

State-building strategies are falling short

Europe must lead on reconstruction of failed states, says new Global Europe report

Thursday 5 May 2005

Attention: diplomatic editors, defence and EU correspondents, comment desks
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International reconstruction interventions are seriously flawed and often 'undermine the very local governments they have come to "assist"', according to an incisive new report on Europe's potential state-building role.

Rescuing the State: Europe's Next Challenge is the latest in the *Global Europe* series of reports from British Council Brussels and the Foreign Policy Centre, and sets forward strategies for improving the effectiveness of European state-building operations. It includes contributions from a leading academic, **Professor Malcolm Chalmers** of Bradford University; former director of management at the OSCE, **Michael von der Schulenburg**; and a serving UK diplomat, **Julian Braithwaite**, who was director of communications for Lord Ashdown in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

'Turning fragile and failed states into strong and stable ones is perhaps the most difficult security challenge of our time,' the report editor, Professor Chalmers, argues.

It is also crucial to the EU's global reach, since state-building is at the heart of Europe's emerging 'strategic identity'. The essays make the case that Europe must take the lead in improving the effectiveness of post-conflict reconstruction, to maximize its international influence and carve out a distinctive world role.

'The EU will not be able to match the ability of the US to intervene decisively in crises for many years, if ever. But it has the resources, the institutions and the processes to be the world's best state-builder,' Julian Braithwaite states in his essay.

KEY ANALYSIS:

1. State-building missions must aim for a 'light footprint' on the ground to avoid the pernicious effects of a high-profile presence. This means:
 - Minimising international personnel and relying on local talent to avoid a drain from local institutions
 - Streamlining the number of aid organizations to avoid waste, duplication and bureaucratic rivalries

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2. Restoring basic services rapidly and efficiently in the first few weeks of a civilian intervention is key to winning 'hearts and minds' and averting the emergence of a 'credibility gap' among the local population.
 - State-building missions should aim to provide universal healthcare and education.
 - Peacekeepers need better tools, namely management technology.
Michael von der Schulenburg sets out his idea to use technology to allow international missions to roll out 'government out of a box'
3. The EU cannot extend enlargement to all the world's vulnerable states, and must be wary of the charge of imperialism. Instead Europe should choose its interventions carefully, focusing on long-term reconstruction rather than crisis management.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. *Global Europe 3 Rescuing the State: Europe's Next Challenge* by Malcolm Chalmers (ed.) is published this month by **British Council Brussels** and the **Foreign Policy Centre**.
2. About the Global Europe project: developed by the **Foreign Policy Centre** (London) in partnership with **British Council Brussels**, it aims to promote new thinking on the EU's evolution as an international actor and provide concrete policy recommendations for the European Security Strategy.
3. The project has been supported by the **European Commission Representation in the UK** as part of *The Future of Europe* project. Global Europe has also drawn on a conference held at **Wilton Park** on 16-18 July 2004, *Global Europe: Testing the Limits of the European Security Strategy*. This was the 760th Wilton Park conference.
4. Contributors to the essay are: **Malcolm Chalmers**, Professor of International Politics at the University of Bradford; **Michael von der Schulenburg**, former Director of Management at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); and **Julian Braithwaite**, former Director of Communications in the Office of the UN High Representative and EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lord Ashdown.
5. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors alone and are offered as innovative and challenging research contributing to the debate. They do not represent the views of British Council Brussels or of the Foreign Policy Centre.

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