common policies towards Iraq and Kuwait as well as the CSCE Summit in Helsinki in 1992 are further examples of Finnish bridge-building policies.

The beginning of disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the waning of Soviet influence in the Third World made possible the UN operation in Namibia in the 1980s. Namibia has been considered “the fulfilment of Finland peacekeeping’s ambitions up to that time” (Kronlund and Valla 1996, 457). The operation supported elections leading to the independence of a country and was led by future president Martti Ahtisaari and a Finnish battalion took part in the completion of the operations assignment. In the 1980s Finland also participated in UN peacekeeping operations for instance in the Golan Heights and Lebanon.

In a nutshell, Finland’s peace policy during the Cold war was centred on participation in UN peacekeeping and finding opportunities for bridge-building between the United States and Soviet Union. A key purpose of these efforts was to prove Finland’s ability to maintain a genuinely neutral position between Cold War rivals. The physician approach implied restraining from taking sides in conflicts involving hostilities between the Western and Eastern blocs. These elements – bridge-building, conventional peacekeeping, neutrality – all contributed to the construction of Finnish small state identity.

Part II: Towards a new peacekeeping doctrine after the Cold War

This section tackles the changes of peacekeeping doctrine, as Finland responded to the post-Cold War environment. Peacekeeping was the central feature of Finnish state identity during the Cold War. However, Finnish peacekeeping was affected by the superpower antagonism of that era. The end of the Cold War largely removed such obstacles. Yet, at the same token the global political changes, intrastate warfare and the momentary paralysis of UN peacekeeping in the 1990s brought new challenges to small states’ peacekeeping policies and international engagements (Salonius-Pasternak and Visuri 2006, 59; Kronlund and Valla 1996, 457). One consequence of the changing international environment was that Finland applied for EU membership. This had far-reaching implications on Finnish foreign policy and state identity. Tellingly, many members of parliament (MP) underlined after the EU accession that the FCMA-treaty no longer defined the international role and *identity* of Finland. It was replaced by the EU-membership, European values, non-alignment and independent defence.⁸

⁸ E.g. MP Penttilä, MP Salolainen 31.10.1995, follow-up debate on the Government Report 1/1995.

In many ways, the EU membership replaced neutrality as a tool in security policy (Ojanen et al. 2000, 103). During the accession period, the European Commission had noted that “The question is whether the Finnish policy of neutrality – even reduced as it is to its core of military non-alignment and credible, independent defence – might stand in the way of a full acceptance of the Union’s external policies” (European Commission 1992, 22). Consequently, Finland, together with the three other countries applying for EU-membership at the same time, i.e. Sweden, Norway and Austria, gave a declaration in which it committed to Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) without any national preconditions or constraints (Joint Declaration on Common Foreign and Security Policy 21.12.1993). Security policy played a role also in the Finnish population’s positive perceptions regarding the EU accession: many Finns expected that the EU membership increases Finland’s security – military security included (Hokkanen 1996, 7). Since that the public opinion surveys by the Advisory Board of Defence Information have year by year (1996-2012) indicated that most Finns see the EU membership as the key factor contributing to the strengthening of Finnish security. The surveys also show that Finnish public opinion has remained positive towards the EU’s foreign, security and defence policies (Maanpuolustustiedotuksen suunnittelukunta 2012).

In the post-Cold War security environment, Finland’s peacekeeping activities were put under transformation pressure. The official domestic discourse acknowledged that Finland must adapt nationally to the post-Cold War security environment, for example by participating in the new forms of international crisis management. To that end, Finnish peacekeeping capacity should be renewed to meet the challenges posed by operations that are broader and more demanding than before. For instance, the troops must be capable of self-defence and prepared to flexibly form new formations required by different missions. The new requirements also included the development of capacities for humanitarian protection and monitoring missions (Government Report 1/1995). Also linked to this was the question establishing and training a rapid reaction force to be used in international crisis management. This became a topic of intense debate and disagreement in the parliamentary debate, as conventional peacekeeping had become an integral part of Finnish identity.⁹

On the policy level, one of the first steps in the post-Cold War transformation of peacekeeping doctrine was to soften the division between crisis management and peacekeeping. This was done by introducing the concept of ‘enhanced peacekeeping’. It was defined as a sort of a middle ground between traditional peacekeeping and military crisis management. In the domestic debate, some criticized the new concept by claiming that it was only aimed at the domestic audience in order to smoothen the Finnish participation in international military crisis management. Furthermore, some members of the parliament questioned whether the participation in new international crisis management undermines the credibility of Finland as a trustworthy traditional peacekeeper.¹⁰

⁹ Prime Minister Aho 17.1.1995, debate on the Prime Minister’s announcement 2/1994.

¹⁰ MP Juhantalo 20.12.1995, follow-up debate on the Government Report 3/1995. See also Defence Committee Statement 2/1995.

In 1995, the political debate on peacekeeping versus crisis management culminated in Finland's participation in the NATO-administrated multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) operation in Bosnia and the related new act on peacekeeping. The purpose of the Government's legislative proposal (Government proposal 185/1995) was to enable Finland's participation in enhanced peacekeeping in various contexts, particularly to deliver humanitarian assistance and provide civil protection. Finnish troops would be allowed to participate even if the operation in question has a mandate to use coercive means to implement its objectives in the context of non-cooperation from the parties. Furthermore, the Government proposal also aimed at making Finnish participation possible in operations mandated by the UN or the OSCE, but executed by other organisations, such as NATO. All in all, Finland's anticipated participation in the IFOR operation played a key role in the amendment of the law.¹¹

The Government's justification for the proposed new legislation built on the notion that the international context had changed after the Cold War and that peacekeeping doctrine needed to be adjusted (Government proposal 185/1995). The parliamentary debate often stressed the moral obligation to participate in a mission, which was to return peace and prevent further conflict in Europe.¹² Furthermore, the Government saw that the operation carried wider significance in the sense that it included both NATO-members and military non-aligned states and hence contributed to the creation of a new international peacekeeping system as well as a new European security system (Government Report 3/1995). Consequently, Finnish participation in the operation was perceived to strengthen the UN's role in the post-Cold War transition period. According to Foreign Minister Tarja Halonen the status of Finland as a militarily non-aligned state added value to the IFOR operation in particular and to crisis management in general. Along with other non-aligned countries, such as Sweden, Austria, Russia, the Ukraine, the Czech Republic, and Poland, Finland's participation broadened the mission and prevented a pure NATO mission, which would lead to "biased peacekeeping in that it would produce new divisions in Europe".¹³

IFOR also triggered a debate about the Nordic dimension of peacekeeping. Some clearly considered IFOR consistent with the Nordic approach, because the Finnish troops are to be part of a Nordic brigade.¹⁴ However, there are also different conclusions on Nordicness and traditions. For example a number of MPs held that participation in NATO-led enhanced peacekeeping undermines Finnish peacekeeping traditions and might lead to a situation where Finland has to give up traditional peacekeeping totally.¹⁵ The following excerpt from the parliamentary debate describes the issue tellingly. It shows how Nordic and Finnish peacekeeping traditions and the Finnish image in the eyes

¹¹ According to the Government proposal Finland would participate in IFOR with the strength of a "building detachment" of approximately 420 soldiers and staff, amounting to 450 persons total. The reconstruction battalion was to build and repair the working and accommodation facilities needed by the staff and stations of the Nordic brigade. (Government Report 3/1995; Aro 2000, 54-56).

¹² E.g. MP Wahlström 18.12.1995, preliminary debate on the Government Report 3/1995.

¹³ Foreign Minister Halonen 18.12.1995, preliminary debate on the Government Report 3/1995.

¹⁴ Foreign Minister Halonen 18.12.1995, preliminary debate on the Government Report 3/1995.

¹⁵ E.g. MP Saari 18.12.1995, preliminary debate on the Government Report 3/1995.

of other countries are given different interpretations and how these interpretations can be used in domestic political debates:

Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen: *"We do not yet know if the Bosnia operation will take place, but if it does, what shall we say to Russia, the US, other European states, other Nordic countries and perhaps to the parties of the crisis who are asking Finland to participate? Would we stay out of the Nordic peacekeeping force, and leave our place to Poland? [...] What would that look like in the light of Finland's great peacekeeping traditions?"*

Interjection by a MP: *We should concentrate on traditional peacekeeping!*¹⁶

Small stateness played a role in the redefinition of peacekeeping doctrine in the context of the Bosnia operation. Thus, peace enforcement was seen as a task that belongs to the great powers, but not to small states like Finland.¹⁷ The Government defined peace enforcement as military coercion targeted at a state or another conflict party with the purpose of repelling or striking back an attack. In the Finnish vocabulary peace enforcement operations also differ from traditional peacekeeping in that they are established without the consent of the conflicting parties. Furthermore, force can be used as much as is necessary for meeting the objectives of the operation.¹⁸ The general conclusion in the domestic debate was that peace enforcement is not suitable for Finland, ultimately because it is alien to Finland's state identity. Thus, a clause was introduced excluding peace enforcement from the list of activities that Finnish troops can take part in. Abstaining from peace enforcement was thus a factor which contributed to the reproduction of Finnish identity related to traditional understandings of Finland as a neutral party that does not serve as a judge but rather as a physician in international politics.

Five years later, in 1999, NATO's intervention in Kosovo again triggered debates about Finnish peacekeeping doctrine. As a reply to NATO's call for preliminary information about Partnership for Peace (PfP) -countries' possible participation, Finland announced its preliminary readiness to take part in the operation with a 700-800 man battalion (Aro 2000, 57). The government noted that Finland's participation in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) is in accordance with the regulations of the Peacekeeping Act, firstly because the operation was authorised by the UN Security Council. Secondly, the Government argued that it was not question of peace enforcement, since "the parties of the conflict are committed to the ceasefire and the KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army] is committed to disarmament" and because "initiative and unlimited use of force is not necessary in this operation". Prime Minister Lipponen further argued that peace enforcement entails the

¹⁶ Prime Minister Lipponen, MP Pulliainen 31.10.1995, follow-up debate on the Government Report 1/1995.

¹⁷ The Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Paasio 31.10.1995; Prime Minister Lipponen 31.10.1995; follow-up debate on the Government Report 1/1995

¹⁸ Defence Minister Taina 31.10.1995; also Prime Minister Lipponen 31.10.1995, follow-up debate on the Government Report 1/1995.

proactive use of military force, whereas the KFOR is about enhanced peacekeeping, that is, the reactive use of force.¹⁹

In the context of planning the KFOR mission, the Finnish Peacekeeping Act required further adaptation.²⁰ A resulting key amendment was that the Act no longer directly stated that Finnish troops could not participate in peace enforcement. When arguing on behalf of this change, Defence Minister Jan-Erik Enestam referred to the problems that the current legislation had caused in the field during the SFOR and KFOR operations. He argued that the Finnish commander in the field might be faced with a situation in which he has to decide if a task given to the Finnish troops during the operation meets the Finnish definition of “peace enforcement” and consequently abstain from implementing the task. The Minister noted that such political responsibility should belong to the parliament and government, not to the field commander. Additionally, the government wanted to make sure that the peacekeeping legislation allowed Finnish troops to participate in any humanitarian operation at the request of a UN agency, such as the UNHCR.²¹

Notably, in the parliamentary debates, the new peacekeeping act is not regarded as merely a technical adjustment, as the government suggested, but as a change that affects the whole Finnish foreign and security policy. Thus, it had repercussions on Finland’s identity in the international system. For example, the EU crisis management development, Petersberg tasks²² and Amsterdam Treaty are repeatedly brought up in the debate. Parliamentarians argued that they cause increasing pressures towards standardization of national legislation in EU member states. Thus, Finland responded to pressures caused by the evolving EU crisis management and was taking steps towards peace enforcement. To some parliamentarians, this was a disturbing tendency. They were concerned that the on-going process was taking Finland away from traditional peacekeeping and eroding the image of Finland as a credible and neutral peacekeeper. Similarly, they criticized the incorporation of the crisis management concept into Finnish legislation as a sign of the EU’s increasing impact on Finnish foreign and security policy. In their objection statements, some of the members of the Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee highlighted that the concept of “crisis management” brings with it problematic connotations regarding military enforcement.²³

These positions point to the durability of the ideas and norms relating to the traditional peacekeeping. Tellingly, in the government texts, the revisions of foreign and security policy are discursively constructed in a way that aims to preserve a certain degree of

¹⁹ Prime Minister Lipponen 16.6.1999, preliminary debate on the Government Report 2/1999.

²⁰ A working group left its report to the Defence Minister regarding amendments to the Peacekeeping Act in November 1999 (Aro 2000, 50).

²¹ Defence Minister Enestam 11.4.2000, preliminary debate on the Government proposal 20/2000.

²² Together with Sweden Finland proposed the inclusion of the Petersberg tasks of the Western European Union (WEU) in the Amsterdam treaty and into CFSP. As a result crisis management became an important part of CFSP. Finland and Sweden were unsuccessful in that eventually the Amsterdam Treaty came to refer to the “tasks of combat forces in crisis management including peace-making” instead of “crisis management” as was proposed by Finland and Sweden. (See Palosaari 2011.)

²³ Foreign Affairs Committee Report 4/2000; Defence Committee Statement 3/2000.

resonance with traditional small state identity elements that have their roots in the Cold War neutrality, bridge-building and conventional peacekeeping. It is noteworthy that while the Finnish population has been supportive towards the development of CFSP, at the same time the public opinion has valued military non-alignment highly. In the surveys the support for military non-alignment has ranged from 58 to 79% (Maanpuolustustiedotuksen suunnittelukunta 2010).

The persistence of the traditional peacekeeping as an identity element became apparent in the domestic debates about the new peacekeeping acts. The neutrality element was frequently connected to this, for instance by noting that it is a factor that gives special added value to Finnish peacekeeping compared to other countries. Some parliamentarians argued that Finland's activities are characterized by confidence building and conflict resolution, whereas other countries put more emphasis on military force.²⁴ Similarly, in the context of the Balkan operations, the media typically presented non-alignment as a positive feature that enabled the work of President Ahtisaari as a mediator in the crisis.²⁵ This shows that traditional small state identity elements were not easily reconciled with the concept of military crisis management, which professed a more robust approach to the use of force. This view is well described by an address of a MP during the parliamentary debate: "Finland is a peacekeeping superpower, but only when it comes to traditional peacekeeping."²⁶

Arguments about the relationship between national defence and peacekeeping also contributed to the evolution of Finnish peacekeeping doctrine after the end of the Cold War. Although peacekeeping activities had been during the Cold War seen as an essential part of Finland's the self-image of a "peacekeeping superpower", it was not manifested as a significant factor in national defence. In the post-Cold War period a direct connection is constructed in the Government discourse between the defence of the motherland and peacekeeping activities abroad. The Government stated that crisis management preparedness must be seen as a growing component in defence policy overall, and as a new tool for security policy and also as an element in strengthening the country's defence capability (Government Report 1/1995, 6). The Government saw that participation in international cooperation will contribute to national defence firstly by offering modern field experience and military expertise for the purposes of national defence. Furthermore, many Ministers have later on concluded that the crisis management operations give valuable experiences to the military personnel and, additionally, increase Finland's capacity to receive external help if Finland becomes under an attack.²⁷ Defence Minister Enestam, for instance, stated that the national defence policy consists of a national and international dimension.²⁸ Additionally, he argued that crisis management operations enhance mutual solidarity and military interoperability between the EU members.

²⁴ E.g. MP Ojala, MP Oinonen, MP. E.Lahtela, 11.4.2000, preliminary debate on the Government proposal 20/2000.

²⁵ MP S.Lahtela 18.6.1999, follow-up debate on the Government Report 2/1999.

²⁶ MP Seivästö 11.4.2000, preliminary debate on the Government proposal 20/2000.

²⁷ Defence Minister Taina 17.3.1997, Prime Minister Lipponen 17.3.1997, preliminary debate on the Government Report 1/1997; Government Report 1/1997, 45. Prime Minister Vanhanen 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on the Government Report 6/2004.

²⁸ Defence Minister Enestam, 30.1.2001 (Enestam 2001).

Consequently, the Minister concluded that Finland seeks for security in political alignment and cooperation instead of neutrality that would lead to isolation under the prevailing conditions.²⁹ Therefore the Finnish Defence Forces are to have a capability for managing crises in unstable regions outside Finland's borders (Government Report 2/2001, 46-47). The Government saw that both the international compatibility and experiences accumulated in international crisis management reinforces the credibility of Finland's national defence capability and strengthens Finland's national defence resources (*ibid.*, 57).

As Finnish experiences in participation in military crisis management increased, there was a growing perception that international military cooperation is an essential part of Finland's security and defence policy, and it supports Finland's own defence.³⁰ Developing Finnish crisis management capability was justified more visibly than before as part of Finnish defence policy. The transformation was found necessary because of the "changes in the operating environment" which require the adoption of new modes of operation. In practical terms this meant that Finland's international crisis management capacity has subsequently been developed by taking into account the EU's troops requirements and crisis management policy.³¹ These will be discussed in the part III of this article.

Part III: Transcending foreign and security policy through Europeanization

This part describes the changes of Finnish policy that occurred, as the EU developed its profile in foreign and security policy. As described above, the adaptation of peacekeeping practice after the Cold War somewhat triggered a backlash and a revival of a traditionalist discourse. However, this proved to be short-lived. The emergence of EU crisis management operations and battle groups influenced significantly the transformation of Finnish foreign and security policy. The starting point was the Concordia operation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in March 2003. Finland also participated also in the Althea operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 2004.³² Moreover, Finland took part in two battle groups (Swedish-Finnish-Norwegian-Estonian and German-Dutch-Finnish units).³³ Finland's participation in the EU battle groups required a new legal framework on crisis management. This argument was made by Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, who drew a clear connection between EU crisis management and battle groups and the need to amend Finnish peacekeeping legislation.³⁴ Semantics mattered here. The government argued that the "military crisis management" which describes the

²⁹ Defence Minister Enestam 30.1.2001.

³⁰ Defence Minister Häkämies 12.12.2007, MP Haavisto 12.12.2007, follow-up debate on the Government Report 2/2007.

³¹ Government Report 6/2004.

³² Finnish troop contribution in Concordia was 9 participants and in Althea c.200 participants.

³³ Finnish contribution to the German-Dutch-Finnish battle group contained i.a. 120-160 military police, medical company, electronic reconnaissance. In the Swedish-Finnish-Norwegian-Estonian battle group i.a. 180-220 combat support, staff officers, protection, reconnaissance, military police. Government Report 8/2006; Government Report 2/2007.

³⁴ Prime Minister Vanhanen 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on the Government Report 6/2004.

EU's crisis management tasks more accurately than the term "peacekeeping". Therefore, it would make sense to change the title of the Finnish law accordingly. The parliament settled on the new title: Act on Military Crisis Management.³⁵ The way peacekeeping is reconceptualised is clearly influenced by European integration and ESDP. The Defence Committee, for instance, finds that the EU possesses unique civil and military capabilities for intervening in crises.³⁶ Additionally, the Government finds that the national procedures and decision-making structures must be revised so it becomes possible to mobilise a rapid response force for the needs of the EU operations.³⁷ There is a common understanding in the domestic debate that the EU battle group concept required a new kind of preparedness from the Defence Forces as well as more flexible national decision-making.³⁸

All in all, in the early 2000s, the Finnish approach to peacekeeping was adapted so that it would be in harmony with that of the EU. There was direct time pressure for changes, in this case caused by the need to have the EU battle groups ready for deployment in the beginning of the year 2007. Pressure was further exerted by the need to agree on national recruitment processes as well as on the conditions of employment.³⁹ Consequently, by 2006, the previous national preconditions and constraints for participation in international crisis management operation had been cast aside in Finland. A common conclusion in the domestic debate is that when Finland operates in EU battle groups, as well as in other multinational crisis management constellations, the Finnish troops must possess similar rules regarding the use of force as the other participating nations. National restrictions came to be seen as a problem, rather than a distinctive character of the Finnish peacekeeping policy. Furthermore, the public opinion was positive towards Finland's participation in the EU battle groups (Maanpuolustustiedotuksen suunnittelukunta, surveys 2005 and 2006).

This concerned also the issue of the UN mandate. Indeed, this was a widely discussed question in parliamentary debates on peacekeeping legislation, as the EU's guidelines do not absolutely require a UN Security Council mandate for its operations. Of the 25 EU member states, only Finland and Ireland have a special mention in their legislation on a UN mandate that prevents participation in operations implemented without UN Security Council's authorisation.⁴⁰ Thus, the necessity of a UN mandate was increasingly

³⁵ Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 30; Rauhanturvaamislain uudistamistyöryhmän mietintö 2005 [memorandum by the working group on the amending of the peacekeeping legislation].

³⁶ Defence Committee Statement 8/2005.

³⁷ Government proposal 5/2006, 20.

³⁸ Government Report 8/2006. Defence Minister Kääriäinen 24.11.2006, preliminary debate on the Government Report 8/2006; MP Jaakonsaari 22.9.2004, preliminary debate on the Government Report 5/2004; MP Katainen 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on the Government Report 6/2004.

³⁹ These external time pressures dictated the schedule of the whole legislative process from preparatory work to parliament and committee handling. The eventual outcome is an exceptionally multi-phased political process in which the Government decides to withdraw its first proposal for the new peacekeeping legislation (Government proposal 110/2005 Act on Military Crisis Management) after the Parliament's Constitutional Law Committee Statement (54/2005), and plans to amend the Constitution instead. Eventually the new law is passed as a so called exceptive act of permanent nature in the spring 2006, based on Government proposal 5/2006.

⁴⁰ Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 31; Foreign Affairs Committee Statement 1/2006, 7.

questioned in the domestic debate. Those arguing that there is no need for a UN mandate noted that the political climate prevailing in the UN Security Council varies and refer to China's veto in the context of the Macedonia operation in 1999.⁴¹ This was opposed by MPs arguing that a UN mandate should be obtained for all EU operations because otherwise the UN's prestige and ability to function in the future are undermined.⁴² Furthermore, some argued that without the UN mandate, the EU's crisis management operations will erode international justice and undermine the EU's status as a promoter of justice. Finally, some opined that EU operations without a UN mandate might lead to a harmful situation where Finnish resources are removed from UN operations into EU operations.⁴³

The Defence Committee held that it might not be possible to always obtain the UN Security Council's green light for the deployment of the EU's rapid response force, for instance due to an operation's urgency or a conflict of interest between permanent members in the Security Council. Yet, it found impossible that the EU would use force contrary to the principles of the UN Charter.⁴⁴ The Foreign Affairs Committee pointed out that the European Security Strategy and the Treaty of the European Union both refer to the UN Charter. Therefore, the committee saw EU rapid response forces as a way to support UN crisis management.⁴⁵ Indeed, the 'principles of the UN Charter' became a phrase frequently referred to in the parliamentary debates as a way to position Finland somewhere between yes and no in the question of UN mandate and EU operations.⁴⁶

As Finland got increasingly involved in EU operations, it put a lot of emphasis on civilian aspects of crisis management. This goes back to Finland's traditional Cold War era approach to peacekeeping. Thus, in the domestic self-perception Finns have always been "capable, levelheaded volunteer peacekeepers who interacted with locals in a constructive manner" (Salonius-Pasternak and Visuri 2006, 59). While non-alignment did not prevent Finland from participating in the EU battle groups and NATO-led operations, it has often led Finland to promote civilian means and non-military aspects of crisis management (Ojanen 2002, 168-173). Defence Minister Seppo Kääriäinen, for instance, stated that linking civilian and military elements in EU crisis management ensures that it is not about "war politics, but something completely different".⁴⁷ In similar fashion, the Minister presented the coupling of military and civilian actions as a unique feature in EU crisis management, making the EU a responsible actor instead of "a warring military alliance".⁴⁸

⁴¹ MP Katainen 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on the Government Report 6/2004.

⁴² E.g. MP Siimes 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on the Government Report 6/2004. Initially the President too supported keeping UN mandate.

⁴³ Objection statement in Defence Committee Report 1/2004, MP Laakso.

⁴⁴ Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 30.

⁴⁵ Foreign Affairs Committee Statement 1/2006, 8.

⁴⁶ In 2006 approximately half of Finnish troops participated in NATO-led operations, and 30% were in UN- and 20% in EU-led operations (Salonius-Pasternak & Visuri 2006, 62). In June 2012 approximately 200 troops were in NATO-led operations and 200 in UN-led operations. Almost 100 Finns were in EU civil crisis management operations and 18 in EU-led military crisis management operations (Finnish Defence Forces 2012). In 2011 Finland was committed to two EU battle groups.

⁴⁷ Defence Minister Kääriäinen 14.9.2005, preliminary debate on the Government proposal 110/2005.

⁴⁸ Defence Minister Kääriäinen 21.2.2006, preliminary debate on the Government proposal 5/2006.

In all, much emphasis has been put on the civilian dimension of EU crisis management in the discussions within the parliament. MPs welcomed civilian crisis management as a theme that is particularly suitable for Finland.⁴⁹ Therefore, given frequent references to the civilian dimension, MP's were able to argue that Finnish participation in EU crisis management does not imply a total departure from the traditional Finnish peacekeeping approach.

Finland announced its preparedness concerning EU civilian crisis management capacity: "Finland is developing its civilian crisis management capacity on the basis of its national approach and is prepared to establish the capacity required particularly for developing the EU's civilian crisis management capability" (Government Report 2/2001, 8). Together with Sweden, Finland continued to lobby for civilian means and non-military aspects of EU crisis management.⁵⁰ A Government Report states that "Finland is playing an active role in developing the civilian crisis management capacity of the EU. Finland is also developing its national capability in line with the EU's objectives, especially in four priority areas: police, strengthening the rule of law, and civil administration and civil protection." This position typically received wide backing in the domestic debate. Yet, at the same time the public opinion saw that participating in the development of EU's defence increases Finnish security (Maanpuolustustiedotuksen suunnittelukunta 2010).

The meanings attached to the civilian crisis management in the domestic debate are positive. A dominant perception in the domestic discourse is that civilian crisis management is reminiscent of the "Finnish" way of peacekeeping, for instance through its insistence on confidence building between the parties and cooperation between military and civilian actors. It is generally conceived that civilian crisis management preserves and perpetuates the heritage and know-how of Finnish peacekeeping.⁵¹ Consequently, the civilian crisis management creates resonance between national understandings related to traditional peacekeeping as an identity element and the new, more military-oriented features of international crisis management.

Part IV: Back to the roots? Finland and peace mediation

This section looks at a feature of Finnish peace policy that emerged in recent years, in particular after former President Martti Ahtisaari won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008. As a result, Finland has developed capacities in international peace mediation and has promoted the institutionalisation of mediation on the world stage, for example via by co-founding, with Turkey, the Group of Friends of Mediation.⁵²

⁴⁹ E.g. MP Räsänen 21.3.2006, debate on the Government proposal 5/2006 (second reading).

⁵⁰ See the joint newspaper article by Swedish and Finnish Foreign Ministers Lindh and Tuomioja in *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Dagens Nyheter* 30.4.2000.

⁵¹ Foreign Affairs Committee Statement 6/2001, 10. Also e.g. MP Ojala 5.9.2001, preliminary debate on the Government Report 2/2001.

⁵² In the UN, Finland and Turkey initiated a General Assembly resolution on mediation that widened the concept of mediation as an instrument that can be applied throughout the conflict cycle (UN Doc. A/RES/65/283 (2011), see Piiparinen 2012, 42).

As of now, Finnish mediation experience is highly personalized. In addition to former President and 2008 Nobel laureate Martti Ahtisaari, prominent individuals emphasized include for instance Ensio Siilasvuo, who acted as the UN's chief coordinator of peacekeeping forces in the Middle East in the mid-1970s, and Harri Holkeri who was peace negotiator in Northern Ireland in the 1990s and served as the Head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. Additionally, the Finnish MP Pekka Haavisto has participated in the Darfur peace talks as the special representative of the EU. Peace mediation carries high domestic appreciation, and has been connected to notions of political prestige and statesmanship. Experiences in mediation have also been a factor in presidential elections. They have been used rather successfully in the campaigns of Martti Ahtisaari, Tarja Halonen, Elisabeth Rehn and Pekka Haavisto. Mediation has helped emphasize a candidate's presidential qualities and characteristically Finnish skills in international politics.

Compared to other small states like Norway and Switzerland, Finnish tradition of peace mediation is not as well-established. Indeed, institutionalised, specialized and professionalised peace mediation capacity is currently limited. Neither does it rest on a firm legal basis, as it is the case in Switzerland (see Lanz 2012). Although domestic cooperation and networking has clearly started, the key actors are still scattered in different institutional settings. In addition to the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI)⁵³ there is the Crisis Management Center operating under the Ministry of Interior, several *ad hoc* special representatives in the Foreign Ministry, as well as experts in the Defence Forces and academic networks. As a remedy, the Foreign Ministry has drawn up an action plan (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2011), which started the development of mediation capacities within the Finnish government. In the EU context, Sweden and Finland launched an initiative to consider establishing a European Institute of Peace that would engage in mediation.

Finland's current engagement for mediation is a product of the 'Nobel effect' caused by President Ahtisaari. Since then, Finland has perceived a window of opportunity: Mediation is seen as an opportunity for small states to contribute to peaceful development of international affairs. At the same time, mediation initiatives have a useful branding effect.⁵⁴ Thus, it helps to market Finland as a peaceful and peace-loving nation (Piiparinen & Aaltola 2012, 96). Such images were used in the campaign to gain a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council in 2013-2014. In this context, mediation has been labelled one of Finland's main priorities on the international scene (Kanerva 2012, 112).

As was described earlier in this article, the self-image of a peacekeeping superpower was anchored in a perception regarding Finland's bridge-building efforts between East and West. According to it Finland has helped to prevent international crises from escalating into a war between the superpowers. Consequently, mediation resonates with the

⁵³ CMI is a non-governmental organization founded and chaired by President Ahtisaari.

⁵⁴ For example, the Country Brand Delegation proposed in its Report (2010) that Finland should establish a peace mediation convention dedicated to Martti Ahtisaari.

traditional elements in Finland's state identity. Thus, in the domestic debate Finnish non-alignment is typically seen as an advantage for international peace mediation. For instance, several Parliament Committees have referred to the work of Finnish arbitrators in Kosovo and Northern Ireland, and to Finland's contribution to developing comprehensive crisis management capacities in the contexts of the EU and NATO's PfP-programme.⁵⁵ The typical Finnish understanding is that military non-alignment, active commitment to development cooperation and UN-led peacekeeping as well as the lack of imperial past make Finland an impartial third party that can play a prominent role in mediation (Wigell, Joenpolvi and Jaarva 2012, 103).

Sometimes even the conceptions stemming from the Cold War era neutrality – the physician approach and bridge-building – are recycled and utilized in justifying the current Finnish mediation policies (see Aaltola and Piiparinen 2012, 97). However, as has been described above in this article, Finland is no longer a neutral country – the official Finnish foreign policy has since the EU accession in 1995 found neutrality an increasingly inapt and outdated way to promote national interest. Thus, in the current mediation debate, neutrality is conceptualised in a different way than during the Cold War. It now typically refers to “a neutral actor ‘steering’ the [peace] process in the right direction” (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2010, 8); and not to a grand foreign policy position or state identity. Together with the post-Cold War understanding of small stateness, this view on neutrality forms the ideational basis for Finnish mediation policies. The example of other small states plays an important role here. The Finnish Action Plan for Mediation notes that Finland can draw lessons from other states' practices and “possibly consider implementing corresponding structures to Finnish mediation activities” (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2011, 20). The Action Plan mentions other small states Switzerland, Norway, Sweden and Belgium in this context. Another conclusion related to small stateness is that networking with other international mediation actors is vital for Finland. The Action Plan finds that the Nordic countries could act jointly “in certain peace processes in different segments” and “cooperate in the field of training” (*ibid.*, 13). Furthermore, the Plan notes that Finnish experience and skills are suitable for various kinds of confidence-building on different levels and in all stages of conflicts.

Conclusions: judging the physician

This article has advanced the main argument that changes in Finland's peace policy after the Cold War reflect a recalibrated understanding of small stateness. The reconceptualization of neutrality, updating of the peacekeeping doctrine, Europeanization of foreign and security policy as well as engagement in mediation were analysed from that perspective. The analysed material, official foreign and security policy documentation complemented with parliamentary debate, gave a vantage point to the process in which national dominant discourse on foreign and security policy is formed.

⁵⁵ Defence Committee Report 2/2001, 8; Foreign Affairs Committee Statement 6/2001, 12. Also MP Anttila, MP Lax, MP Korkea-aho 5.9.2001, preliminary debate on the Government Report 2/2001; MP Kallio 19.12.2001, follow-up debate on the Government Report 2/2001.

The located new understandings have clearly influenced the process of reproduction of state identity through foreign policy.

During the Cold War Finland's peace policies focused on the conventional UN-peacekeeping and bridge-building between East and West. Both of them helped to build and preserve an identity of a neutral small state. Finland aspired to be 'physician rather than a judge' in world politics and avoided taking a stand on issues that were directly linked to the super power antagonism. Participation in peacekeeping was linked to improving the image and credibility of Finnish neutrality in the West.

Currently, peacekeeping still represents a key factor in Finnish peace policy conception, but the post-Cold War development towards crisis management has caused changes in the meanings attached to it and in its practices. As a result of the EU membership, Finland has become exposed to new practices and structures of meaning that originate in the ESDP and have thus transcended Finland's traditional approach to peacekeeping. In this light, Finland represents a typical case of Europeanization. The Cold War era idea of Finland as a neutral 'peacekeeping superpower' focusing on UN-mandated operations has become challenged and sidelined. New factors have emerged from the domestic discourse: minimalist reading of military non-alignment, alignment to the EU, and peacekeeping increasingly understood as active participation in crisis management as defined by the EU. Also the meanings attached to small stateness have changed. Small stateness was made compatible with EU-membership and recast more and more as 'small member stateness'. In this reading small state as an element of Finnish state identity increasingly refers to a 'small EU member state identity' and is less characterised by qualities such as 'marginal' or 'border state' or 'small population'.

The reconstructed small state identity entails that as a small member state Finland should be active in supporting further integration in the sphere of CFSP. Furthermore, mere technical adaptation in the domestic level is not sufficient but the small state should profile itself as a dynamic initiator. The small state can be an active and competent member of the security community EU, and can also upload its national policies and use the EU in achieving national foreign and security policy goals.

This recalibrated understanding of small stateness is evident also in the current Finnish mediation policy and related capacity building. Finland is trying to gain an active role in international mediation. In order to achieve this, Finland looks closely at the examples of other small states. In addition to learning and adaptation, Finland has made initiatives and proposals for cooperation and networking in the Nordic, European and global context. The current Finnish peace policy highlights small stateness, lack of imperial past, military non-alignment, active commitment to development cooperation and peacekeeping as factors that make Finland an impartial third party in mediation. This way the Finnish physician approach has been reconstructed and updated for the post-Cold War world.

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